



# Challenges for faculty management at African higher education institutions

edited by

Peter Mayer, Marc Wilde, Abebe Dinku, Jutta Fedrowitz,  
Naomi L. Shitemi, Marijke Wahlers, Frank Ziegele

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# International Deans' Course: Competence for Higher Education Management in Africa and Asia

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MARIJKE WAHLERS AND MARC WILDE

Universities are currently faced with daunting challenges. This observation holds true not only in Europe, but also in other world regions. National and international competition in the university sector continues to grow, while demands from stakeholders are high. In an increasing number of countries, higher education policies are moving from historically state-controlled systems towards systems embracing university autonomy, accountability and peer-based quality assurance.

Despite dwindling public funding, universities need to widen access to higher education and to simultaneously maintain or even enhance the quality of teaching and research. They need to sharpen their institutional profile and allow their students and researchers to be more international without giving up valuable traditions. At the same time, new management strategies, such as the performance-based allocation of funding and cost and activity accounting, need to be implemented without losing sight of the true character of institutions of higher learning.

These reform processes lead to significant changes in the job description of university leadership. Along with this newly broadened mandate come added responsibilities and higher demands from various stakeholders both from within and outside of the university. Due to increasing decentralization, this holds true not only for university presidents, but for deans of faculties and heads of departments well. Thus, university leaders at all levels of hierarchy have to show leadership and behave in a business-like manner. They have to be able to negotiate, decide, coordinate and integrate as well as allocate scarce resources and manage crises. At the same time, we must not forget that universities are “expert organizations.” They are unique and function according to specific rules and guidelines.

Effective university managers require targeted and appropriate training. Currently, researchers who at a certain point in their careers decide to take on management responsibilities have rarely been trained for their new positions. Changing university government structures therefore call for the professionalization of higher education management, e. g., through targeted training courses that focus on the improvement of management skills of university staff.

It is in this context that the International Deans' Course (IDC) has been established within the framework of the DIES program, which is jointly run by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the German Rectors' Conference (HRK). Since 2006, the IDC has been offered annually in cooperation with the University of Applied Sciences Osnabrück, the Centre for Higher Education Development (CHE), the Alexander von Humboldt-Foundation (AvH) and partner universities in Africa and Southeast Asia. The module-based course engages a group of thirty selected higher education managers, mainly vice-deans or newly appointed deans from either Southeast Asia or Africa. The course consists of three parts: a two-week in-service training program in Germany, a follow-up workshop and a final one-week seminar in the participant's home region. Higher education experts and managers from Germany as well as from the region provide hands-on knowledge in various areas of faculty management, such as university governance, strategic and operative management, financial management, leadership and quality management. Soft skills workshops and project management tools ensure the practical orientation of the training. In this regard special emphasis is placed on the development of individual reform projects, or Personal Action Plans (PAP). All IDC participants are expected to design and implement PAPs at their respective home institutions during the course. Throughout the three phases of the course, participants receive support and guidance from regional experts. Follow-up meetings provide the opportunity to improve PAPs and to learn from the experiences of other group members.

This publication provides an overview of current higher education management issues in Africa. Focusing exclusively on the first two rounds of the IDC, the collection describes the experience of different IDC participants by showcasing their PAPs. Furthermore, the articles establish that the main objectives of the course are being realized: the initiation of concrete processes of change and the ensuring of tangible results at the institutional level.

# Promoting Faculty Management in Africa: Innovation in Cooperation Between Higher Education Institutions in Africa and Germany

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JUTTA FEDROWITZ, PETER MAYER AND FRANK ZIEGELE

Successful higher education systems require successful higher education institutions. Such institutions cannot succeed without good management. Although this is true the world over, concept of good university management and how to achieve it differ. These differences might arise from variations in culture and traditions, historic experiences or from levels of development, to name just a few reasons. Regardless of these differences, there is widespread agreement that better management can help higher education institutions achieve their goals, reduce costs and frictions and increase effectiveness. The concept “good management” most conspicuously implies effective management at the top of the institution, but it also necessitates good management at the level of schools and faculties, where the most fundamental processes of teaching and research are carried out. Good management also means that managerial approaches and instruments are adapted to the culture and to academia in general. It is impossible to run a university like a private company; however, it is not only possible, but also necessary to transform the management tools developed in the private sector and apply them appropriately to management in higher education.

Once the importance of good management is recognized and accepted, there is a need to identify how the concept applies to the specific duties of those who manage universities, faculties, departments or schools. This can elucidate issues and skills pertinent to such management duties. And, it is important to clarify which persons in which positions at a university need to have which skills. And, if said skills and persons are identified, it still remains to establish the right means of providing those skills.

The past decade has seen a growing recognition of the need to develop management skills in institutions of higher education, pushing against tendencies to follow the status quo. This has been equally difficult at the faculty level, but organizations have also here begun to make progress. Some organizations offer programs for deans or vice deans exclusively, others include programs for assistant deans and support staff. Some programs are merely one- or two-day workshops, others stretch over weeks or months. New study programs have been introduced. Some programs are national in nature, others incorporate international components.

Each of the organizations collectively offering the “International Deans’ Course” has substantial experience in offering training programs in higher education management. The CHE Centre for Higher Education Development offers numerous programs addressing the training needs of faculty leadership, including not only deans and vice deans, but also those at supporting levels, recognizing the potential in developing new careers in higher education management, which starts at the level of “faculty manager.” The University of Applied Sciences in Osnabrück began offering an MBA-program in higher education management in 2004, successfully providing a platform for discussing key management challenges and for reflecting on national and international best practices. The German Rectors’ Conference disseminates information about new trends and organizes forums where experts on these new developments can discuss and collaborate. Such forums offer an opportunity for rectors and presidents to reflect on new challenges. Many activities specifically target the staff of higher education institutions in charge of managing important processes, such as quality management or internationalization. The DAAD provides information and best practices on internationalization and has become an exceptional resource for all institutional drivers in this realm. The Humboldt Foundation offers an impressive variety of programs for their Humboldtians. And, our international partners Addis Ababa University and Moi University are widely recognized as forward-thinking institutions ready to share their experiences in developing innovative projects with other higher education institutions around the world.

The “International Deans’ Course” therefore provides a unique opportunity for these organizations to collaborate in offering a program addressing management issues of higher education in Africa, Asia and Europe. Discussions, reflections and practical experiences of PAPs are quintessential to the program and help realize the tremendous potential of sharing information, discussing new trends and sifting through the wealth of ideas offered by participants with the goal of assessing which solutions can work, which are likely to be short-lived and which are not applicable to higher education institutions, or are applicable only in a specific context.

# The International Deans' Course in the Context of African Higher Education Management

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ABEBE DINKU AND NAOMI SHITEMI

In a communication dated October 23 2006, Christoph Hansert, then in charge of the DIES program (Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies) on behalf of the German Academic Exchange Program (DAAD), sent a communication to us, stating the following:

*.... we would like to ask you to present your analysis and points of view on being a Dean and on what skills a new Dean should have today. ... You might like to focus on the key topics of the subsequent workshop, strategic planning, staff recruitment, and organizing professional meetings and reflect on a Dean's role between academics and university management. You might want to explain how a Dean sometimes needs to look for unconventional strategies to form alliances to circumvent political barriers and focus on what a new Dean today should have learned before he/she starts acting – or reflect on any other topic which you see as key on explaining your serving as Dean. The presentation should not be theoretical but a reflective analysis of your personal experience. ... We would highly appreciate you presenting your experience as a Dean during our joint curriculum development workshop. We would like to learn about your reflection what skills a new Dean should have acquired before entering his job and what you personally had to learn the hard way on the job and would like to have included in a special training course for new and prospective deans. We would appreciate your comments on adequate curriculum and learning methods of such a course, on who should be the instructors, where the course should take place, how to select excellent participants, how to share costs, how to organize quality monitoring of the course and how to integrate universities of your region and participants as actively as possible in such a new project ....*

Through this mail, the vision of a still-in-hatchery-project, the International Deans' Course (IDC), was introduced to us. In response, we did indeed make our presen-

tations to the DAAD and the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), who are jointly coordinating the DIES program, as well as to the working group targeting the development of the new program. The presentations at the two day workshop, under the moderation of Frank Ziegele (Centre for Higher Education Development, CHE), were based on personal and institutional experiences. The discussion that ensued formed the backbone of what we now have as the IDC platform, an innovative, hands-on initiative that targets the training of faculty deans, and which prides a number of alumni to date.

The faculty dean's position has evolved over the years to take on complex and challenging dimensions. The shift from ivory tower to entrepreneurial characteristics among the institutions of higher education challenges the identity and role of the dean. Current trends in higher education have steadily shifted from the ivory tower university to an open and collaborating university, in which entrepreneurship continues to emerge as one of the basic goals, while doors open to stakeholders and competitor challenges. The trends have shifted even more towards an appreciation of benchmarks, partnerships, collaborations and shared experiences, in which are expectations of mutual benefit, equal participation and contribution to common agendas by participating institutions. Institutional management also continues to evolve, taking on new shapes and demands such that capacity building becomes inevitable; hence further relevance of the IDC initiative.

While discussing aspects of "Revitalizing Higher Education in Africa," Stamenka Uvalić-Trumbić, (2008)<sup>1</sup> poses the following questions:

- i. Is higher education today a driver for sustainable development in the national and international context?
- ii. Does it induce change and progress in society and act as one of the key factors for building knowledge-based societies?
- iii. What are the most significant trends that will shape the new higher education and research spaces?
- iv. How are learners and learning changing, and what are the new challenges for "quality?"

Note that these questions do not directly address the management aspects of higher education that the International Deans' Course address. Furthermore, contemporary trends and global convergences, in which are to be found shared technologies, resources, partnerships, collaborations and innovations, present key building

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1 From the UNESCO Division of Higher Education in discussion of *The changing map of higher education – how will it affect the cooperation between Africa and Europe?*, at the **ACA Conference On Higher Education** in Brussels on, "From Aid to partnership" 17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> Oct. 2008

blocks that speak to what HE institutions should be seen to fulfil, and to which the IDC sufficiently responds.

The key goal of the IDC has been to build managerial capacity in deans, Vice-Deans and Heads of Department. The primary target groups are alumni of the DAAD and Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (AvH) from across Africa. So far faculties from Universities in Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Cameroon, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and South Africa have been accessed.

The IDC objectives include:

- i. To provide knowledge for participants on the fundamental changes in higher education;
- ii. To enable participants to gain insight into new thinking about management of higher education institutions in order to improve institutional performance;
- iii. To give participants practical skills to respond to change in higher education in their own working places;
- iv. To build bridges between higher education institutions in Africa and Germany for contacts in teaching, research and administration;
- v. To enhance capacity building among German-trained alumni.

The IDC course takes place in a context that acknowledges and enhances skills that facilitate dealing with:

- i. Fundamental change in the higher education sector the world over;
- ii. Changes in management of higher education institutions;
- iii. Challenges facing deans in management of faculties and schools in the areas of academic, human resource and infrastructure management; research, partnerships, collaboration and income generation; and the dire need for hard and soft skills for mediation in management.

The IDC methodology is unique and highly practical. It includes three phases covering a span of nearly one year. The following steps are undertaken, each with specific methodology:

#### *Step I*

- Introduction of important concepts in higher education management
- Sensitization to new ideas and issues on forces of change
- Project Action Plans (PAPs)
- Implementation and application of PAP skills

#### *Step II*

- Regional meeting at which the following are shared:
- Experiences on higher education management

- Implementation of PAP
- Reflection on change, challenges and sharing strategies
- Public forum on HE dialogue

#### *Step III*

- Workshop for all participants
- Reflection on change processes and experiences
- Reflection on PAP implementation

#### *Step IV*

- Intra-regional and interregional networking of participants
- Alumni meetings and networks
- Initiatives among participants for networking and collaborative activities
- Contact, collaboration, partnerships and networking with Alma Mater German institutions

The IDC program, jointly coordinated by DAAD, HRK, AvH, CHE and FHOs, therefore addresses challenges that face HE in contemporary times. It is sensitive to the emerging university, hence it is assumed that deans that go through it should be better equipped to cope. Indeed, participants have confirmed that most have not only been equipped with relevant and contemporary skills, but that they have also been empowered and transformed to better cope with emerging issues from an informed standpoint that makes them competitive players in the ever changing field of faculty management. Some alumni have also consequently earned advanced appointments, adding a multiplier effect of accrued benefits.

It is our pleasure to have been part of the architectural and implementation team of the IDC program. It has immensely built our capacity through shared knowledge and experiences. The testimonies of the alumni, as illustrated by the articles herein, could not emphasize more the relevance and timeliness of the program. It is our hope that through multiplier strategies, as has been adopted by the REAL alumni network that brings together three DAAD-DIES training programs in the HE sector (UNISTAFF, IDC and UNILEAD), we shall ensure its sustainability through both adaptation and adoption, hence much more capacity enhancement in the rapidly emerging and transforming area of HE management and internationalization.

# Towards a Culture of Quality Management at SASS, Moi University: Changing lecturers' Attitudes to Student Assessment/QM

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EUNICE KARANJA KAMAARA

## Abstract

Enormous changes characterize university management in various aspects all over the world today, introducing new concepts to describe old and new approaches towards effectiveness. Among these is the concept and practice of quality management. Quality management has three components: quality control; quality assurance, and quality improvement. Quality assurance for example requires sufficient planning and development of appropriate tools, which are designed to measure performance of lecturers with regard to knowledge, skills, pedagogy and experience in teaching specific courses for quality assurance. The analysis of the data/information acquired, following the administration of assessment tools, should be targeted towards quality assurance not in a vacuum, but through the strategic development of improvement action plans, within which the best practices are appreciated and built upon, while the weaknesses are responded to with mediating/correcting initiatives. The paper, therefore, picks out the attitudinal challenges of introducing quality assurance, within an African higher education setting as a central theme. It focuses on the East Africa region as coordinated by the IUCEA, Moi University and specifically locates the dialogue within the context as experienced during the implementation of this writer's Personal Action Plan (PAP) in the School of Arts and Social Sciences (SASS), and more specifically in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Moi University. The action plan was developed in the course of the writer's participation in the International Deans' Course on Faculty Management, an initiative of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), the Center for Higher Education Development (CHE), the University of Applied Sciences Osnabrück, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (AvH) and

experts from Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya, and Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia. We demonstrate that change of attitude, which is a necessary prerequisite to accepting change, is possible in spite of specific challenges.

**Key words:** Higher education, quality management, performance, development

## Introductory Background

A defining characteristic of our contemporary times is globalization, the complex process through which the world has become a “global village,” within which ideas, services and goods are exchanged almost instantaneously from one corner to the other, without state control. In the words of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), time and space have shrunk to previously unimagined levels and national or other borders have virtually disappeared (UNDP 1999). With technological advancements facilitating improved communication, and transport services leading to reduced costs and increased effectiveness, international trade has increasingly proliferated (Krueger 2006). Dismantling of trade barriers such as trans-border control and taxes first effected under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1947, and more recently international policies such as liberalization of markets, have served to further enhance international trade.

Globalization has created a vibrant and dynamic global market, in which competition is the guiding value. Indeed, the assumption of globalization in the current information age is that competitive markets translate into better and cheaper services in different forms, thus giving consumers many choices. Theoretically, making the world a global village therefore increases accessible suppliers and consumers of goods, services and ideas, which in turn leads to innovation and effectiveness. This trend has had a major impact on various institutions, demanding that they change the way of fulfilling their tasks in terms of identity, mission, structure and methodologies. In some situations, institutions have had to change even their tasks and mission.

