

Academic Leadership and Innovation

A Workshop

for Senior Faculty and Academic Leaders of Christian Higher Education Institutions in India

AIACHE, New Delhi
28, 29 and 30 August 2026

1. Background and Rationale

Higher education institutions in India are passing through a period of significant transition. Colleges are expected not only to conduct classes and examinations, but also to demonstrate academic quality, curriculum relevance, student formation, employability, research culture, innovation capacity, social responsibility and institutional distinctiveness.

In this context, senior faculty members are called to exercise academic leadership beyond routine teaching and administrative responsibilities. They are expected to read the changing context, guide departments and institutions with strategic clarity, strengthen academic systems, renew curriculum and learning practices, and build research and innovation ecosystems.

This three-day capacity-building programme on Academic Leadership and Innovation is designed to enable senior faculty and academic leaders of Christian higher education institutions in India to develop a clear leadership perspective and a practical institutional development agenda.

2. Programme Purpose

The programme seeks to form senior faculty as academic leaders who can contribute to institutional renewal, curriculum transformation, quality enhancement, research culture and social impact. It is intended to move participants from activity-based academic functioning to purpose-driven, strategic and innovation-oriented academic leadership.

3. Learning Outcomes

- Understand the changing context of higher education and its implications for Christian higher education institutions in India.
- Recognise the role of senior faculty as academic leaders who shape institutional vision, academic culture, quality and future direction.
- Apply strategic thinking to institutional development, departmental planning and long-term academic priorities.
- Develop the broad framework of a Strategic Institutional Development Plan for a college and a Departmental Development Plan aligned with institutional goals.
- Understand the need for curriculum renewal, interdisciplinary learning and competency-based education.
- Identify teaching, learning, assessment and digital innovations that promote student capability, engagement and deeper learning.

- Develop strategies to strengthen research culture, innovation, incubation, entrepreneurship and institutional impact.
- Translate the learning from the programme into concrete institutional, departmental and personal academic leadership commitments.

4. Programme Design

The programme is organised around three connected movements of academic leadership: leading the institution with strategic clarity, transforming curriculum and learning through innovation, and building research, innovation and student capability ecosystems.

Day	Core Theme	Leadership Focus
Day 1	Strategic Institutional Leadership	Understanding the changing higher education context; developing strategic thinking; preparing institutional and departmental development plans.
Day 2	Curriculum, Digital Learning and Innovation Ecosystems	Renewing curriculum; integrating digital technology; strengthening research, innovation, incubation and teaching-learning practices.
Day 3	Leadership in Action and Student Capability	Translating leadership into practice; consolidating competency-based education; preparing commitments for institutional follow-up.

5. Day-wise Session Schedule

Day 1: Strategic Institutional Leadership

Leading institutions with vision, direction and developmental clarity. The first day focuses on the foundations of academic leadership. It helps participants understand the emerging context of higher education, develop strategic thinking and learn how to prepare institutional and departmental development plans.

Time	Session and Focus	Resource Person(s)
9.00 - 10.00 am	Inaugural Session Welcome and Dynamics of the Workshop Inaugural / Chief Guest Address	Rev. Dr. Xavier Vedom SJ General Secretary, AIACHE Chief Guest: Dr. Armstrong IAS , Ministry of Education, New Delhi
10.00 - 10.30 am Coffee Break		
10.30 am - 12.00 pm	Session 1: Setting the Context - Trends in Higher Education Today Emerging expectations in higher education; student diversity; employability; digital learning; interdisciplinarity; quality; internationalisation; social relevance; and institutional accountability.	Dr. A. John Peter Director, St. Joseph's International, St. Joseph's College, Tiruchirappalli
12.00 - 1.15 pm	Session 2: Strategic Leadership Strategic thinking; institutional priorities; environmental scanning; academic positioning; stakeholder expectations; resource alignment; and change leadership.	Dr. John Varghese Former Principal, St. Stephen's College, New Delhi
1.15 - 2.15 pm Lunch Break		
2.15 - 3.45 pm	Session 3: Developing a Strategic Institutional Development Plan for a College Institutional vision, priorities, strengths, goals, strategies, outcome indicators, timelines, monitoring systems and institutional distinctiveness.	Dr. John Varghese Former Principal, St. Stephen's College, New Delhi
3.45 - 4.15 pm Tea Break		
4.15 - 5.30 pm	Session 4: Developing a Departmental Development Plan Departmental identity; competency model; curriculum strengths; teaching-learning practices; mentoring; research priorities; student clubs; placement linkages; and signature programmes.	Dr. A. John Peter Director, St. Joseph's International, St. Joseph's College, Tiruchirappalli
5.30 - 6.00 pm Transition Break		

