

Our college has an NSS unit that has been operational since 1985. The regular membership is 250, and special camps allow for 125 students. The college organizes various programs every year, including celebrations of the birth and death anniversaries of great personalities. Additionally, NSS conducts programs to develop the skills of students and foster unity among them. Two coordinators oversee the planning of NSS activities in the college. Special camps are organized in January or February. During these camps, the village of Devmurti is adopted, and programs such as child marriage prevention, eradication of superstition, water management, and cleanliness are conducted in the village.”

The National Service Scheme (NSS) was established with the aim of instilling social awareness in college students and fostering their overall personality development. To integrate the values of self-reliance, character building, and social responsibility into the new education system, NSS was launched on the occasion of Mahatma Gandhi’s centenary year on 24th September 1969. It is implemented for college students under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India. In Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, NSS operates effectively across four districts, involving 36,400 volunteers, 375 program officers, and 221 colleges.

History:

The concept of starting NSS is attributed to Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. In the post-independence period, it was believed that young people, especially college and university students, should contribute to constructive activities for the service of the nation. Since India is a country of villages, efforts were made to ensure that rural people could benefit from the fruits of independence. In January 1950, Dr. Radhakrishnan, the then-chairman of the University Commission, organized a meeting to discuss implementing Gandhian ideals in education. Based on this, the First Five-Year Plan in 1952 proposed organizing student camps focusing on community service and physical labor. In 1958, Jawaharlal Nehru suggested a program where students should engage in community service in rural areas for nine months to a year during their graduation. At the 1959 Education Ministers’ Meeting in Delhi, a committee chaired by Dr. C.D. Deshmukh was established to prepare such a scheme. This committee made significant recommendations. In 1960, Prof. K.G. Saiyidain studied similar initiatives in other countries and presented a report titled National Service for the Youth. In 1964, the Education Reform Commission, chaired by Dr. Daulat Singh Kothari, recommended implementing plans for students to undertake community service. In 1969, a draft for NSS was prepared during a subcommittee meeting of vice-chancellors. On 24th September 1969, Dr. R.V. Rao, the then-Education Minister, officially announced the launch of NSS. This scheme was initiated

with the support of state governments to realize Mahatma Gandhi's ideals and fulfill Jawaharlal Nehru's vision. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi expressed that this scheme provided college and university students a new opportunity for community service and nation-building, similar to the National Cadet Corps (NCC). Initially, in 1969, the scheme was launched as a pilot project in 37 universities and for 40,000 students. Over time, NSS expanded. Today, in Maharashtra, more than 3,56,800 students across 36 universities actively participate in NSS. This highlights the deep connection of students in Maharashtra and across India with this scheme.

Objectives of the National Service Scheme (NSS):

The NSS was initiated with the purpose of engaging students in community service while they are pursuing their college education. It aims to involve students with the people in their surroundings, understand them, and engage in constructive activities. Through community service, it seeks to develop the personality of the students.

The main objectives are as follows:

1. To understand the community in which one works.
2. To identify the needs and problems of the community and work towards solving them, making the community more active.
3. To develop and foster a sense of social responsibility.
4. To apply one's education to solve personal or social problems and find practical solutions.
5. To develop qualities needed for mingling with society effectively.
6. To cultivate leadership qualities and democratic attitudes.
7. To reduce the gap between the literate and illiterate populations.
8. To promote and foster the idea of national integration.
9. To awaken the desire to serve the underprivileged sections of society.
10. To raise awareness about voter registration campaigns.
11. To enable oneself to be competent to understand and relate to the community.

The Badge:

A badge based on the emblem of the National Service Scheme (NSS) has been designed for volunteers. Volunteers wear this badge on their chest while performing various tasks in the community or participating in different programs. The center of the badge features a wheel with eight spokes, representing 24 hours (symbolizing 8 time periods or Ashtaprahar, which make up a day).

The badge reminds the wearer of their commitment to serving the nation round the clock. The red color in the badge symbolizes the vibrant blood of youth, representing enthusiasm and passion, and signifies vitality. The blue color represents the vastness of the sky, indicating that NSS is like a part of the infinite sky. Wearing this badge signifies that the volunteer is ready to dedicate a portion of their time to the welfare of humanity.

Motto and Emblem of NSS:

The motto of NSS is “Not Me, But You.” This emphasizes the essence of democratic living, social responsibility, and the need for selfless service. It highlights the importance of considering others’ perspectives and fostering sympathy towards fellow human beings. It also signifies that individual welfare leads to societal welfare, as society is a collective of individuals.