In the context of higher education, globalization has led to increasing interactions and interconnections between and among students, academic staff and university managers across the world. With the onset of the contemporary “information age,” and the appreciation of knowledge as a commodity referred to as “intellectual property” and its consequent recognition as legal tender, such interactions and interconnections have gained prominence. For institutions of higher learning, internationalization is the net impact of globalization. In spite of internationalization of higher education, the mandate of universities continues to be that of teaching and training, research and extension/outreach. However, the way universities carry out this man-

date has dramatically changed, exhibiting various trends. The subject of trends in higher education in the context of internationalization has been of interest to many scholars, especially from the west (see for example de Wit 2002 and Scott 1998), some categorizing the trends in terms of internal changes and external changes, while others categorize them in terms of changes in content, structure and pedagogy. Two interrelated factors are of relevance to this discussion: i) commercialization, commoditization and ‘massification’ of higher education, and ii) academic mobility. While the impact and intensity of these factors differ from one specific university situation to another, it is plausible to generally discuss them as follows:

### **Commercialization, commoditization and massification of higher education**

With the recognition of information as legal tender, universities are no longer mere repositories, disseminators and creators of knowledge but much more commercial institutions that produce and transact knowledge as a commodity. In the current knowledge-based economy, universities are increasingly running on business models so that university managers are increasingly becoming powerful managers of human resources that produce, store and disseminate knowledge. Hence, for academic staff working in various universities, it is no longer “publish or perish” but “innovate or perish.” Associated with commoditization and commercialization is ‘massification’ of higher education. As with every business, mass production is desired, for it translates to high profits. Thus, the number of students per university is very much on the increase. To support massification of higher education in the global market, diversification of academic programs in terms of structure, methodology and content is required, and of course with information technology, space is no longer an issue. In addition to the traditional programs which involve immigration outside one’s country for purposes of study, the following programs have emerged with internationalization of higher education: sandwich programs, study abroad programs and distance learning.

### **Academic mobility**

Academic mobility has always existed throughout the history of higher education and has been important especially for research and knowledge exchange. However, academic mobility has recently come to be associated with commoditization and sometimes commercialization of higher education. With technological advancements in information and transport, those who produce, package and disseminate knowledge, as well as those who consume it, increasingly move across the global knowledge market. In this context we limit ourselves to two levels of academic mobility: a) student mobility, and b) academic staff mobility. For students, mobility is guided by considerations of quality, cost and length of programs abroad. Over the years study abroad programs are increasingly of shorter and shorter duration (Hay-

ward 2000). For academic staff, mobility is exercised in a search for better environment and in of service, amongst other reasons.

As with all human trends, internationalization of higher education poses specific challenges and prospects. While some challenges are commonly experienced across the globe, others differ from context to context because, although globalization in general and internationalization of higher education in particular is theoretically understood as facilitating competitive markets, the ability and level to which individual countries and individual universities compete is not equal since it is determined by many cultural and historical factors largely related to economic and political power. For institutions of higher learning in Africa, the challenges include: i) quality assurance ii) domination of global knowledge systems by the geographical North, and, iii) brain drain, among others. In this context, we focus on the challenge of quality assurance as an aspect of quality management.

## Quality Assurance

Perhaps the greatest challenge of internationalization of higher education common to all institutions, be they in the North or the South, is quality assurance. With globally competitive markets, a lack of quality assurance translates to poor products, inefficiency, loss of clients and consequently poor business. It suffices to explain briefly how the challenge of quality assurance emerges with internationalization of higher education.

As has already been observed, among the major trends of internationalization of higher education is commoditization, massification and sometimes commercialization of education. In Kenya for example, political decisions push university managers to admit more students than the capacity of individual universities in spite of decreased government funding. Thus, some universities in East Africa are forced to seek to admit as many clients as possible, if only to meet their running costs, while others, like business enterprises, seek maximum profit. In the process, quality of education is compromised. A number of factors therefore challenge the quality of teaching:

- The teacher to student ratio rapidly decreases if the number of students in a university class increases without commensurate increase of academic staff.
- Contact between teacher and student is then greatly reduced. While information technology cannot fully replace personal contact and communication, universities with adequate technological facilities such as electronic blackboards, where students can consult with their teachers and vice versa at any time no matter where they are, may find this a minor challenge, but for universities

lacking information technology, such as those in East Africa, reduced contact between teacher and student is a major concern.

- Demand is higher than the supply of quality lecturers, leading to employment of less and less qualified staff to accommodate the huge populations of students. At Moi University for example, while the desired minimum educational qualification of a lecturer is a doctorate, many lecturers are being employed without this to meet the great demand necessitated by huge student populations. Moreover, at Moi University we have more part-time lecture now than ever before as universities seek to hire cheaper labor.
- There is decreasing motivation and commitment to excellence among academic professionals. As universities transform from being public service providers to commercial institutes, university managers are increasingly becoming more powerful than academic staff, and tensions between academic and administrative staff of universities are common. At Moi University, we have the concept and practice of 'equivalents' which defines the salary scales of administrative staff in relation to those of academic staff. With this concept, administrators with a bachelors degree share the same salary scale with full professors, by virtue of their standing in administration. In this era of internationalization of higher education, it is the university administrator rather than academic staff who, more often than not, wins. For example, in spite of accusations and threats from the University Academic Staff Union (UASU) and major efforts to do away with "equivalents," university administrators continue to be "equivalents." The result is lack of motivation among academic staff and a lot of accusations, counter-accusations, suspicion and threats between the two service providers. Since academic staff is the core service creator, disseminator, packager and in total, provider of knowledge, their occupation of peripheral positions and discouraging remunerations ultimately leads to lack of quality.
- As universities seek to attract more students, either because the government demands it or because they want to maximize profits to cater to university developmental needs, many satellite campuses and collaborating institutions are founded without commensurate hiring of academic staff. The existing staff is therefore strained to provide services in all these campuses with the help of a few part timers. At Moi University for example, over fifteen satellite campuses have been created in the last five years.

The net effect of the above discussed factors is declining quality of education. The tragedy of reducing quality of education in Africa is glaring. A clear high level manifestation of this is the high level of unemployment of university graduates. This calls for development and review of curricula to match the labor market, which implies that universities have to work closely with industries and local communities.

Yet, as these challenges take their toll, internationalization of higher education keeps its pace, demanding quality management for global competitiveness. Hence, as African universities lose on quality, more and more students opt for study abroad or for private universities, most of which are foreign-based or foreign-run. Moreover, as tuition fees in public universities constantly increase to match that of private universities, students are increasingly opting for private universities which have better flexibility, for example where there is provision for a summer semester, which allows students to complete their studies faster. To counter this, high level university managers seek to introduce quality management in their institutions. In an already tense environment, this leads to suspicions among academic staff that the administrators are out to harass, frustrate and kick some of them out of the institutions.

While the above described scenario seems to suggest a grim future for African universities, the truth is rather that there are enormous opportunities for positive change and growth. Within the East African region, within which Moi University, the focus of this paper, falls, there is the Inter-university Council for East Africa (IUCEA), whose mandate is to facilitate “...contact between the universities of East Africa, providing a forum for discussion on a wide range of academic and other matters relating to higher education, and helping maintain high and comparable academic standards ... coordinate and promote sustainable and competitive development of universities in the region by responding to the challenges facing higher education, and helping universities to contribute to meeting national and regional development needs through its various activities...” (For details see <http://iucea.org/>).

Specific to quality assurance, IUCEA is in the process of developing a Regional Quality Assurance Framework towards building and maintaining high and comparable international academic standards in the East African universities. The IUCEA has been working in this area together with the DAAD since 2006 (Mayunga, Bienefeld, Hansert 2009).

At the national level, the Commission for Higher Education in Kenya (CHE) has implemented major initiatives towards quality assurance in the country. Besides, internationalization of higher education, IUCEA avails African universities various opportunities to learn and work with HE institutions from the North on this challenge of quality management. For example, Kenyan universities can learn from Universities in Germany through publications, such as the one by Mayer and Ziegele (2009) on transformation of higher education in Germany, while such programs as the on-going International Deans’ Course, of which this writer is a proud alumnus, empower young academic managers from African universities to build up and maintain quality education in their universities for greater competitiveness.

In the proceeding session, I share a personal experience on facilitating attitudinal change among academic staff at Moi University for smooth implementation of quality assurance.

## **Sharing a Personal Story**

In 2005 Moi University embarked on the development and implementation of its current strategic plan (Moi University 2005). One of the recommendations of the plan was the merger of related academic departments with the basic objective of reducing administrative costs. Within the School of Arts and Social Sciences (SASS, previously called the School of Social Cultural and Development Studies), a reduction of twelve to eight academic departments was proposed. In line with the plan, my Department of Religious Studies was merged with that of Philosophy. As members of the staff, we debated on what was happening and speculated on what the objective of these changes were. We concluded that this was a move by university administrators to cut down on academic staff. This seemed true especially because these changes were coming soon after a wave of retrenchment of non-teaching staff in the university.

We hypothesized that in due course, certain degree programs and courses were going to be scrapped or integrated, reducing the teaching workload and consequently reducing the need for academic staff. We conspired to resist and sabotage the proposed change. At the same time that these departmental and school mergers were being proposed, information got to us that there was going to be introduction of performance contracts. Informed by our hypothesis mentioned above, we (mis)understood this to mean that performance contracting was about determining who among the academic staff performs the lowest so that they would be laid off. Indeed, before we could even sign the contracts, the idea of student assessment of staff came up. This, being a new concept for many of us, further entrenched our fears. It seemed to us that students would be used to determine who performs and who does not perform.

Given the many loopholes in relying on student assessment to determine academic staff performance, many of us began strategizing on how to resist and sabotage this change. Meanwhile, no official communication explaining the proposed changes was coming to us. Sooner than later, a series of meetings of the University Academic Staff Union (UASU) were called to deliberate on the proposed changes to university operations. I personally attended all the meetings and was vocal on the need to resist this change. UASU resolved that nobody was going to sign the performance contracts or implement student assessment and that departmental meetings would be held to resist mergers.

Meanwhile, the university management was keen to implement part of the strategic plan. It is against this background that to my shock and horror, I was appointed the head of the newly merged Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies. I found myself between a hard rock and the deep blue sea, as the university reminded heads of departments and deans that they are part of university management and therefore could not be part of UASU. Rather, they were to work closely with top university management to implement the mergers, performance contracts and other necessary changes.

Personally, even though I don't remember missing any senate meetings, I did not get clear indication of the rationale and objective for introduction of the changes, but it was clear to me that onus was on me as head of department to ensure smooth running of the new department. I took it upon myself, partly for purposes of spying for UASU, to visit some senior management offices to seek clarifications on the changes that we were being asked to implement. The officers that I consulted did not seem clear on the objectives of the change and simply pointed to it as "orders from above." In this context I understood 'above' to mean "Ministry of Higher Education."

Meanwhile, I was having a difficult time managing academic staff in my department who were out to sabotage the merger of departments. Former heads of the Department of Religious Studies and Department of Philosophy were especially uncooperative and so were members of the former Department of Philosophy who interpreted the merger and my appointment as head of department to mean that philosophy was subordinate to religious studies. I counted myself in the right position at the wrong time and contemplated resigning from the position. When I consulted with my academic mentors from other public universities in Kenya, most of them strongly urged me to keep the position and relax, as the situation would settle. One of them thankfully sent me a book on good leadership, which I literally used as a manual and treasure it to date.

While the encouragement from my mentors was very helpful, neither this nor the book on good leadership solved my problem. The reality is that every day I would go to the office to pose as a university manager while deep in my heart I knew I was with UASU in resisting and sabotaging change. For a while, I survived by playing the dualistic roles.

The turning point came when I got the privilege of participating in the International Deans' Course (IDC) organized for young academic university managers. It was in the course of this training that I came to clearly understand what the changes in my university were, where they were coming from, what they were intended for and why they were necessary. This was for this writer an eye opener on internationali-

zation of higher education. As we went through each of the modules of the IDC, my wish was that I could have all my colleagues, including UASU leadership to go through the IDC and understand that the changes in higher education were not happening in our university alone, but all over the world. As far as quality management is concerned, whether in personal, private or public life, the IDC is indisputably the most empowering experience that I have ever had.

One of the take-home assignments was to implement a Project Action Plan (PAP) that I developed in the course towards addressing some of the challenges of higher education in my university. The PAP was titled Enhancing Ownership of Change in Higher Education for Quality Assurance. In the proceeding paragraphs, I share the various components of my PAP in view of my reflection on key learning outcomes.

## Key Learning Outcomes

The following were my key learning outcomes of the International Deans' Course:

- Changes taking place in my university are not unique. There are reforms in the higher education sector all over the world.
- These changes are necessary because of the changing environment within which higher education is developing and taking place.
- With globalization driven by information technology, access to global markets for higher education is characterized by competition. For effective competition, universities within their local catchment's areas as well as internationally have to ensure that people all over the world are aware of the services that they provide, they have clear procedures on how they provide the services and that the quality of the services is high. Hence, quality management is absolutely necessary.
- Leadership in quality is necessary if all levels of universities are to be effective. This is demonstrated not just in managerial skills, but also in aspects of professional skills: accounting, presentation, conflict management, communication and conducting meetings. Social and soft skills as in interpersonal relations are also important in quality leadership. For example, it is important to 'catch' staff doing the right thing and praise them for it.
- The styles of leadership are changing from autocratic to democratic with a lot of decentralization. The adoption of Responsibility Based Management (RBM) by Moi University, for example, illustrates such change. This style gives autonomy to heads and deans, making it necessary for them to have appropriate leadership skills in all aspects.

- Things don't just work out. It is important for managers at various levels to strategically plan, implement and manage the plans.
- The process of strategic planning and management must be owned by a significant number of staff for effective implementation.

In view of these learning outcomes, I reflected on the key management challenges among academic staff in Moi University and more specifically in my department and identified the following needs:

- Poor flow of information leading to communication breakdown.
- Lack of motivation leading to lack of commitment.
- Resistance to change.
- Conflicts
- Unnecessary delays due to limiting procedures in acquisition of required equipment and services within the University. Staff then wastes a lot of time and energy 'chasing.'

The IDC was useful in addressing all these challenges, at least at the departmental and school levels, except for the challenge of unnecessary delays due to procedures in acquisition of required equipment and services within the university, which is beyond deans and heads of department.

I realized that I could address most of the above mentioned challenges without major decisions out of my personal realm as head of department within the time-frame of the IDC.

## **Personal Goal of PAP**

Between the end of the first IDC in May 2007 and February 2008, when the second part of the deans' course was due, I planned to see academic staff within the School of Arts and Social Sciences at Moi University, and more specifically within the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, appreciate and own some changes in higher education. I envisaged that this would translate into reduced conflicts, positive attitude towards performance contracting and enhanced motivation to deliver quality services in teaching, research and extension. I identified the following five indicators as measurements of my success towards this goal:

- Acceptance of the implementation of student assessment tools in the department.
- Development of personal action plans by at least 30 % of academic staff in the school.

- Appreciation of performance contracts as primary tools for personal assessment, for self improvement and realization, rather than as punitive tools for use by management.
- Increased interest in international partnerships, which translates into more planned activities and competitiveness within existing partnerships between the school and other universities within and outside Africa.
- Change focus by the University Academic Staff Union (UASU) to issues of performance, benchmarking, best practices and quality control. The agenda of UASU meetings in the next six months would indicate this.

## **Motivation Cross Check**

The above mentioned goal was important to me because my personal assessment of the situation in the School of Arts & Social Sciences at Moi University, and more specifically in my Department, is that we have high quality staff who have a lot of potential to deliver high quality services in teaching, research and extension, but they have not exploited this potential. This is essentially because they have not adapted to changes in higher education because they perceive them as unnecessary, undesirable, and forced. So they resist them. I know this because, even after my appointment as head of department, I was one of the members who saw change as unnecessary, undesirable and forced down our throats. Without the IDC, I would most probably have continued to resist change.

The attainment of this goal requires and involves change of attitude. Change of attitude is definitely the first step to changing my school and equipping it to lead the other schools at Moi University in responding to and facilitating necessary change, thus leading to improved service delivery and quality assurance. This particular objective was meaningful to me as a person and as the then head of department because I believed in the potential of our school as a leader in transforming our university into a center of excellence, especially because experience indicates that at Moi University, ‘SASS leads and others follow.’ In my endeavour to achieve the aforementioned goal, I found it necessary to identify what were likely to be sources of resistance and of support.

## **Resistance and Support**

Chief among the issues that I envisaged as likely to constrain my achievement of this goal is the very challenge of resistance to change. Being head of my department was definitely going to work against my objective, since I would be ‘othernised’ by

my colleagues to be perceived as one of the university managers out to enforce change. In other words, some people would associate my change of position from being ‘a resister of change’ to being ‘a driver of change’ with my appointment as head of department, hence conformity to the whims of management and use of this to mobilize resistance to the changes that I would be proposing.