Time	Session and Focus	Resource Person(s)
6.00 - 7.30 pm	Session 5: Curriculum Development for the Present Higher Education Context Need for curriculum renewal; limitations of content-heavy curricula; outcome orientation; relevance; flexibility; student-centred design; and holistic formation.	Dr. Aloysius Albert Dean of Academics, St. Xavier's College, Palayamkottai

Day 2: Curriculum, Digital Learning and Innovation Ecosystems

Designing learning for competence, interdisciplinarity and future readiness.

The second day focuses on the academic core of institutional leadership: curriculum, digital transformation, research orientation, innovation ecosystems, pedagogy, learning design and assessment. It helps participants understand how academic systems can be renewed to form students who are competent, thoughtful, ethical, employable and socially responsible.

Time	Session and Focus	Resource Person(s)
9.00 - 10.30 am	Session 6: Digital Transformation in Teaching, Learning and Research Purposeful integration of digital technology in curriculum delivery, learner engagement, blended learning, learning resources, academic documentation, research support, data use and responsible digital practice.	Dr. Aloysius Albert Dean of Academics, St. Xavier's College, Palayamkottai
10.30 - 11.00 am Coffee Break		
11.00 am - 12.15 pm	Session 7: Innovation, Incubation and Entrepreneurship Ecosystems Incubation cells; start-up support; student innovation labs; industry and alumni linkages; intellectual property awareness; social innovation; and context-specific models of institutional innovation.	Dr. Paul Wilson Principal and Secretary, Madras Christian College, Chennai
12.20 - 1.30 pm	Session 8: Building a Research Culture in Higher Education Institutions Faculty and student research; interdisciplinary research clusters; research mentoring; publications; funded projects; consultancy; research ethics; and institutional support mechanisms.	Dr. Sandra Joseph Senior Consultant, Program and Assessment Officer, United Board
1.30 - 2.30 pm Lunch Break		
2.30 - 3.45 pm	Session 9: Innovation in Teaching, Learning and Assessment Experiential, active, collaborative, blended, case-based, problem-based and reflective learning; rubrics; portfolios; projects; presentations; field assignments; feedback systems; and assessment for deeper learning.	Dr. Paul Wilson Principal and Secretary, Madras Christian College, Chennai
3.45 - 4.15 pm Tea Break		
4.15 - 5.30 pm	Panel Discussion: From Curriculum Reform to Student Formation A synthesis conversation on how curriculum reform, digital learning, research culture, innovation and assessment can lead to actual student transformation.	

Day 3: Leadership in Action and Student Capability

Consolidating academic leadership, competency and institutional commitments.

The third day consolidates the programme by connecting academic leadership with practice, student capability and institutional follow-up. It concludes with participant reflections and leadership commitments for institutional renewal.

Time	Session and Focus	Resource Person(s)
9.00 – 12.00 pm	Session 10: Student Engagement and Leadership in Action Student-Centred Learning, Student Voice and Representation, Community Engagement and Social Responsibility, Digital Engagement and Leadership, & Reflection and Continuous Growth	Dr. David Johns Senior Consultant, United Board Dr. Anita Christine Tiphagne Consultant, Program Officer for Partnerships & Alumni Network, United Board
10.30 - 11.00 am Coffee Break		
12.00 - 1.00 pm	Valediction: Leadership Commitments and Way Forward Participant reflections; key insights; institutional commitments; certificates; and closing remarks.	Dr. Pareena Gupta Lawrence President, United Board Dr. Maher Spurgeon, Consultant, Director of South Asia Programs, United Board

6. Expected Participant Outputs

By the end of the programme, each participant or institutional team will prepare a brief academic leadership action plan covering:

- one strategic institutional priority;
- one departmental development initiative;
- one curriculum, digital or learning innovation;
- one research, innovation or incubation initiative; and
- one personal academic leadership commitment.