The emblem of NSS is inspired by the wheel of the Sun Temple at Konark, Odisha. The wheel symbolizes motion, as progress and social change are only possible through movement. NSS envisions today’s college students as the agents of social transformation, making this emblem a representation of that vision.

NSS Day:

It has been decided to observe 24th September as NSS Day every year. On this day, various programs are organized at the university and college levels, including activities like blood donation, eye donation, health camps, slum eradication, tree plantation, cleanliness drives, water conservation, etc. While celebrating NSS Day, programs should be planned keeping in mind the local needs and requirements.

Guidelines for Admission of Volunteers in the National Service Scheme (NSS):

1. Priority should be given to students who voluntarily seek admission.
2. While admitting students, preference should be given to those from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
3. A student can participate in only one scheme in an academic year, e.g., NCC/NSS/Department of Extension and Continuing Education, etc.
4. Admission should be based on the evaluation of a social work-related project submitted by the student at the college or voluntary organization level. Students who actively participate in three consecutive programs organized by the Program Officer should be given admission.
5. Priority should be given to students at the +2 level, undergraduate, and postgraduate levels who have previously participated in NSS.

6. Special preference should be given to students with disabilities (visually impaired, physically handicapped, etc.).
7. Students with qualities like introversion, lack of leadership skills, etc., should also be given priority.
8. Equal opportunities should be given to students from all academic streams.
9. Both boys and girls should be given equal opportunities.
10. Students should be socially responsible and motivated by national sentiments.
11. Students should not have any addictions and must be disciplined.
12. Minority students should be encouraged to join NSS.
13. Students above 25 years of age should not be admitted to NSS, though a relaxation of 3 years is allowed for students from backward classes.
14. It is mandatory for students admitted to NSS to participate in a seven-day residential camp.

Scheme Structure:

The NSS operates through two types of programs:

1) Regular Program:

Under this program, every volunteer in NSS is required to perform 120 hours of community service in a slum or rural area adopted by the college during the academic year. Activities under this program include:

- Preventive vaccination
- Diagnostic camps
- Village cleanliness
- Literacy campaigns
- Environmental conservation
- Promoting social harmony
- National integration
- Water conservation

And other areas related to social life.

2) Special Camp Program:

Each college organizes a seven-day residential special camp once a year in a village adopted by the institution. During these camps, programs are conducted with the cooperation of professors, volunteers, and villagers. Activities include:

- Village cleanliness

- Water conservation
- Tree plantation
- Surveys
- Repairing unpaved roads
- Constructing soak pits and simple toilets
- Health camps
- Cultural programs to raise awareness on social issues among villagers.

Implementation

1) College Level:

At the college level, one faculty member is appointed to guide every 100 volunteers participating in the NSS. This faculty member is designated as the Program Officer. Apart from their regular duties, they must undertake additional responsibilities without receiving any extra remuneration. To ensure the effective implementation of NSS activities, a college-level advisory committee is formed under the chairmanship of the college principal. This committee includes the Program Officer and social workers.

2) University Level:

To oversee and guide the implementation of NSS activities in affiliated colleges, as per the guidelines of the central and state governments, an NSS Cell is established at the university level. A faculty member from an affiliated college or university is appointed on deputation as the Program Coordinator.

3) Training:

Program Officers from colleges are provided training and orientation in social work and related subjects through institutions like the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, and the Training Center at Ahmednagar College. The central government bears the entire cost of this training, which is mandatory for all appointed Program Officers.

4) State Level:

At the state level, an NSS Cell is established in the Ministry to ensure the smooth functioning of NSS activities in colleges and universities. This cell also coordinates the implementation of government programs through NSS as per the central government guidelines. The administrative expenses (salaries, office expenses, etc.) for this cell are entirely borne by the central government. The head of this cell is designated as the State Liaison Officer. To make decisions related to NSS, a State Advisory Committee is formed

under the chairmanship of the Minister of Higher and Technical Education, comprising university vice-chancellors and secretaries from relevant departments.

Per Volunteer Annual Grant:

National Service Scheme Grant (Maharashtra Government):

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- **Regular Program:** ₹400/- per volunteer per year
- **Special Camp Program:** ₹700/- per volunteer per year

(These rates are applicable from 2022-23 onwards.) From the ₹400/- grant, ₹40/- is deducted for university-level administrative expenses. The remaining ₹360/- is allocated to the college NSS unit.

College-Level Expenditure (₹360/- Grant):

- **Program Officer Honorarium:** ₹60/- per volunteer per year
- **Administrative Expenses (Postage, Stationery, etc.):** ₹25/- per volunteer per year
- **Activity Expenses (Regular Activities):** ₹275/- per volunteer per year

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