A good compromise, which I applied, was to give up running for deanship when the time for new appointments came. Many of my colleagues were expecting me to run for this position, and, although I really desired to, I did not. I also had to give up some other personal goals to pursue this goal. For example, I had to give my personal time to casual discussions with colleagues and to UASU officials in order to lobby and advocate for desirable and necessary change. Three reasons made me compromise my ambitions:

1. The higher one is in university managerial status, the more one is associated with university management and isolated by colleagues as ‘one against us,’ rather than ‘one of us.’
2. The higher one is in management, the less available one is for pursuing personal objectives of this kind and implementing personal action plans with a bottom-up approach.
3. I had a better opportunity to influence the school by influencing the department first. There is continuity in remaining head of department at, which level I could implement my PAP.

Yet, in spite of the constraints I anticipated, I indeed got a lot of support from my department, where I had over 80% support. Within the school, I had the support of a large number of staff, who were my peers and were keen to develop themselves. Most of these consulted me on academic research, writing and publications. I had a lot of good will from colleagues in the school, and this is what I primarily used. The large number of DAAD alumni at Moi University and in our school was a great blessing that I counted on.

My approach was both ‘bottom-up’ and vice versa in order to counter the impression that university managers force undesirable change. Once people see the need for change and appreciate it, one has no need to ask them to take it up. They will, out of their own volition. I also had support from the dean and from a significant number of heads of departments. Through the ‘Committee of Heads’ meetings, I harnessed support towards positive change in the school.

Outside the school, I had the support of senior university management, who I strategically approached for technical support towards certain ends. They did not disappoint me. Outside the university I had and continue to increase my networks and

partnerships, which are helpful towards my objective. For example, through a partnership with Indiana University Purdue University, Indianapolis (IUPUI), we planned for a workshop on quality assurance at Moi University in March 2008.

Desire for professional success seemed to motivate many of my colleagues, especially young scholars in the school to listen to me and adopt my recommendations. I took time to explain the personal benefits of embracing necessary change, and it would seem that my confident expression that embracing change would ultimately lead to development of individual lives in their personal public and private lives made all the difference. Indeed, personal gain is universally the major motivation factor for most human endeavours.

But in spite of these areas of support, a well-planned strategy was important in achieving my set goal. I had developed a step-by-step strategy on how to achieve specific objectives towards my goal. Carefully reflecting on sequencing, I had defined detectable activities and milestones up to the end of January 2008 in order to be within the IDC timeframe. I identified what internal and external resources I needed that I could realistically get in time.

## **External Support and Coaching**

It is easy to give up on one's goal, especially if the constraints are beyond expectations. To ensure that I did not give up on my goal, and that I kept to my PAP, I sought and received encouragement from external expert competencies. Moreover, through e-mail communications, I shared my progress in terms of frustrations and challenges as well as successes and pleasant surprises with some of my colleagues in the IDC.

The second part of the IDC presented an opportunity to meet physically and share with colleagues. While I appreciate the enormous benefits of information technology, person-to-person communication remains for me the most effective means of communication. Of course it would have been better to meet the entire group as we were in Germany because some of the peers I bonded best with were not present at the second part of IDC, but I do appreciate that in life we do not always get what we want. Fortunately, I got the technical expertise that I needed to keep going. I wish to make special mention of two experts: Naomi Shitemi and Peter Mayer, from whom I received adequate mentorship and companionship. Fortunately, Naomi was physically available for me throughout the PAP period and others were accessible electronically. The most vivid inspirational talk that I remember from the IDC was by Peter Mayer sharing on his own challenges at FH Osnabrück and how he

faced them. I continued to draw inspiration from and implement many of the things I learned and unlearned in the first part of the IDC.

## **Assessment of the PAP**

It is important to establish whether what I planned in my PAP was achieved. Milestone A of my PAP was creation of awareness and sharing of the learning outcomes of the IDC's initial phase, especially on higher education reforms as a global phenomenon. This was achieved beyond my expectations. I effectively communicated back to the university at all levels on the IDC and its impacts. Written reports and minutes of meetings are available as university documentations of this success, while personal e-mail communications and diary notes are private documentations. The success was exceptionally felt at the departmental level. At some point, I was pleasantly surprised when members of teaching staff requested for templates of student assessment forms to implement in their various courses. By the end of the 2006/2007 academic year in August, the stage was well set for implementation of quality assurance strategies in the department.

In the second phase of my PAP, I planned to engage in various activities in order to create awareness on the necessity of change to individual faculty development. This entailed discussions with individual academic staff, UASU leadership and the offices of DVC (R&E) and DVC (P&D). These were successfully held. To my advantage, the university had at the same time embarked on the process of ISO certification with all the accompanying components of quality assurance and management. I was appointed one of the facilitators of the first ever quality assurance workshop for the senate, the decision-making organ of the university held in Kisumu, Kenya, between 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> June 2008. The objective of the workshop was to "develop quality assurance policy to govern the operations of each department and unit of Moi University" (Moi University 2008).

Milestone B was measured by receiving support of the DVC (R&E) and development of a concept paper on quality management and another on Aluka digital. Once again, this milestone was achieved beyond expectation. I not only got support of DVC (P&D) but also of DVC (R&E) towards the development of the Moi University quality assurance policy. The concept paper on Aluka digital was not achieved."

In the third phase of my PAP, I had hoped to increase awareness on the need and desirability of change and to train thirty members of academic staff on quality assurance. While most of the activities of the phase were achieved, two were not, for various reasons outside my control. The plan to have Peter Mayer give a public lecture at Moi University did not work because he was not available over the dates

we proposed. The plan to have the Association of African Universities (AAU)-QA workshop to train thirty participants in November was postponed to 2008 because of poor timing: Campaigns for 2007 national elections were at the peak.

While awareness on the need and desirability of change was greatly enhanced, the training of participants was not achieved as scheduled, but it was successfully done later in 2008. Official letters, minutes of meetings, and completed student assessment forms are available documentations of this success.

The last phase was geared towards putting SASS in the leading role to higher education reforms at Moi University with respect to quality assurance. Some of the activities of this phase were not achieved because of the unprecedented 2007/08 post election violence, which rocked Kenya. The impact of this violence pushed me to take sabbatical leave away from Kenya. Interestingly, the process continued first and foremost because members of the SASS had already owned the process, and therefore my absence was largely inconsequential. Moreover, Naomi Shitemi who was my mentor and co-partner in the implementation of my PAP, carried the process through.

Achievement of the last milestone, Milestone D, was to be marked by enhanced ownership of change in the School of Arts and Social Sciences, Moi University. Once again, this milestone has been achieved beyond expectation. As I write this, Moi University, and specifically SASS, has been piloted in QA in the East Africa region under two programs, one driven by a collaboration of DAAD and IUCEA and the other driven by three East Africa peer institutions under the coordination of a Spanish university, the German Accreditation Council, IUCEA and AAU. Service units and academic programs have been subjected to self assessment procedures and improvement action plans developed for the enhancement of quality (for details, see: <http://afriqunits.org/>).

## Conclusion

Things don't just work out. It is important for managers at various levels to strategically plan, implement and manage plans. This writer did not wake up one day and turn from being a major opponent of reforms in her university to being a driver of these reforms. It took strategic planning, implementation and management by the organizers of the IDC, operating many miles away from this writer with absolutely no knowledge by this beneficiary. Nothing illustrates this better than sharing my personal story.

In sharing this story, I present five of what I consider the major constraints to embracement of change in higher education:

- Poor flow of information/communication breakdown,
- Lack of commitment/motivation of academic staff,
- Resistance to change,
- Conflicts, and
- Unnecessary delays/procedures in acquisition of required equipment and services within the university.

While these factors are so heavily interrelated that the situation may appear complex and insurmountable, most of the challenges can be addressed easily by low level university managers like deans and heads of department with a lot of success.

The overarching challenge constraining change in many universities in East Africa, as in the case of Moi University, is poor attitude to change. This can be dramatically transformed to enthusiasm for change, as has happened in the case of Moi University. However, this requires local, national and international collaboration. The IDC which initially triggered the change in the SASS was an intentional initiative. It took various institutions to come together and strategically plan, implement and manage the course. At the local Moi University level, mentorship and companionship by Naomi Shitemi made all the difference. It is almost certain to this writer that success of the magnitude that we experience at Moi University in terms of quality assurance would not have been achieved without these collaborations.

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# Quality Management of the Postgraduate Programs in the Faculty of Management Studies at Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU) – A Case Study

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MOHAMED MENYA

## Abstract

Demeke Yeneayhu, in Peter Materu (2007) argues that “One of the major problems of African education is not as most think – universally; it is quality which is the problem. Africa needs thinkers, scientists and researchers, real educators who can potentially contribute to societal development. Most donors define African education success in terms of how many students are being graduated and how many students are in school. The quantity issue is of course one thing that should be addressed, but it shouldn’t be the whole mark of any education intervention in Africa. How an African resource could be better utilized by an African child for an African development should be the issue.” This case study shows how multifaceted improving quality can be in institutions of higher learning, with particular emphasis to Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU). The whole process of improving quality has to adopt many trigger areas that are aimed to result into quality improvement of postgraduate programs. If only one aspect is addressed, the final product cannot have the desired expectations.

**Key words:** Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), quality management

## Introduction

The DIES Project on regional quality assurance in higher education was initiated together with the Inter- University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) at the beginning of 2006 in cooperation with the German Rectors’ Conference (HRK) and the University of Oldenburg. The initial talks with the IUCEA were held during a DIES

information visit to Germany by East African rectors and vice-rectors. In mid June 2006, the first workshop was held on the introduction of quality assurance in Nairobi with about thirty participants from East Africa. The end of 2006 saw a number of national workshops held in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda with around fifteen participants each in order to plan for further cooperation and to develop a self-evaluation guide for universities (Mayunga, Bienefeld, Hansert 2009). This new perception of higher education was then to be engineered by the deans and heads of departments in universities. As dean of a faculty, the quality assurance drive triggered a keen thinking of coming up with a project to improve quality in programs. The IDC provided the platform of starting a project and implement it in the faculty.

It is against this background that a new thinking to what holders of postgraduate diplomas in public administration, human resources management, and in project planning and management, or holders of master's of public administration or business administration should be able to demonstrate. It was recognized that students were spending a long time on postgraduate studies, others were dropping off and the majority could not exhibit any sign of what is expected of a postgraduate student. Crucial to this background, it was evident that there is a need for improving both the quality and completion rates of postgraduate programs.

## **Background to the Problem**

The year 2006 saw a new phase, in which universities started to think critically about the products they produce in East Africa through a systematically planned procedure. This was a result of a number of national workshops held in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda with around fifteen participants each in order to plan the further cooperation and to develop a self-evaluation guide for universities. The primary destination for the quality assurance efforts was then directed to the deans and heads of departments to start thinking of quality of their programs. Deans were required to think critically about the inputs, processes, outputs, completion rates, dropout rates, students' employability, stakeholder involvement in curriculum development and review and many other quality assurance attributes. Although the practice of quality assurance could be traced in the faculty and the university at large, a systematic track record of all those mentioned above could not be clearly established. This triggered the need to pursue activities that would address these shortfalls, particularly the quality and completion rates of postgraduate programs in the faculty of management studies.

In the process of compiling dropout rates, it was discovered that many students either drop out or take too long to complete their respective programs. Between

2003 and 2007, over ninety students had not completed their Master of Business Administration or Master of Public Administration, the majority of whom had absconded and were discontinued (Center for Postgraduate Studies minutes 2008). It is against this background that during the IDC program skills for developing Project Action Plans became vital and lead to the development and implementation of this plan of improving quality and completion rates of postgraduate programs.

## **Objectives of the Study**

The study adopted two specific objectives:

- To develop mechanisms that will enhance the process of completion rates of postgraduate programs at Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU).
- To develop ways that will ensure quality of postgraduate programs at IUIU.

## **Methodology and Procedure**

The methodology used was predominantly questionnaires and interviews. In the initial stages, there was a lot of building consensus from various stakeholders for the need to improve both the completion rates and quality of the programs.

Various meetings were held across the university. The faculty intended to solicit support and build consensus on the way forward. These meetings included:

- Meeting the Vice Rector (Academic Affairs).
- Center for Postgraduate Studies where all postgraduate students are housed.
- Faculty members through the faculty board.
- Heads of departments.
- Librarian as it involves changing reading materials for the students.
- Student representatives.

These meetings ensured that findings and recommendations would have the mandate of all stakeholders. Then, between 29<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> October 2009, a draft report was presented at the regional conference in Nairobi/Kenya to generate more ideas.

## **How is Quality Managed for the Postgraduate Programs at the Faculty**

The handbook “A Road map to Quality” (volume 1), which has been jointly developed in the initiative of IUCEA and DAAD, suggests that quality runs from the inputs, process and output. As such it was perceived that to improve quality of the postgraduate programs, a combination of many factors need to be highlighted in

order to guarantee this needed shift. The following actions were agreed upon to improve the quality of the programs and student completion rates.

## **Admission Requirements**

**Input** – The admission requirements have been a bachelor’s degree, lower second, upper second and first class in any field. This has, however, proved a problem to those with no business background since many courses would require a certain level of experience. The new admission requirements will have a requirement of business or public administration knowledge to be admitted to the master’s program. In a case where one does not possess this qualification, he/she is required to start with a postgraduate diploma in either business administration or public administration. It is hoped that this would ensure that all those admitted have knowledge enough to master in business or public administration. This caters for the input level.

## **Admitted Number of Students**

**Input** – These programs are seen as money generating for the faculties and so numbers are always welcome at the expense of quality. Previously, each of the two master’s programs would attract forty-five to fifty students each year. It is equally known by universities and regulatory agencies in Uganda and East Africa that getting the right number of professors or PhD holders in the field of business in the region is not easy. To effectively supervise these numbers cannot be possible, a possible explanation to the delayed completion because the existing professors would be overloaded. It is now agreed in IUIU that the maximum number to be admitted for either degree will be thirty students, and each professor will be allowed a maximum of five students to supervise. The belief by the IUIU Research Committee is that these will be adequately taken care of to ensure that many complete and also that the student teacher ratio is acceptable.

## **Teaching Staff**

**Input** – Deliberate attempt to attract high quality staff to the faculty through offering incentives that attracts the best instructors. This is done through staff development of the existing lecturers to advance to higher levels, short courses to improve their teaching abilities and attracting those from outside the university.

## Teaching Process

**Process** – This is the complete shift from the traditional teaching methods, i. e., black board and reading notes, therefore teacher centered. In this method, the teacher is all-knowing and the students look to him/her to unleash knowledge for them to consume. This was done without considering that some of these students have already attained enough working experience and that sharing of knowledge would have therefore worked magic. The teaching procedure henceforth will be using cases, seminars, placements, discussions, field trips, visiting lecturers and discussions provided by renowned businessmen within the business environment. These will give a better hands-on learning experience to improve on the quality of the graduates of the faculty.

## Establishment of the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee

**Process** – All vetting activities and guidance of the students should be in the hands of a team of experienced lecturers for better results. This committee is charged with two major activities:

- Convene graduate seminars for the students at the stage when students develop their research topics before being allocated supervisors.
- Conduct mini-defences of the already prepared research proposals. At this level the belief is that as a student proceeds to the field, his topic should have been sanctioned by the committee and any outcome of the research cannot be very far from the expected by the faculty.

With this committee in place, cases of students failing the viva voce due to wrong or unresearchable topics would be minimized.

## Compilation of all Research Topics Ever Done in the Faculty

**Process** – Before this endeavour, there was no trace of any organized database where one would find all the areas already researched, whereby duplication or reproducing the same work could be quite easy. As of now, all this work has been compiled and deposited in the library and the faculty for students to view.

## Tracking the Performance of Students and Supervisors While on Research

**Process** – This is intended to counteract a less-committed student or less-committed or overloaded supervisor. Grievances between students and supervisors would

emerge about one failing the other due to non-appearance. At the moment, both the students and their supervisors have to give a monthly progress report to account for time spent, and in cases where one is dissatisfied with the other, a change of supervisor or student is possible based on these reports. This has proved beneficial, as the completion rate has dramatically improved.

## **Penalties for Delayed Completion**

**Process** – It was realized that a delayed student still consumes the time of the supervisor and may deny him an opportunity of being allocated another set of students or deny other students being allocated to that particular supervisor. As such, when a student delays on the program, but is still in the mandated time for graduation, he/she pays fifty percent of the tuition plus annual registration to remain a fully registered student. The cost is prohibitive but it has helped on the delay caused by problems of commitment.

## **Curriculum Review**

**Process** – This is the final bit that was deemed as central, and others merely rotate around it. This is the content that is given to the students to ensure that what they receive is worth the money and time spent while studying with a particular institution. The curriculum was reviewed in 2009 and it has made work more practical and trying to answer the business environment needs.

## **Conclusion**

The evidence reviewed in this paper shows that achieving low-quality postgraduate management often result from low expectations and students backgrounds, this is therefore catastrophic to the students and the universities. Indeed, as we have seen, expectations of students can be quite high and academic programs can be a positive experience for many students. Furthermore, taking postgraduate studies can suffice for some groups, however, policies about postgraduate studies assume the opposite.

At this stage, most studies recommend the policies should be redirected towards support for the postgraduate students. This is indeed one aspect of the faculty of management's original twin track strategy of 'better preservation' and 'better support,' where the latter is identified as helping postgraduate students into education, training and employment. However, as we have seen, critics claim that 'the better support' component of the postgraduate program strategy is underplayed. But, pol-

icy reformulation needs to go beyond a restoration of balance between these two policy arms. Rather, there needs to be a refocus on the value of postgraduate study in and of itself, both with regards to taught and research elements. For the students, this might focus on the positive experience of becoming a postgraduate student at IUIU or on students' prowess and resilience.

Education and employment of postgraduate students should be recognized as a component of 'better support' rather than individualized rational planning, where students are seen as obstacles.

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# Quality Management in Curriculum Development and Delivery in African Universities: A Case Study of Moi University, Kenya

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G. J. CHESEREK

## Abstract

Institutions of higher learning have been faced with many challenges arising from increased student enrolment, liberalization of education system and globalization of education in general. As a result of these pressures, universities have been challenged to maintain quality in curriculum development and delivery. This paper discusses how Moi University has risen above these challenges to maintain quality in curriculum development and delivery, in which areas Moi University has developed quality assurance principles. The institution is among top universities in Kenya offering quality teaching, research and community outreach.

**Key words:** Quality teaching, course evaluation, higher education institution.

## Introduction

Quality means different things to different people and is relative to processes or outcomes. Quality is a complex concept, and quality in higher education is especially ambiguous and sometimes even confusing. However, it is generally accepted that quality in higher education is perceived as consisting of a synthesis of conformity, adaptability and continuous improvement. Quality is a synthesis of a range of expectations for many stakeholders. Students may focus on facilities provided and perceived usefulness of their education for future employment. Academic staff may pay attention to the teaching-learning process. Management may give importance to achieving an institution's goals and objectives, whereas parents may consider the education achievement of their children. Employers may consider the competence

of the graduates, and government may be interested in achieving education goals for its youth (Commission for Higher Education, 2008).

Quality is seen as adding value. This concept focuses on the students and value added to them during education and training (ibid.). The process begins with formulating learning outcomes and ends with realizing the outcomes of graduates. The basic question is ‘what has the student learned?’ An institution that enables a student to enhance his/her knowledge, competence and employability is seen as successful in its efforts and therefore in generating quality education and training.

Quality is also seen as value for money. This concept focuses on efficiency and effectiveness of a program by measuring outputs against inputs. Something is considered to have quality when it meets the expectations of the consumers in relation to the amount they pay for it. Quality therefore corresponds to the satisfaction of the customers.

Curriculum is an organized program of study for a given degree, diploma or certificate award, incorporating all matters such as academic staff requirements, duration of academic program, admission requirements, content requirements and assessment process requirements. In this paper we discuss programs of study leading to an award of university degree. We will specifically discuss curriculum development, review and delivery at Moi University.

In Kenya, the process of quality assurance in curriculum development involves evaluation of an academic program to ensure it meets standards set by CHE. To achieve quality in curriculum, it is important to assess supporting academic resources (physical, academic, equipment, learning materials, texts and journals). The accreditation of university curricula is done by CHE for private universities, whereas chartered public universities develop and approve their curricula through established systems.

The mandate for quality assurance in higher education programs lies with Kenya’s Commission of Higher Education. This Commission undertakes the role of external quality evaluation, which includes reviewing, measuring and judging the institution. The commission evaluates the institutions’ education processes, practices, programs and services. A university will conduct internal quality assessment and can invite peers to assess its processes, practices, programs and services. This paper is concerned with curriculum development and delivery and will thus focus only on programs and services.

## Establishment of Moi University

Moi University (MU) is the second oldest university in Kenya, established in 1984 through an Act of Parliament that recommended its establishment in a rural setup. The University is located thirty-five kilometers southeast of the town of Eldoret and 300 kilometers northwest of Nairobi. Eldoret is the fifth-largest town in Kenya with an estimated population of 800,000 people (Central Bureau of Statistics 1999). The student enrolment at Moi University is currently approximated to be 23,000 students. This is the total of 17,000 government-sponsored students and 6,000 privately-sponsored students. It is projected Moi University will have a student population of around 28,000 by 2014, taking into account current annual student growth of three percent for government-sponsored students and ten percent for privately-sponsored students (Moi University Strategic Plan 2005–2015). The university has five campuses, namely, Main, Chepkoilel, Town, Eldoret West and Annex. The university is proud of the establishment of eight satellite campuses, namely, Kitale, Nairobi, Kericho, Southern Nyanza, Odera Akang'o, Central Kenya and Coast.

## Moi University Vision and Mission

Moi University's vision is "to be the university of choice in nurturing innovation and talent in science, technology and development." The university mission is "to preserve, create and disseminate knowledge; conserve and develop scientific, technological and cultural heritage through quality teaching and research; to create conducive work and learning environment; and to work with stakeholders for the betterment of society" (Moi University 2005). Based on this vision and mission, Moi University has integrated quality into curriculum development and delivery.

The university quality policy statement is, "Moi University is committed to providing quality education and services that meet the needs of its customers and stakeholders through quality and relevant teaching, research and community service/outreach." Customers refer to students, parents and citizens, while the stakeholders are the government of Kenya through the ministry of education, the private sector, donors and other networks.

## Moi University Organizational Structure

Moi University's organizational structure is presented in Fig 1, while curriculum development and review is shown by Fig 2.

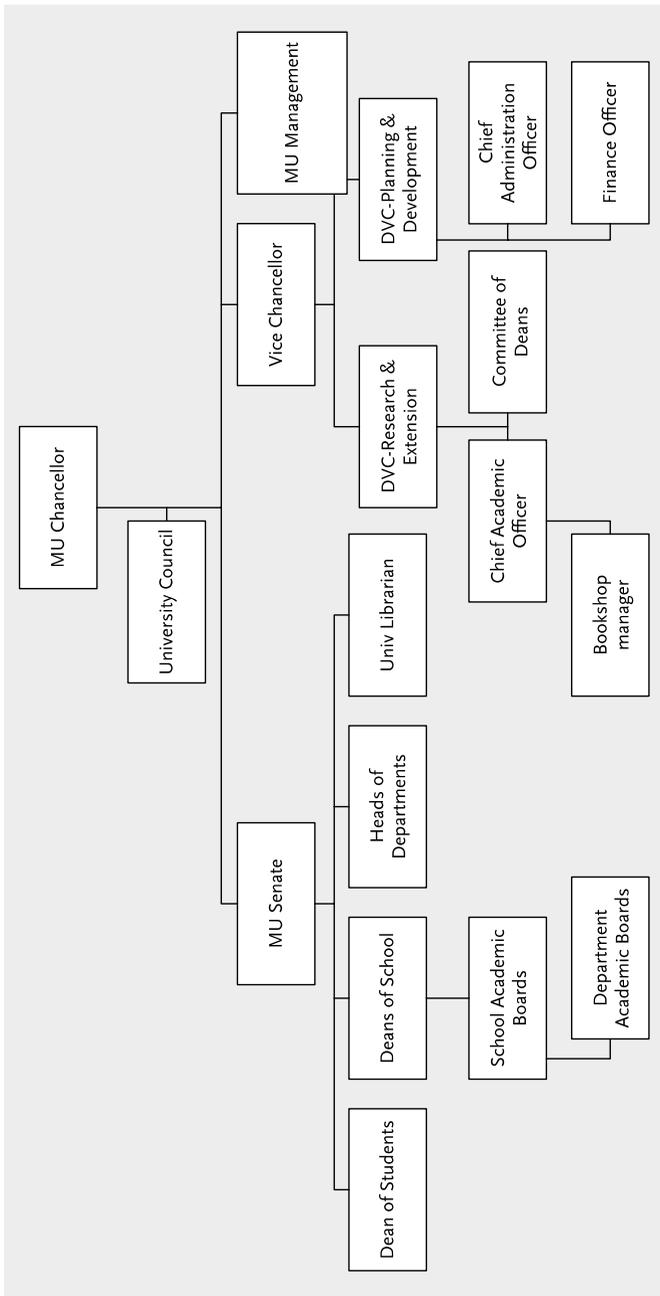
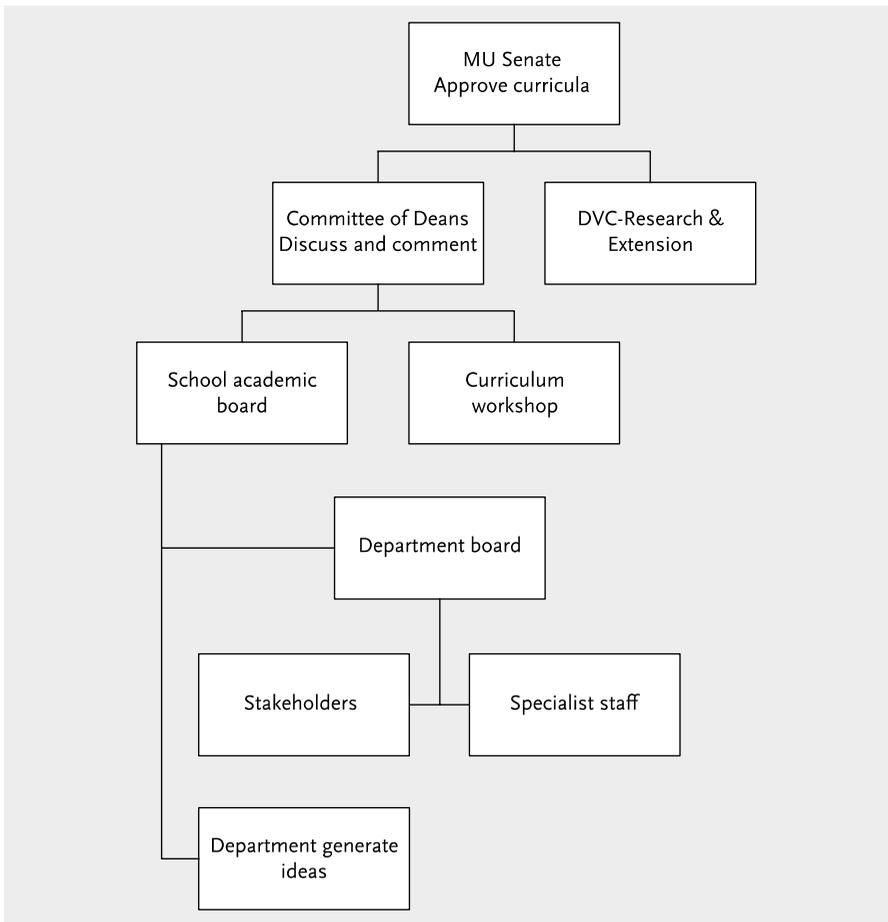


Fig. 1: Moi University organizational structure



**Fig. 2:** MU Curriculum development structure

The process of curriculum development begins in the individual departments and ends at the level of senate for approval. University management, the Council and the Chancellor are to show good will in terms of assisting departments to market and implement approved curriculum programs (Fig 1 and 2).

### **Moi University's Academic Programs**

The university has registered students in 121 academic programs shared among fifteen schools, namely, agriculture, engineering, education, arts, environmental,

business, science, natural resources, medicine, public health, dentistry, law, information and human resources. The 121 programs offered are comprised of forty undergraduate programs, fifty-three master's programs, twenty-three doctoral programs and five post-graduate diplomas. Eighty percent of the students are enrolled for undergraduate and twenty percent at post-graduate levels.

## **Curriculum Development and Review at Moi University**

### **Curriculum Development and Review at Department Level**

Moi University's statutes vest the development and delivery of curriculum in academic departments lead by heads of department (HoD). However, the chief academic officer is responsible for ensuring that curriculum development and review is carried out in accordance with university regulations. Quality management in curriculum development at the department level requires qualified staff to develop curricula relevant to current community needs and problems, keep in mind requirements of the Kenyan government, and observe standards requisite to an internationally respected education.

According to the Inter University Council of East Africa (IUCEA 2006) and the Commission for Higher Education (CHE 2008), all academic departments need to be headed by a qualified, academically trained individual with relevant and appropriate experience in university teaching, preferably a professor or associate professor holding a PhD in the relevant field of study. He/she should preferably be employed full-time. Academic teaching staff should hold an academic qualification of at least one level above what he/she is supposed to teach/lecture. This has been implemented at Moi University, whereby diploma programs are taught by bachelor's degree graduates, undergraduate programs are taught by master's degree holders and doctorate programs are taught by senior lecturers and holders of a PhD or its equivalent.

To achieve and maintain quality in curriculum development and delivery, Moi University has encouraged academic excellence in research that enables departments to have professors, senior lecturers and several lecturers who participate in developing and reviewing curricula. The curriculum development at the university is divided into diploma, graduate and postgraduate programs. This paper will only consider curriculum development processes for graduate and post-graduate degree programs.

In order to work in line with the globally accepted definition of quality in curriculum development ('satisfaction of the customer/client'), Moi University has involved its

customers and stakeholders when developing academic programs. This has enhanced the 'fitness-for-purpose' in the curricula, thus resulting in the meeting of customers' needs. At Moi University, quality corresponds to the satisfaction of the customers which is evidenced in high numbers of applications to the programs offered.

Curriculum development is initiated by teaching staff in departments that identify areas in need of developing a new curriculum and point out curricula that require review. They then call for department meetings to brainstorm on these needs, chaired by the HoD. The HoD identifies and tasks specialized staff (sub-committee) to initiate the process of curriculum development and review with a time frame of two months. The specialized staff collect relevant information from their colleagues, related departments, the market for and consumers of the program, relevant government ministries, industry and key experts. The sub-committee prepares a memorandum of suggested new curriculum or revisions to existing curricula. The memorandum is submitted to the HoD, who will table it in a special department academic board meeting for discussion. All university curricula must have the following items:

- Enrolment requirements
- Objectives
- Scope
- Specific courses and content
- Duration
- Mode of assessment
- Standard references
- Academic award.

The department academic board (all teaching staff) considers the proposals submitted by the sub-committee and possibly makes some revisions. The sub-committee then integrates these suggestions of the department academic board and drafts a new or revised curriculum within one month. On receipt of the draft curriculum and its amendments the HoD distributes it to academic staff in the school for further input within two weeks. On receipt of the inputs from academic staff, the HoD organizes a workshop to deliberate the draft courses and revisions. The workshop is facilitated by resource persons (who are subject specialists) from outside the department. The participants of the curriculum workshop are department academic staff, stakeholder's representatives (students, parents, industry, private sector, ministry of education and tertiary institutions,). The aim of the workshop is to improve the quality of the proposed curriculum to suit the market demand, community expectation, maintain an international standard and create awareness

among consumers. The findings of the workshop are compiled by the sub-committee and submitted to the HoD, who circulates it to department academic staff for further input. The HoD then holds a department academic board meeting to discuss the advanced draft curriculum and potentially recommend for onward transmission to the school board.

## **Curriculum Development and Review at School Level**

The HoD compiles an advanced curriculum draft and submits it to the dean for consideration by the school curriculum committee. The committee recommends amendments to the source department for consideration. The aim here is to further improve the draft curriculum in line with other existing curricula. When the school curriculum committee is satisfied, the draft is submitted for further discussion in the School board. The School academic board may propose amendments for the source department to consider. The department considers the amendments and submits the draft curriculum to the School board for review and recommendations. When the School board is satisfied with the draft curriculum and course revision, it authorizes the dean to submit the draft curriculum and review recommendations to the Chair, committee of deans (DVC- Research and extension).

The chair of the committee of deans tables the proposed curriculum and course revision at the committee of deans for discussion. The deans' committee may propose amendments for the source department to consider. The department considers the amendments and resubmits the draft to the committee of deans through the dean. If the committee of deans is satisfied, it authorizes their chairperson to submit the proposed curriculum and course revision to the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) for onward presentation to University Senate for discussion.

## **Curriculum Development and Review at Senate Level**

The Chief Academic Officer, on receipt of the proposed curriculum and revisions, tables it in the University Senate for discussion within two weeks. The Senate discusses the proposed curriculum and course revision and may suggest amendments for the source department to consider. The department considers the Senate's amendments and re-submits the proposed curriculum and revisions to the Senate through CACO. If the Senate is satisfied with the draft curriculum and course revisions, the curriculum is approved and becomes a bona fide university curriculum to be run in the source department.

## Curriculum Delivery at Moi University

According to Moi University’s regulations, “The Dean is responsible for quality teaching in his/her respective school. The Head of department is responsible for the day-to-day teaching activities in his/her respective department.” This statement, quoted in the quality manual of Moi University, states clearly the role of ‘dean’ and ‘HoD’ in the management of quality teaching in the school. Since several departments make up a school, it is important to note the special role of HoD in managing quality teaching in a university. Thus, the qualification and administrative capacity of HoD is considered key to quality teaching at Moi University.

At Moi University, HoDs are appointed by the Vice Chancellor from three people recommended by the deans of each school. The three staff are normally ranked according to academic seniority, with small deviation to further gender equity. This procedure is in line with Kenyan government requirements for appointment to public office. The shortcomings associated with the appointment of HoDs is the lack of administrative training after appointment. The university normally organizes a one-day induction for the HoD, which is deemed insufficient. HoDs end up ‘learning the ropes’ of administration on the job. Each HoD serves a term of three years with the possibility of renewal. Reappointment as head will depend on one’s performance and satisfactory work in respect to managing departmental affairs.

**Tab. 1:** Time Frame for curriculum delivery in a semester at Moi University

|     | <b>Activity</b>              | <b>Responsibility</b>       | <b>Time</b>     |
|-----|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| 1.  | Course distribution          | HoD                         | 1 week          |
| 2.  | Lecturers begin              | Course lecturers            | 4 weeks         |
| 3.  | Setting of examinations      | Course lecturers            | 1 day           |
| 4.  | Department moderates exams   | HoD & course Lecturers      | 1 day           |
| 5.  | Administer CAT 1             | Course lecturers            | 1 day           |
| 6.  | Lecturers resume             | Course lecturers            | 4 weeks         |
| 7.  | Administer CAT 11            | Course lecturers            | 1 day           |
| 8.  | Lecturers resume             | Course lecturers            | 2 weeks         |
| 9.  | Administer CAT 111           | Course lecturers            | 1 day           |
| 10. | Revision                     | Students & course lecturers | 2 weeks         |
| 11. | Administer examinations      | HoD & course lecturers      | 2 weeks         |
| 12. | Course & lecturer assessment |                             | 1 day           |
| 13. |                              |                             | <b>16 weeks</b> |

## **Allocation of Courses to Teaching Staff**

Five weeks prior to the beginning of a semester, the examination coordinator circulates the proposed teaching timetable to HoDs. Each HoD will convene a department meeting to allocate courses for the semester one month prior to the beginning of the semester. All academic staff are required to be present at this department meeting. A list of staff and courses taught is generated, guided by university requirements on full-time equivalent (FTE) of each department. Where a department has a shortage of teaching staff, some internal and external applicants are considered to fill the gaps.

Each lecturer generates a course outline, a list of references, a practical manual and lecture notes, guided by the course description. This is done for all courses, and copies are submitted to the HoD for filing. At the first week of teaching, the lecturer provides students with a copy of the course outline, including the reading reference list. The course outline indicates topics to be covered, course assessment tests (CATs), practical work, group assignments, individual assignments and end of semester examination plans. The course outline provides the grading system, marks for assignments and examination, and the mode of examining. The lecturer will register all students taking the course and maintain a class attendance register throughout the semester. Late registration, of course, or continuous absence in class is reason enough to disqualify a student, based on a twenty percent rule. Thus, it is important for all registered students to attend all class activities.

## **Curriculum Delivery and Assessment**

A course lecturer is expected to deliver course content guided by the course outline and teaching timetable to the respective students for a period of fourteen weeks. A lecturer maintains a class attendance register for all course activities, which is used to analyze the percentage of attendance for the purpose of examinations. Any student who scores less than eighty percent of course activities is disqualified from taking examinations in that registered course. The lecturer will assess students' progress using CATs, under guidance of the university's examination regulations. Lecturers schedule main examinations in the first week of the second month in the semester, guided by university rules and regulations on examinations. The draft examinations are submitted to HoD for filling.

The HoD, upon collecting all examinations, will call for a department meeting to internally moderate the examinations. Within two weeks, the examinations are sent to external examiners for moderation. Within two weeks, the external examiner returns moderated questions to the HoD, who is the chief examiner in the depart-

ment. The HoD will integrate the comments of the external examiner into the examinations paper and submit them to the examination office five weeks before examination period commences.

Three weeks to the start of examinations, the school's examination coordinator will produce an examination timetable and propose names of invigilators. Two weeks to the end of semester, students will sit for university examinations. The HoD is responsible for the smooth running of the examination period. She/he will assign two examination invigilators for each examination room and one security officer. Examination papers will be collected by invigilators from the examination office thirty minutes to commencement of examination time. This process is done under strict security. At the beginning of each examination, invigilators will register candidates present (using examination card number, identification number and signature). Examinations will run for the stipulated time, after which scripts are collected for secure storage at the dean's/HoD's office. Internal examiners will collect and mark scripts within one month of sitting examinations. All examination scripts in the department will be externalized at the end of each academic year. Student results will be deliberated at a departmental meeting where the comments of the external examiner will be considered. Within two weeks of externalizing examinations, student results are forwarded to the dean for tabling in the School Board. If issues arise from student results, the School Board will appoint a sub-committee to investigate. If the School Board is satisfied with student results from departments, the School Board directs the dean to submit the same to the Chair of Senate for discussion and approval. Any issues arising from student results at the senate level will be handled by a sub-committee of the Senate. If the Senate is satisfied with the results, it approves them and the departments announce them to students.

## **Students' Course and Lecturer Assessment**

One week to the end of teaching, students will be supplied with course and lecturer evaluation forms by the school administrator. The students will assess whether the content of the course was sufficient, if it was well-presented by the lecturer and how it might be improved in future. The evaluation forms will be analyzed by quality assurance officer, and reports will be delivered to the HoDs, who will circulate them to the teaching staff. The lecturers will use summaries of the evaluation reports to improve on their mode of delivery, content of the course and reading references in the subsequent semester or academic year.

The instrument of evaluation forms is currently being challenged by the University Academic Staff Union (UASU), which has questioned the validity of the tool and

the implied consequences for non-performing teaching staff. Currently, the university management is holding talks with UASU officials on the best way to assess teaching and learning at Moi University.

## **Quality Management in Curriculum Development and Delivery**

The experiences from Moi University's case study indicate that in order to maintain quality in curriculum development and delivery, several factors need to be considered. This paper will briefly discuss some factors that promote or hinder quality.

### **Quality in Teaching Facilities**

The teaching facility (lecture room, laboratory, tutorial room and/or discussion room) should maintain standards, as stipulated in the IUCEA guidelines (2006), in order to assure quality teaching. This refers to the size of classrooms/ lecture halls and laboratories vis-a-vis the number of registered students for that course and its duration. This is because some lectures last one hour, others last three or five hours. The university has extended lecture hours from seven in the morning to about nine thirty in the evening, thus the need to improve teaching facility to be comfortable at all times. The expectation here would be that a teaching facility used for a period of three hours should be comfortable for teacher and student alike in order to facilitate learning. The lecture halls need to be fitted with equipment that fosters learning as well as makes the lecturer and students comfortable. Security for students and lecturer need be observed at all times.

### **Quality of Teaching Staff**

For individual lecturers offering courses at the university level, it is important to maintain quality in curriculum development and delivery. Globally, university lecturers and professors are often not paid commensurate to the time put into lecture preparation, delivery and assessment. As a result, staff do not fully participate in all areas of academia, such as in research and consultancies. It is important for Moi University to highlight consultancy processes and increase funds for research to motivate lecturers not only to teach, but also to participate in research and consultancy. The university needs to promote a culture of quality teaching, research and consultancy through honoraria and other rewards.

## Quality at Work Environment

In order for an employee to perform well, he/she requires a good work environment. At Moi University, lecturers lack basic work environment standards, such as office space, computers, printers, stationery and internet connectivity. This inconveniences lecturers. The university must provide these basic requirements to enable lecturers to fulfill all their tasks appropriately.

## Challenges of Quality Management at Moi University

Moi University is faced with some challenges in attaining quality curriculum development and delivery. A major challenge arises from education liberalization and expansion. The university has eight satellite campuses, and coordinating quality is difficult and requires employing extra staff to deliver curriculum. Maintaining appropriate teaching facilities while student enrolment increases is increasingly challenging. The university needs to construct more facilities (lecture rooms, laboratories and staff offices) to enhance quality curriculum delivery. The lecture rooms should be fitted with public address systems, laptops and LCDs, which allow for easy presentation of content. Finally the university is faced with inadequate teaching staff, high academic staff turn-over, a lack of incentives for highly qualified academics and competition from private universities. The University needs to come up with a quick/easy employment process for academic staff, particularly in departments with high staff turnover. Academic staffs on permanent terms of service are more stable than those on a contract basis. In order to decrease staff turnover, some incentives should be developed for highly qualified staff to improve on staff retention.

## Conclusion

Over time Moi University has continuously improved in terms of maintaining quality in curriculum development and delivery. However, more attention needs to be put on quality of lecture rooms, laboratories, university and industry networks and international linkages. The university needs to develop quick/shorter procedures for curriculum development and review. New curricula should be developed touching on current global issues, such as sustainable and affordable housing, water resources management, urban development and eco-sanitation. The institution needs to move away from a market-driven curriculum and target innovation-based curricula that will enable graduates to create employment for youth and resolve emerging global issues. Continuing education and distance learning are promising

pathways to university education, particularly when challenged by a lack accommodation space or classroom capacity. Currently in Kenya, university education is on high demand, and institutions of higher learning like Moi University need to embrace information and communication technology (ICT) in curriculum development and delivery.

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# Advocating Student Evaluation of Teachers in Higher Education in Nigeria: a pilot study

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ENO-ABASI URUA

## Abstract

Evaluation constitutes a crucial part of quality assurance work. In higher education institutions (HEIs) in Nigeria, evaluation in the pedagogical domain has usually been characterized by the traditional approach, a one-sided evaluation of students by the teachers. Over the years, research in education has shown that student evaluation of teachers improves the overall quality of teaching and learning. In this study, in addition to the current situation in higher education institutions in Nigeria, we advocate an evaluation of teachers by the students for formative purposes in order to provide a better strategic output of the educational products in HEIs in Nigeria.

**Keywords:** Assessment, evaluation, higher education in Nigeria; best practices in higher education, quality management

## Introduction

Black and William (1998b) define assessment “to broadly include all activities that students and teachers undertake to get information that can be used diagnostically to alter teaching and learning.” The word “diagnostically” is crucial to draw attention to the fact that assessment is not an end to itself. Assessment may be for formative or summative reasons. Boston (2002) defines formative assessment as “the diagnostic use of assessment to provide feedback to teachers and students over the course of instruction.” In the summative sense, it is used in formal reporting for perhaps disciplinary or promotional purposes. Evaluation, along with synonyms like assessment or appraisal, has been one instrument used in the personal and

public domains to assess work that has been done in order to attempt to determine and quantify the level of success or failure and to make improvements in the system.

As far as evaluation is concerned, the traditional approach in educational institutions, including higher education institutions, entailed teachers' formal assessment of their students, for inspectors to assess the teachers, and so on. In essence, it was the case that a "superior" had the mandate of formally assessing the "subordinate," but not the other way round. It was therefore a one-sided approach, which did not provide holistic or comprehensive insight into the teaching and learning experience. Although students have always assessed the performance of their teachers, this has always been informal, behind the scenes and not used as a definitive tool for formative or summative purposes. Prior to this time, any failure or poor performance of students/learners was rarely officially blamed on the quality of teaching, infrastructure, etc., but attributed to dullness and or lack of seriousness of the student/learner. The blame rested squarely on the learner. Current research reports showing the impact/effect of the quality of teaching, class management, class ambience or infrastructure, among others, have changed the perception and dynamics of education evaluation.

Globally, the situation has recently changed drastically such that the "subordinate" can now assess the "superordinate," in addition to what was the status quo ante! This is what we experience in modern educational institutions in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. Although this is widely practiced in the West, the traditional approach to evaluation is still predominant in many higher education institutions in Nigeria. In comparison with the USA, Canada and Germany, for instance, evaluation is a relatively new and recent development, which is still being resisted and receiving knocks in some quarters.

This study, which is based on a Project Action Plan (PAP) under the International Deans' Course (IDC) organized by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), German Rectors' Conference (HRK), the University of Applied Sciences, Osnabrück and the Centre for Higher Education Management (CHE), seeks to advocate a change in traditional evaluation approaches to a more balanced approach, with students making contributions through the evaluation of teachers, facilities and resources in their HEIs in order to optimize the learning experience.

## **Methodology**

The study adopted a survey method to obtain relevant data on, first, whether or not Student Evaluation of Teachers (SET) is practiced in Nigerian universities and how prevalent the practice is, and, secondly, on having an overview of SET practices and

the relevant assessment instruments employed in its implementation in various institutions in different parts of the world. In doing so, we sampled the situation in a few Nigerian universities in the South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria, comprising Akwa Ibom State, Bayelsa State, Cross River State, Delta State, Edo State and Rivers State. The HEIs included the University of Uyo, Uyo (Akwa Ibom State); the University of Calabar, Calabar (Cross River State) and the University of Port Harcourt, Port Harcourt (Rivers State). In addition, we obtained information on SET practices from colleagues in higher educational institutions in Ghana, Ethiopia, Germany, UK, Japan, Canada and the USA. The survey was done through e-mail correspondence, telephone interviews, face-to-face interviews and internet searches.

## Findings

Under the first objective, our survey revealed that SET was practiced in very few universities in the South-South zone of Nigeria. In fact, none of the universities used in the study practiced SET at an institutional level. However, we found that individual lecturers, based on their experiences and interactions with colleagues elsewhere, had adopted SET as part of a formative tool in the assessment of their teaching.

On the second objective, the findings showed a widespread use of SET instruments. The SET instruments varied depending on the institution and the teacher. A summary of the SET instruments captures information from the following areas:

- Personal
- Institutional (Departmental/Faculty/University)
- Covering responses from both students and evaluators
- Detailed/additional comments
- Some on clearly stated objectives, others less so

Some SET forms were short, whereas others were quite detailed.

The sectoral approach seemed to reflect the following:

- Students' responsibilities
- Course contents
- Teachers' responsibilities
- Resources
- Institutional responsibilities

Additionally, some universities have started to use online tools to implement the evaluation of courses. Overall, forms are designed to elicit information on students'

attendance and participation in the course – to qualify them to make useful evaluation. Forms are also designed to evaluate the lecturer vis-à-vis interaction with students, class management, time management and/or class ambience (friendly, hostile, etc.). The course content, reading materials, instructional materials, assignments and class work also constitute part of the evaluation.

## **Findings from Institutions in the South-South Zone**

Three tertiary institutions were investigated for the purpose of this study – the University of Port Harcourt, Port Harcourt in Rivers State; the University of Calabar, Calabar in Cross River State and the University of Uyo, Uyo in Akwa Ibom State, all in the oil-rich Niger Delta region and South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria. All three institutions had not yet embraced SET as a quality control measure institutionally. Information on SET seemed not to be widespread in two of the three universities, and there appeared to be no immediate plans for its implementation. However, striking in Nigerian universities from June 2009 to October 2009 made it difficult to do more than telephone or personal interaction with just a few lecturers. With the cessation of conflict, we plan to do a more comprehensive survey and interact with key officials and management staff of these institutions.

In one university, we found a research report of a study by staff of the Faculty of Education on the attitude of secondary school teachers towards SET practice. The study reported a negative attitude to SET regardless of gender, academic qualification and teaching experience, especially when the evaluation reports were used for summative purposes.

One of the three institutions had actually constituted a senate committee to study and make recommendations on the implementation of SET in that institution. In fact, they had prepared the SET forms and were on the verge of standardizing the instrument in three other universities in the region and beyond. The constraint on the standardization of the instrument seemed to be the lack of funding for the project. Another finding, in the same institution, was that some lecturers, at the individual level, designed SET instruments, which they administered to their students at the end of the semester for formative purposes.

## **Why SET?**

Even in western societies, our survey on SET shows that some teachers are not too enthusiastic about the practice of SET. Debates are still ongoing on the desirability of students evaluating their teachers. Those who take a more positive attitude insist

on clearly defined objectives regarding the use to which the results are put ultimately. They argue for the need to have strict controls on who should have access to the evaluation reports. We summarize the debates below.

## **Shortcomings Associated with SET**

The debates on whether or not SET should be adopted in educational institutions can be quite vociferous. Opponents of SET practice argue that SET is subject to students' biases. Students who may not like a teacher or who think the teacher is too strict or holds different views may be downgraded. This in itself, in pursuance of the argument, is a threat to academic freedom, where teachers are expected to be free to hold any view. Another criticism is that in order to receive positive ratings from students, teachers tend to "dumb down" their courses, in other words, teachers may lower the tone of their courses to enable many students to pass. Teachers with excellent communication skills and charisma but with little intellectual content tend to receive positive assessment, as opposed to those who are not imbued with such charm, also known as the Dr. Fox phenomenon. Finally, opponents question the qualification and experience of students to evaluate course content. Other concerns relate to who is responsible for collecting the data so obtained, who has access to the data, data protection and when students should participate in the evaluation. So what then is the point of SET, given the above criticisms?

## **Benefits of SET**

Those who argue in favour of SET practice make the following claims. SET is a reliable method of evaluating the performance of teachers. In addition, it is said to be a valid instrument of assessment. SET is an invaluable tool to gauge staff performance, the professional growth of the teacher (formative purposes), staff promotion, pay rise or reduction and/or discipline (summative purposes). SET is regarded as inexpensive and easy to administer; there seems to be few alternatives, and SET is considered to pass the objective test.

Other suggestions have been preferred to address the criticisms. They include:

- Capacity building programs for teachers to improve teaching and class management
- Designing questions that will likely elicit more objective indices
- Teachers to design their own questions based on how they can improve their performance

- SET to be administered more than once in a semester, perhaps in the middle of the semester and at the end
- Questions that elicit written comments instead of those that simply require “True,” “False,” “Strongly Agree,” “Agree,” “Disagree,” “Strongly Disagree,” etc.

## **Analysis – Insights and Lessons from the Study**

Given the ambivalence and controversies that trail SET implementation, it seems that it would be wise for us in Nigeria to conduct more in-depth and comprehensive studies on SET, even as we advocate the introduction of the practice into our tertiary institutions. Secondly, the importance of prior sensitization and raising the level of awareness on the part of school administrators, teachers and students cannot be over-emphasized. The intentions are to enable the stakeholders to understand the purpose of the exercise, to stress the fact that it is not meant and should not be meant for punitive reasons (but for the overall professional development of the teachers) and to advance efficiency of the institution. The advantage is that we are likely to become aware of challenging areas and to find ways of addressing them to avert sabotage and or other problems. In addition, SET should only be one of many tools employed in performance assessment; other ways suggested in the literature should be explored and adopted. Teachers should be well trained, provided with conducive work environments and should have access to or be encouraged to attend refresher courses for the enhancement of their professional career.

In Nigeria, for instance, we may wish to reflect a little on the General Studies (GST) courses offered in our universities and on the performance of the students in these courses, within the backdrop of the personnel and facilities/infrastructure available. Most general studies courses are offered for all first year students in all the faculties. This entails huge numbers in terms of student enrolment. Many students fail GST courses at the first attempt, largely because of structural problems, such as inadequate classrooms to accommodate the large student numbers, absence of public address systems, inadequate personnel, etc. If students were only to evaluate the teachers of GST courses, they would most probably grade them low. However, if the teachers, facilities and resources were to be evaluated separately, a different picture would likely emerge. The inherent structural inadequacies would be thrown up, shifting attention to other areas, not only the teacher. This provides a good example where SET results are put to formative use, once again addressing the questions of the use of the SET reports and and who has access to them. A careful consideration of the result of such a study would therefore assist in providing the needed facilities for the GST programs in our higher education institutions.

## Update

Since the regional meetings in Abuja (Nigeria) and Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), which have been carried out in the framework of the IDC, we have continued to work on the PAPs. At the Abuja and Addis Ababa meetings we learned important lessons from our colleagues in other African countries, e. g., on SET practices and procedures. We received sample SET questionnaires from Ghana and Ethiopia. From Ghana, we learned that SET had been in place for over ten years at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Ghana. And from Ethiopia, we learned that SET has also been in practice and that there are no promotions or salary increases without SET reports for lecturers and that continuous absence of SET reports thereafter attracts a warning letter, followed by a termination of appointment. This is a good example where SET reports are used for summative reasons.

Although the University of Uyo had raised a committee to consider SET, the report of this study added impetus to the process. The University of Uyo is about giving approval to the adoption of SET as part of the assessment report for the overall evaluation of academic staff.

On our part, we have sensitized colleagues within the department and introduced sample SET questionnaires to some colleagues in our department who appear to be quite enthusiastic about the practice. The Head of Department of Linguistics & Nigerian Languages has indicated interest in adopting this as a departmental policy. We believe that this will extend to other departments in the Faculty of Arts and eventually become a university-wide policy.

Just in February 2010, we concluded a two-week workshop on social science research methods for graduate students in our university. To test if SET is desirable and practicable for an inter-faculty course, we asked the participants to complete SET forms, which they willingly did with interesting results. The lecturer did not seem to mind the exercise at all. The result from that exercise revealed that the course was quite popular but also threw up areas that could be improved upon by way of provision of better facilities.

The University of Uyo is almost set to implement SET in the system as part of its quality assurance scheme. The indicators show that it is now only a matter of time before SET is implemented in the entire system.

As part of the quality measures embarked upon by the University of Uyo, promotion of university teachers will no longer be based solely on publications. The input of students taught by the lectures, based on students' assessment reports of the lecturers, will be an integral aspect of the total appraisal exercise.

## Conclusion and Future Work

From insights gained from the PAP study, it is suggested that Student Evaluation of Programs (SEP) should be introduced to underscore the idea of a more comprehensive assessment, not only targeting the teachers but the overall learning environment. The result would lead to the general improvement of the learning experience – facilities, learning resources, human resources, etc. Variables that are deficient could be addressed, through retraining in the case of human resources and through the provision of adequate teaching and learning facilities in the case of infrastructure. This is where feedback is crucial. Studies have shown that even where SET is practiced, the exercise becomes largely futile without feedback.

For instance, apart from lecture staff in education faculties in HEIs, many other faculty members do not have the requisite skills for teaching at any level, simply because they have not been trained in the basic and underlying principles and practice of education. In spite of the enormous knowledge and information at their disposal, such untrained teachers may not be equipped with the philosophy behind teaching and therefore sometimes perform poorly in information dissemination in the classroom setting. In recognition of this gap, calls have been made to provide short (in-house) courses and training on the principles and practices of education to faculty members. This issue has often been ridiculed by those faculty members in in most dire need of such training. This attitude can be changed through a conscious effort to raise the awareness of the teachers on these issues. Such in-house training would be beneficial to the teachers' overall teaching performance.

This survey shows that Student Evaluation of Teachers is already in practice in a few higher education institutions in Nigeria, such as University of Maiduguri, Maiduguri and Abia State University, Uturu, as well as in other HEIs in Africa, such as in Ghana or Ethiopia. It would be ideal in terms of quality control to introduce the evaluation of programs to all HEIs in Nigeria. This would certainly improve teaching and learning, if the results were used primarily for formative purposes. Formative assessment is used to improve the teaching and learning processes and can be fruitfully exploited both from the teachers' and students' perspective for positive gains in the classroom setting. Indeed, studies have shown that formative assessment adds significant learning gains to the learning experience (Black and William 1998a). In this paper, it is suggested that SET/SEP be introduced in HEIs in Nigeria because it is believed that if properly implemented, the results in the teaching and learning experiences of both teachers and learners would be promising.

This is a pilot study, and the findings have shown that there is substantial evidence that SET application judiciously improves higher education in Nigeria. However,

there is need for further research in the near future with a view to further improving the teaching and learning experiences.

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# Development of Strategies for Scientific Research Groups at the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

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CHARLES A. IGWE

## Abstract

The following paper describes objectives, methodologies and the main outcomes of the Project Action Plan (PAP), which has been implemented at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka during my participation at the International Deans' Course (IDC). Point of departure was the fact that no research strategy or plan was in existence at the faculty level. A strategy was therefore required to enable basic least services to be delivered to the university, as well as to national and international communities. The aim of the plan was to establish scientific research groups in the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria. As a result, and following consultations of stakeholders, a committee was formed to advise the dean on the formation of research groups, together with possible heads of those groups. They met with staff, professors and heads of department within the faculty. The committee studied written memorandums, questionnaires and oral presentations. Finally, a SWOT analysis of the faculty capabilities was done to ascertain our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and obstacles. The faculty is endowed with high-calibre man power, trained within and without the country. The committee recommended for approval – based on the internal strengths and weaknesses of the faculty – the research groups listed below, based on competence and past records. The location of the university in an area where there has been very serious environmental degradation calls for serious attention to the environment and other aspects of the ecology. Ten research areas, or groups, were identified with very senior academic staff to head them. The faculty does not claim to have all the expertise in all areas and may seek collaboration with other faculties in the university or sister universities in and outside the country.

**Keywords:** research strategy, SWOT

## Introduction

The PAP topic was chosen out of the need to create research groups based in the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Prior to this there was no research strategy or plan in existence at the faculty level so that young faculty members were finding it difficult to secure research grants from either national or international donors. A strategy is required which will enable basic least services to be delivered to the university, as well as to national and international communities. As the nation Nigeria aspires to be a leading economy by the year 2020, there is a need to match the desire with an aggressive expansion of research capabilities within both our own universities and those of other higher education systems. Also, globally, one of the ways of rating higher education systems is through the quality of research that is produced by its academic system. Njenga et al. (2008) observed, among others, that to date African higher education institutions have fared poorly on university rankings partly because of a lack of ground-breaking discoveries in sciences, including engineering and technology, and in the humanities. According to the African Union (2006), there is a need for a complete revitalization of higher education in Africa through the emergency of strong and vibrant institutions profoundly engaged in fundamental and development-oriented research, community outreach and services down to the lower levels of education. This higher education system in Africa should function in an environment of academic freedom and institutional autonomy, within an overall framework of public accountability.

The Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria (ARC 2009), in line with the national quest of guaranteeing security in the area of food production, advertised a series of agricultural research areas aimed at increased food production. There is therefore the need for the faculty to identify areas of capability and relate them to national and international demands. As a result of this, and following consultations of stakeholders (heads of departments in the faculty, senior academics, professors and the faculty board), a ten-man committee was formed to advise the dean on the formation of research groups, together with possible heads of those groups.

## Objectives

The aim of the PAP was to establish scientific research groups in the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria. The reasons for the establishment of research groups were to create scientific groups that can compete for research grants nationally and internationally and to create interdisciplinary groups aimed at solving problems. In achieving these objectives, the experiences of the past were reviewed while seeking to develop a broad-based strategy for the faculty's implementation. Finally, a guideline for pilot project testing was identified.

## Methodology of the Study

To achieve the set objectives, the dean, after some preliminary consultations with faculty stake-holders, had to appoint a ten-man committee, comprising mostly faculty members at the mid- career level, along with the faculty chairman of the University Standing Committee on Research Grants as an adviser. The faculty officer (faculty secretary acted as the secretary of the committee) was included as well. The committee was charged to come out with a working document on the implementation of the program. The committee was also requested to identify areas of food production or food security and environmental management where the faculty can impact the nation or the international community. They were also asked to identify areas of cooperation with other faculties and disciplines.

The committee spent one month on the preliminary draft of the strategies. The committee first studied the draft format of the Project Action Plan (PAP) already developed by the dean (the PAP is shown below). They called meetings of staff, professors and heads of department within the faculty. The committee studied written memorandums, questionnaires and oral presentations. Finally, a SWOT analysis of the faculty capabilities was done to ascertain our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and obstacles. This exercise helped not only in developing strategies for scientific research in the faculty, but also in enabling us to carry out an in-house quality assessment of our programs. Meanwhile, the SWOT analysis enabled the faculty to understand the usefulness of its staff and student populations in the overall competition for industry to university relationships.

## Summary of the SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis was carried out by the committee to determine the possibility of developing research groups and strategies for achieving scientific successes within the Faculty of Agriculture at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria.

### Strengths

- Availability of highly trained man-power in various areas of agricultural research
- Availability of moderately equipped laboratory for laboratory-based research
- Support from government agencies
- Existence of infrastructure

### **Weaknesses**

- Lack of commitment by staff
- Inability of staff to organize itself
- Poor reward system for staff

### **Opportunities**

- Availability of research grants for research groups
- Preference of Universities' researchers over private researchers
- Opportunities for industry to university relationships

### **Obstacles**

- Competition from other organizations
- Lack of funds to initiate certain projects
- Lack of seriousness by research group members
- Irregular energy supply

## **Research Groups in the Faculty of Agriculture, UNN**

The committee recommended for approval – based on the internal strengths and weaknesses of the faculty – the research groups listed below, based on competence and past records. The faculty is endowed with high-calibre man-power, trained both within and without the country. These faculty members have won laurels and prizes as a result of hard work in other areas of scholarship. The report noted that the university, and indeed the faculty, enjoy good will from the government and industries. This relationship should be translated into practical relationships that will benefit the staff and the university.

### **Research groups**

- Ecological
- Agricultural watershed development
- Animal improvement/breeding
- Crop improvement/breeding
- Tropical fruit development
- Poultry development
- Feed production
- Piggery research
- Value addition and post harvest processing
- Agricultural extension policy and marketing

The location of the university in an area where there has been very serious environmental degradation, due to soil erosion, landslide and flooding, calls for serious

attention to the environment and other aspects of the ecology and water shed management. The faculty does not claim to have all the expertise in all areas and may seek collaboration with other faculties in the university or sister universities in and outside the country. Also, in the event of food insecurity, as experienced in most parts of developing countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, extensive research on food production and food processing is most required if the country aspires to feed its citizens. This is where a faculty of agriculture such as ours is expected to offer leadership in terms of new findings, increased output and reduction of drudgery that is associated with agricultural productivity in Sub-Saharan Africa.

## Approval

These reports have gone through a process of approval. It is noted that the benefits of the establishment of research groups will ensure special attention from relevant sources of public funding, such as the Federal Ministry of Education and World Bank sponsored STEP-B Program and the current grants being floated by the Nigerian Agricultural Research Council Research programs. It went further to encourage other faculties within the university to initiate such programs in their respective faculties. The groups have started to make progress in the research arena of the nation’s scientific and industrial community.

## Project Action Plan (PAP)

The original plan was divided into the activities A, B, C, D and E, as shown below:

|   |
|---|
| <p><b>Activities A:</b> Preliminary discussions with faculty members on the establishment of Scientific Research Groups (SRG) within the faculty to enable members to develop research themes for securing grants.</p>  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discuss with the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academics) on the outcome of the International Deans' Course in Germany and from the PAP.</li> <li>2. Meet with select senior members of staff (professors) and relate my intentions of PAP.</li> <li>3. Call a meeting of heads of department to discuss the PAP.</li> <li>4. Task the Faculty Board to involve all academic staff in various subject areas and to carry every staff member, along with decisions of heads of department and professors.</li> </ol> |
| <p><b>Milestone A:</b> The faculty members are all informed and consensus built on the need to develop research teams, which did not previously exist in the faculty.</p>   |

**Activities B:** Development of a SWOT analysis of faculty facilities and staff.

1. Formation of a ten-man faculty committee to study the feasibility of SRG development in the faculty.
2. Collection of information by memorandum and oral discussion with the aim of producing a SWOT analysis.
3. Submission of the result of the SWOT-analysis to the dean.
4. Analysis and study of the committee report and production of a draft report for presentation to the faculty board.

**Milestone B:** Draft report on the establishment of SRG is accomplished.

**Activities C:** Release of the report on the formation of SRG and its consideration by faculty board.

1. Release of the draft report on the formation of faculty SRG.
2. Consideration of the report by a committee of heads of department in the faculty.
3. Faculty board meets for consideration of the draft report.
4. Release of the final report of SRG to faculty members.

**Milestone C:** A faculty report on the establishment of scientific research groups is published.

**Activities D:** Endorsement of the report by top university management.

1. Report sent to Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) for endorsement on behalf of the Vice Chancellor.
2. Report sent to university senate through the Senate Research grant committee.
3. Approval of the report by senate and communicated to the dean of the Faculty of Agriculture.
4. Approval circulated to all heads of department in the Faculty of Agriculture.

**Milestone D:** Report of the formation of SRG in the Faculty of Agriculture becomes a ratified university document.

**Activities E:** Formation of SRG based on the report already approved by heads of department, Faculty Board and Senate.

1. Copies of report sent to heads of department and professors that will lead research group studies and implementation.
2. Advertisement for the formation of SRG and applications solicited from groups. Terms of Reference are given.
3. Consideration of SRG application by committees of experts from the university and outside the university.
4. Release of application results and formation of SRG within departments and interdepartmental groups.

**Milestone E:** Scientific Research Groups are formed with team leaders.

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# Promotion of Graduate Studies at Laikipia University College: A Kenyan Perspective

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FELICIA ARUDO YIEKE

## Abstract

Laikipia University College is a new college, having been elevated to this status in 2009, although the campus had existed for a long time. The only programs available for a relatively long time were the bachelor's degree programs, and it was felt that there was need to enhance graduate studies, since this would be one of the things that would allow University College to grow, or even propel it to the next level by producing highly trained graduates specifically trained in various disciplines at an advanced level. The Project Action Plan (PAP) was therefore to promote graduate studies at the college. This process went through very deliberate stages and took cognizance of the fact that the development of academic programs is key for faculty and must be done according to certain rules and regulations that govern universities. By the end of the process, two MA programs were developed and are now currently in place at the University College, although the whole process was very challenging.

**Keywords:** Graduate studies, quality, faculty, MA in Applied Linguistics, MA in Kiswahili and Communication

## Introduction

Laikipia University College has 927 acres of land. It is situated fifty km from Nakuru town, which is a major town in Kenya, and eleven km from Nyahururu Town. The college was founded in 1925 as a primary school for children of the European settlers. It also served as a facility for farming. Later on, a separate school was started for African children, whose parents were working on the farm. The facility was later transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry in 1965. The college went through various phases: Thomson Falls Large Scale Farmers Training

College (1965–1979), Animal Health Industry Training Institute (1979–1988) and Laikipia Teachers College (1988–1990). In 1990, the Laikipia Teachers College was converted to a campus of Egerton University, and in 2009, the campus officially became a Constituent College of Egerton University (Kenya Gazette Notice, 2009).

With the inception of a new college, there was need to have a logo and to develop a vision, mission and core values that would guide the college in a new direction and foster development. The vision was thus identified as follows: a distinguished university of excellence in quality and outstanding scholarship for valued social transformation.

The mission of the University College was identified as providing quality and holistic training, research and outreach through innovative programs and as utilizing modern communication technology in order to foster development among communities of the world.

Consequently, the following were considered as core values:

- Passion for excellence
- Respect for professionalism
- Fostering fairness, merit and equity
- Nurturing environmental diversities

Coupled to the vision, mission and core values, various strategic objectives were identified as key to the advancement of the University College. These are as follows:

- Produce knowledgeable and competent graduates who are capable of contributing to national and international development.
- Increase research output and dissemination of knowledge for social transformation;
- Increase the networking, collaboration and number of partnerships with other institutions and organizations.
- Improve the management and governance of the University College resources and processes in dealing with its stakeholders.
- Increase the use of modern communication technology in teaching, learning, research, outreach and governance.

It is expected that the University College will be able to live up to the vision, mission, core values and meet its strategic objectives by, among other things, strengthening its academic programs and enlarging the student base.

Initially, Laikipia University College had only one faculty, the Faculty of Education. The Faculty of Humanities and Development Studies was started in the late 2008. It is expected that these two faculties will be converted into schools, and that three

more schools will be established, the School of Science and Applied Technology; the School of Law, Governance and Public Administration and the School of Tourism and Recreational Studies.

The student population grew from 600 to 1500 between the academic years 1990–1991 and 2009–2010. There are currently five degree programs: Bachelor of Commerce, Bachelor of Education (Arts), Postgraduate Diploma in Education, Master of Education (Guidance and Counselling), Master of Education (Education Management) and Master of Business Administration. In the 2010–2011 academic year, the University College will be offering additional academic programs that have already been developed in the course of this year. These are a Bachelor of Arts in Peace Education, a Bachelor of English and Communication, a Bachelor of Kiswahili and Communication, a Master of Arts in Kiswahili and Communication and a Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics. It is anticipated that the student population will increase considerably with the launch of these programs.

Laikipia University College would consequently like to be a part of the league of universities in Africa that are recognized for the quality of teaching and research that is offered. Having been appointed dean in one of the two faculties at the university, I made a resolve that I wanted to be a part of transforming the university. This is the reason why when I saw the advert on training for deans in Africa, I quickly seized the opportunity because I anticipated to eventually be equipped with the necessary skills to be able to accomplish the tasks involved in this transformation.

## **Role of Universities in Africa**

Universities play a very important national role in Africa and more than in other regions. They are potentially the most capable institutions in their countries. They are often the only national institutions with the skills, the equipment and the mandate to generate new knowledge through research, or to adapt knowledge for the solution of local problems. University roles in research, evaluation, information transfer and technology development are therefore critical to national social progress and economic growth. Under such circumstances, universities are thus key actors in national development.

Higher education and education in general was, after independence of most African countries, at the heart of all hopes of emancipation. Academia was seen as the key instrument for independence, both economically and politically, and for the renaissance of African cultures and identities. It was the place where modernization, rooted in rehabilitated history and culture, was built and planned. The ‘reconstruction’ of the continent was led by westernized elites (read ‘foreign experts’). African

states turned heavily to foreign countries as a means of access to technical competence, which was not available locally, or as a resource to support local capacity (Khelifaoui 2009). At the heart of these aspirations, the university received special attention and soon became an effervescent hotbed of work aimed at re-appropriating knowledge and history. “Through the academia, we affirm our right to think, the basis of the right to self determination” (Shivji 2005, 3). By the 1970s, African universities put themselves at the forefront of struggles against domination and social injustice and played an active role in the denunciation of ideologies aimed at “legitimizing academically, the knowledge and assumptions that supported the social order. From just about a dozen universities in the early 1960s, the number of universities had increased by about twenty-five times today, and the number of students has increased in even more significant proportions” (Khelifaoui 2009).

By the turn of the new century, the university sector faced an enormous crisis. This was a critical phase of over-crowded facilities, obsolete and inadequate equipment, deteriorating living conditions of students and teachers and emigration of much of the scientific staff, all leading to a dramatic decrease in the quality of teaching and research in most countries. Due to the importance of the universities then, the declining quality of university education in Sub-Saharan Africa and the institutional crisis which surrounds it have been the subject of considerable analysis since the 1990s. What strategies should be put into place to reverse this trend is the question that all parties interested in higher education very frequently ask.

Managing change in a globalized knowledge economy, especially within the context of higher education, is a task likely to achieve its intended objectives only when the implementation process is closely monitored (Lyonga and Endeley 2008). This brings to mind the Bologna Process, which is a major European policy that has translated to policy change in higher education in Europe. The Bologna Process (Surssock and Smidt 2010) is thus a major higher education innovation whose impact is felt worldwide and is gaining momentum in most African universities (Ouattara 1997). Efforts are being made to study what has become known as the external dimension of the Bologna Process, the implications of the Bologna Process in other parts of the world and how Kenya can benefit from this process.

## **International Deans’ Course for Africa**

The International Deans’ Course, a part of the Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies (DIES) program, recognized that action plans are important elements in project management in higher education, specifically at the faculty level. Project Action Plans (PAP) are potential roadmaps for achieving success and there are very

specific steps to be followed if one expects to succeed in one's PAP. One must be able to do a needs assessment, define the goal or objectives of one's PAP, outline the key steps to realising these objectives and then modify and review the PAP.

Once I attended the first part of the course, I reached a decision that I wanted to be part and parcel of the development and transformation of Laikipia University College, and one way to do this would be to promote graduate studies in the college. This would be my PAP.

## **The Process of Promoting Graduate Studies in LUC**

The general objective of my PAP was to develop two master's programs – a MA in Applied Linguistics and a MA in Kiswahili and Communication for the Faculty of Humanities and Development Studies. However, by the time of the IDC training in Germany, as dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Development Studies, I had already started the process of promoting graduate studies at the then Laikipia Campus of Egerton University and was still keen to accomplish this. In this respect, quite a number of activities had already been put in place.

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2009, the dean held a faculty board management meeting where she made known her intention on having new programs and the need to establish a faculty curriculum committee that would help to spearhead this process. Among these programs were the MA in Applied Linguistics and the MA in Kiswahili Studies and Communication.

On the 27<sup>th</sup> April 2009, a faculty curriculum committee was formed during the full faculty board meeting. This faculty board committee has a representative from each of the three departments in the faculty. Most of the departments already had departmental curriculum committees, which would work together with and also inform the faculty curriculum committee, especially when the curriculum of a specific department was being reviewed. In this respect, the curriculum committee from the Department of Literary and Communication Studies (Litcom) was instructed to take charge of the two MA programs (MA in Applied Linguistics and MA in Kiswahili and Communication) that the faculty wanted to launch, and also work in consultation with both the faculty curriculum committee and the dean of the faculty. The departmental curriculum committee has representation from the Kiswahili sub-department, literature sub-department, English sub-department and the communication skills sub-department. The chairperson of this department is also part of this committee, but is not the chair of the departmental curriculum committee.

It should also be noted that the staff in the English and Kiswahili sub-departments at the Laikipia campus are the same staff who teach the Master's programs in Eng-

lish, Linguistics and Kiswahili at the Njoro main campus of Egerton University since they (Njoro) lack personnel in terms of qualified staff with a PhD degree who are able to handle the same master's programs. It is these same qualified staff who are part of the departmental curriculum committee in Laikipia.

## **The role of Faculty in the Development of MA Programs**

The roles and responsibilities of college and university faculty members are closely tied to the central functions of higher education. The functions of colleges and universities are to promote inquiry and advance the sum of human knowledge, to provide general instruction to the students and to develop experts for various branches of the public service (Joughin 1969: 163–164). Correspondingly, college and university faculty members undertake research, teaching and service roles to carry out the academic work of their respective institutions. Each of these roles enables faculty members to generate and disseminate knowledge to peers, students and external audiences. The teaching, research and service roles of faculty members overlap conceptually and practically. Of the three roles of teaching, research and service, the teaching role is the most widely shared among faculty members across institutional types. The balance among teaching, research, and service, however, differs widely across institution types and by terms of the faculty member's appointment.

The teaching role of faculty members reflects their centrality in addressing the primary educational mission among colleges and universities. As faculty members teach, they disseminate and impart basic or applied knowledge to students and assist them with the learning process and application of the knowledge. The university faculty is charged with the development of new academic programs since they have the expertise necessary and their knowledge base is deemed to be current.

The Faculty Curriculum Committee proposed to have a three-day retreat to discuss and write the two MA programs. This was held from the 10<sup>th</sup> September to 13<sup>th</sup> September 2009 at the Red Court hotel in Nyeri, which is a provincial town in Kenya. The committee comprised the departmental faculty team, the chairpersons of the curriculum committees in the other two departments, the faculty administrative assistant and the dean of the faculty, who also coordinated the whole process. The committee was able to successfully develop the MA programs and complete a draft.

Once back in college, the drafts were edited and copies made by the faculty administrative assistant to be circulated to faculty staff. This was done early enough to allow members to review the drafts before the actual special faculty board meeting, which was held in early October.

At the special full faculty board meeting, the two programs were presented and discussed exhaustively. The documents were approved, with minor corrections. At the same time, the faculty fixed a date for a stakeholders meeting, which needed to be held as part of the curriculum development process. In Kenya, it is now mandatory that any new curriculum at the university be vetted by stakeholders to ensure that it will be relevant to the market. The date for the meeting was set for December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Through an appreciation of the objectives and justification of the two programs, the faculty was able to identify stakeholders that would be useful for this event. Some of the stakeholders identified included a few fourth-year students from the department of Litcom, representatives of MA students from the Njoro main Campus, a representative from Kenya Institute of Education (KIE), a representative from the Commission of Higher Education (CHE), a representative from the Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE), a representative from the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) and all academic staff from the faculty.

After the special full faculty board meeting, the curriculum team finalized the documents, incorporating the comments received from the faculty board members. The revised drafts were handed in to the dean on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2009 in preparation for the next hurdle, the stakeholders workshop.

A very successful and well attended stakeholders workshop was held on December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2009. The Registrar of Academic Affairs of Egerton University and the director of the graduate school also attended, and the insights they gave were very useful to the whole process. With minor corrections, these documents were again approved, and the faculty was allowed to take them to the next level. The curriculum team thereafter sat and incorporated the comments from the stakeholders workshop. The revised copies were brought back to the dean's office for onward transmission to the graduate school of Egerton university. This marked the achievement of milestone A, where the dean had indicated that the faculty would be fully involved in the development process and own the two programs for onward transmission to the next level. A milestone in this sense is part of the PAP management tool.

## **The Role of the Graduate School in the Development of MA Programs**

The role of the Graduate School is to promote innovation and excellence in research education. It is also supposed to coordinate all postgraduate degree programs of the University College. The programs cut across departments and schools. The Graduate School works very closely with the teaching departments to ensure that the programs offered meet the necessary standards of acceptance, both in regards to the student and to market forces outside the university. The ultimate goal of the

university through the Graduate School is to equip the postgraduate students with adequate and relevant knowledge that will allow the students to face the challenges of the highly dynamic and competitive world.

Since any new MA program at the university has to pass through the Graduate School for approval before it can be presented to the University Senate, the two MA programs were forwarded to the Graduate School on the January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2010. The Graduate School board met on the February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010. The dean presented the programs, which were consequently discussed and approved with minor corrections. The drafts were taken back to the faculty for revision with the corrections in mind. The faculty team worked on the comments and returned the programs to the Graduate School. The Graduate School Board had a meeting to ratify the revised programs and forwarded the same to the Senate in March 2010. This marked the achievement of milestone B, since the programs successfully went through the Graduate School board, were approved, and were consequently forwarded to the University Senate.

## **The Role of the University Senate in Academic Programs**

The academic senate is the governing body of a university and typically the supreme academic authority for the institution (Birnbaum 1989). It acts for and on behalf of the university in the exercise of the university's functions. It controls and manages of the affairs and concerns of the university. The Senate has therefore been seen as the voice of the faculty and the body that sets educational policy and makes academic decisions. The Senate is responsible for authorizing and approving degree programs, issuing degrees to qualifying students and honorary recipients, and for the discipline of students.

Once the programs were approved by the Graduate School, they were forwarded to the Senate, which has the overall authority on all academic programs of the University College. This was done on April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2010. However, it should be noted that review by the the Graduate School is such a rigorous process that in most cases, it will be passed through the Senate, although this is not always guaranteed. The programs were finally approved, and the faculty was allowed to advertise them. This marked the achievement of milestone C.

Advertising was done in June 2010 through all the national newspapers, and the response was positive, since there were many applicants. The faculty has admitted its first batch of students in MA Applied Linguistics and MA Kiswahili and Communication, and teaching commenced on August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

The Final Product: the MA in Applied Linguistics and MA in Kiswahili and Communication

The following is an abridged version of the two programs that have been developed by the faculty and will be offered to graduate students as part of promotion of graduate studies at Laikipia University College.

## **Master of Arts in Kiswahili and Communication**

### **Introduction**

Kiswahili continues to acquire new roles, not only as the national language of Kenya, but also as the de facto lingua franca of the East Africa region. The language is currently taught and used beyond the confines of the African continent. Consequently, it is becoming increasingly necessary to train highly erudite personnel in the language.

### **Justification**

Language is a tool for communication. Communication is a highly interactive affair. Subsequently, over and above learning a language, one also needs to be equipped with skills that will enable them use the language they have learned effectively. It is in recognition of this fact that the MA (Kiswahili & Communication) program is deliberately designed to cover elements of both language (Linguistics and Literature) and communication. It sets out to equip students with skills that are analytical, critical, practical and utilitarian at both levels; that would prepare its graduates to tackle challenges in relevant sectors of the job market, viz. media (both print and electronic); in publishing; in theatre, in drama and film; in university teaching and research; in public relations and in social work and translation.

### **Aim and Objectives**

The general objective of the M.A (Kiswahili and Communication) program is to accord students an opportunity to acquire an advanced comprehension of Kiswahili as a language and the requisite skills needed in the application of the language to various situations as need be.

The specific objectives of the program include:

- To impart a high level of expertise in the analysis of Kiswahili – at the linguistic, literary and communicative levels.
- To equip clients with skills in scientific research that would enable them collect, sieve, synthesize and analyze data in a way that ensures foolproof answers to problems.

- To give clients a strong grounding in theory of language, theory of literature and theory of communication as relates to Kiswahili.
- To arm clients with the necessary skills and expertise that would enable them tackle with confidence challenges in the various sectors that deal with matters relating to language, literature and communication.
- To enable the clients to master the language as an important tool of communication in society.

### **Admission Requirements**

- The common regulations for a master’s degree in Egerton University will apply.
- The common requirements for a master’s degree in the Faculty of Humanities and Development Studies, Laikipia University College, shall apply.
- Candidates must hold at least an Upper Class Honors BA or BEd. (Arts) with a specialization in Kiswahili or General Linguistics and English from Egerton University, or from any other University recognized by the Egerton University Senate. Those with a second class lower division, but with two years relevant work experience, may also be considered for admission.

### **Loading and Duration of Study**

The program shall offer two options of study, namely

- Coursework examination and project.
- Coursework examination and thesis.

The MA (Kiswahili and Communication) course shall cover a period of at least 18 months and not more than 36 months.

### **Course Coding**

The course code for Kiswahili and Communication is KIMS. This code is followed by three digits, with the first denoting the level of study, the second the year of study and the third the sequence of the course. An example here is KIMS 711, which represents research methods, where KIMS stands for Kiswahili and Communication Studies, 7 stands for masters degree level at the University College, the first 1 stands for the fact that the course is offered in the first year of study, and the second 1 means that it is the first course offered in that academic year.

### **Examination**

Examination regulations of Egerton University will apply.

### **Infrastructure Needs**

- 4 Seminar rooms

- 1 Language laboratory
- 1 Studio
- 1 Theatre / Hall

### **Stakeholders**

- Media (print and electronic)
- Publishers
- Translators
- Social workers
- Theatre, drama and film producers and directors
- Language scholars and researchers
- Authors

## **Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics**

### **Introduction**

Kenya is a multi-ethnic community facing substantial political and social changes. It therefore provides a most interesting context for doing advanced study in applied linguistics. This program aims to provide students with a firm theoretical grounding in applied linguistics, which will enable them to carry out research in such areas as language information science, language teaching or in areas related to the social, cultural and psychological implications of multilingualism. It also aims to develop students' intellectual and linguistic abilities, better enabling them to function as language professionals. It provides a solid foundation to pursue further postgraduate study for a PhD. The program addresses linguistic, social, historical and other factors in the development of English and other languages, fostering greater linguistic sophistication and appreciation for the richness of the English language and other languages.

### **Justification**

The Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics is designed for language educators and other professionals who wish to gain a firm theoretical grounding in applied linguistics and explore its relevance to their professional practice. The program should be able to develop students' understanding of the linguistic dimensions of cultural diversity, globalisation and social change; and develop skills in the application of linguistic theory to a range of professional practice. It integrates theory and practice.

Students will benefit from the wide range of research interests in areas such as academic and workplace literacies; first and second language development; dis-

course analysis and editing practices; cultural diversity in the workplace; language, ideology and power; critical literacies; grant writing and project planning in linguistics; literacy instruction and applied linguistics; linguistic theories and pedagogy; applied linguistics and professional practice. Students of this program should also be able to apply linguistic insights to computer application areas, such as natural language processing, machine translation, speech technology, etc. Additionally, graduates of this program should be able to pursue further education to become lecturers and professors in the various sub-disciplines of Applied Linguistics.

### **Aim and Objectives**

The main aim of the MA in Applied Linguistics is to provide students with a solid foundation in linguistic theory, linguistic analysis and application. Besides this, the course prepares linguists for careers in various areas, especially in the university sector. The program exposes students to specialized areas of linguistics, which form specific areas for research at higher levels. In addition, the graduate is exposed to techniques used in applied linguistics.

The course is designed to:

- Provide a rigorous theoretical grounding in applied linguistics relevant to the needs of language educators and other professional groups.
- Enable students to understand the basic principles of applied linguistics and apply them to their field of interest and professional practice.
- Develop students' understanding of the linguistic dimensions of cultural diversity, globalisation and social change.
- Develop skills in the application of insights of linguistic theory to a range of professional practices.
- Enable students to pursue further postgraduate study for a PhD.

### **Admission Requirements**

- The common regulation for all master's degrees in the University College shall apply.
- Candidates must hold at least a Second Class (Upper Division) Honours BA (Kiswahili / English) or BEd (Arts) of Egerton University with specialization in English / Kiswahili and General Linguistics.
- Holders of at least a Second Class (Upper Division) Honours in an undergraduate degree with specialization in English/Kiswahili, or General Linguistics and English/Kiswahili from other recognized institutions are also eligible.
- However, applicants who are holders of a Second Class (Lower Division) degree with relevant working experience or other additional qualifications may be considered for admission into the MA program.

## **Loading and Duration of Study**

- The Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics shall extend cover a period of at least 18 months and not more than 36 months.
- During the first year of study, all the candidates will take a total of eight courses, i. e., four courses in each the first and second semester. Of these, six will be compulsory and two will be elective.
- In the first year, all the candidates will be examined in all the courses they would have taken.
- In the second year of study, candidates will choose one of the following modes of study, either:
  - A: Coursework, examinations and project.
  - B: Thesis
- Candidates who opt for mode A will take three courses in the first semester of the second year. Of these, two will be compulsory and one will be an elective.
- Candidates who opt for mode A will devote the second semester of the year to project work. A project will be equivalent to 6 credit factors.
- Each course in the first year of study will be of four credit factors, while those in the second will be of 3 credit factors.
- Candidates who opt for mode B will devote the whole of the second year carrying out research, leading to the write-up of the thesis. The research topic will be on an approved area within applied linguistics.

## **Course Coding**

The courses are coded LING, which represents Linguistics. This code is followed by three digits, with the first representing the year in which the unit is offered, the second the semester in which the course is offered, and the third the sequence of the course in the category. An example here is LING 711, which represents research methods in applied linguistics, where LING stands for Applied Linguistics, 7 stands for masters degree level at the University College, the first 1 represents the semester in which the course is offered, and the second 1 represents the sequencing of the course in the category.

## **Examination**

Examination regulations of Egerton University will apply.

## Challenges of Developing Graduate Programs in Universities in Africa

Deans of faculties in most Kenyan universities are usually very busy and in most cases, despite being the administrative managers of the faculty, they are still supposed to teach at least one course every semester. This leads to deans having very loaded schedules. As a result, deans in Kenya have to learn how to multitask, if they are not already doing so. As dean of the faculty of Humanities and Development Studies, I always found that I had too many issues to handle, which were in most cases both urgent and important. There were times when I had to perform the functions of the College Principal when he had to be away, since our college has been a relatively small place. Consequently, some of my core tasks took longer to accomplish. This meant that, even though I had deadlines to meet in as far as my PAP was concerned, I sometimes had to postpone some events to a later and more convenient date.

I had arranged to have a retreat with my curriculum committee for developing and writing the programs in July 2009. This was not possible due to financial restrictions. Administration was not willing to put in a lot of money at once on the project at the time planned. However, the retreat was finally held in September 2009.

Curriculum team members had many other schedules, and so they were not able to keep deadlines. The next faculty board meeting had to therefore be delayed (from 7/8/09 to 9/10/09), since members took quite a while to produce the drafts necessary. This forced me as dean to be very actively involved in the writing of the programs and to consequently personally take over the writing of the MA Applied Linguistics degree program, working overtime.

Identification of the stakeholders and also agreeing on the kind and number of stakeholders that were needed was a bit of a challenge. However, this was eventually done, and invitations were sent out to them. There was also the problem of not being able to set a date for a stakeholders workshop due to a full university calendar and thus a consistent postponement set dates resulted, i. e., from November 6<sup>th</sup>, to November 13<sup>th</sup> and then to November 19<sup>th</sup>. This was eventually set for December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Despite the postponement of dates, stakeholders turned up in large numbers and were able to give their input in areas that they thought needed improvement. The faculty curriculum team was able to accommodate the various views as it prepared the final drafts of the programs.

The Graduate School meets only once a month and only discusses a limited number of programs at each sitting. This meant for us that it was possible for our programs to take a long time. However, I was able to lobby and use diplomacy to get the programs slotted into a tight timetable and to be discussed. A similar challenge was

present when it came to having the programs reviewed in the Senate, and delays were experienced. We had initially hoped to have some students in April 2009 begin instruction, but because of the delays in the process, the first batch of students came first in August 2010 to begin their program.

Laikipia became a University College (LUC) at the end of the year. This was a major challenge in the sense that we had to create structures that we did not initially have, and in this transition period, certain things could become quite difficult to determine, i. e., what was the role of the graduate schools, the senates and the Academic Boards for the new university colleges? We consulted the academic registrar for Egerton University, and were advised to continue using the structures that existed at the inception of this program development process, otherwise, it would have been possible to experience further delays.

In general, and despite the challenges that we went through, we were able to achieve our objectives and meet the needs of our stakeholders who were excited to have been a part of the whole process of producing MA programs. In fact, as soon as these programs were advertised, the response was very positive and we received many applications. The first class of graduate students in both programs began their classes in August 2010.

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# Departmental Manual as an Essential Tool for Effective Management of Academic Departments in Nigerian Universities

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HARUNA KUJE AYUBA

## Abstract

Most Nigerian universities have policy and faculty manuals that guide the administrative operations of said universities and faculties. Principal officers of the universities and deans of faculties therefore have hands-on manuals they can consult from time to time as they conduct affairs in the universities. Unfortunately, most departments that constitute the smallest academic units in faculties do not have manuals to guide academic heads in their operations. This paper, using the Department of Geography, University of Maiduguri as a case study, sets out the essential contents of what a departmental manual should consist of in Nigerian universities and also includes a discussion on criteria of quality assurance, tactics to approach conflict and of financial management. It provides hands-on information for newly appointed academic heads. This paper is part of my Project Action Plan (PAP), submitted to DAAD during the 3<sup>rd</sup> part of the International Deans' Course (IDC) for Africa in Ethiopia.

**Keywords:** Departmental manual, newly appointed academic head, Nigerian universities

## Introduction

Nigerian universities today face many management challenges that impinge on effective implementation of the vision and mission statements establishing such institutions. The quality of education that is imparted depends largely on the quality of leaders at various levels within the university (from the heads of departments to the principal officers) and the determination of all stakeholders in the system to

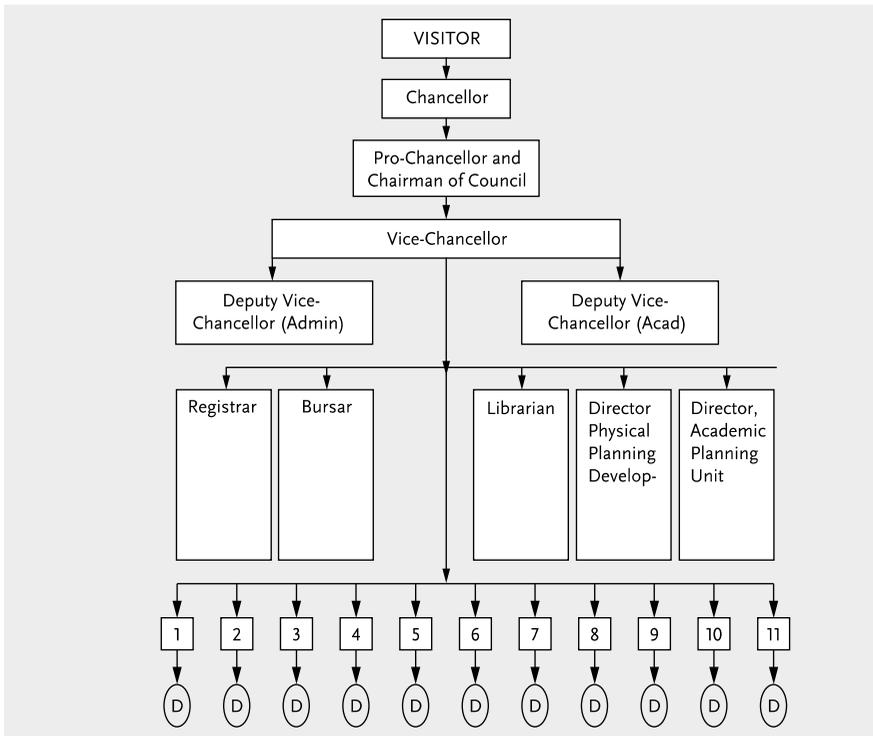
work towards actualizing the strategic goals that have been set. The question is: How does one switch from being a lecturer and researcher to a head of department without any experience or material to guide him/her in the new managerial role? Yet we hear that experience is the best teacher. Since a newly appointed head of department may not have any experience before assuming office, there is a need for a manual, to which he/she can refer, that gleans on the experiences of previous heads of department and addresses issues such as quality assurance, dealing with conflict and financial management. The focus is on the head of department because it is less likely for someone without leadership experience to be appointed dean or vice chancellor. By contrast, any academician engrossed in his own 'world' of teaching and research may be appointed as head of department. In most African universities, the roles of departmental heads are subsumed under faculty or university manuals, and usually little information is given in such manuals on the expectations of a department head.

This department head manual is designed to assist newly appointed department/unit heads who have administrative responsibilities and must ensure quality and assume budgetary duties while also dealing with complex situations involving personnel conflict. This manual is not intended to be a policy manual (for this see Koroma 2004; and Aguolu, 2004). Rather, it is intended to be a procedure manual.

## **Basic Information to Know About Your University and Your Department**

You are probably anticipating that someday the burden of headship of your department will fall on you. You don't need to panic. A handbook such as this is just what you need in order to prepare ahead of time. All that you need to know before assuming the office of departmental head is spelt out here to guide you. It is important that you know the history of your institution, the vision and mission statements and objectives of setting up the institution (and of course, that of your department!). You also need to study and understand the organizational/administrative structure of your institution, as circulars will soon flood your desk from various principal officers requiring you to do one thing or another. You must go the extra mile to meet these deadlines. So, prepare for action!

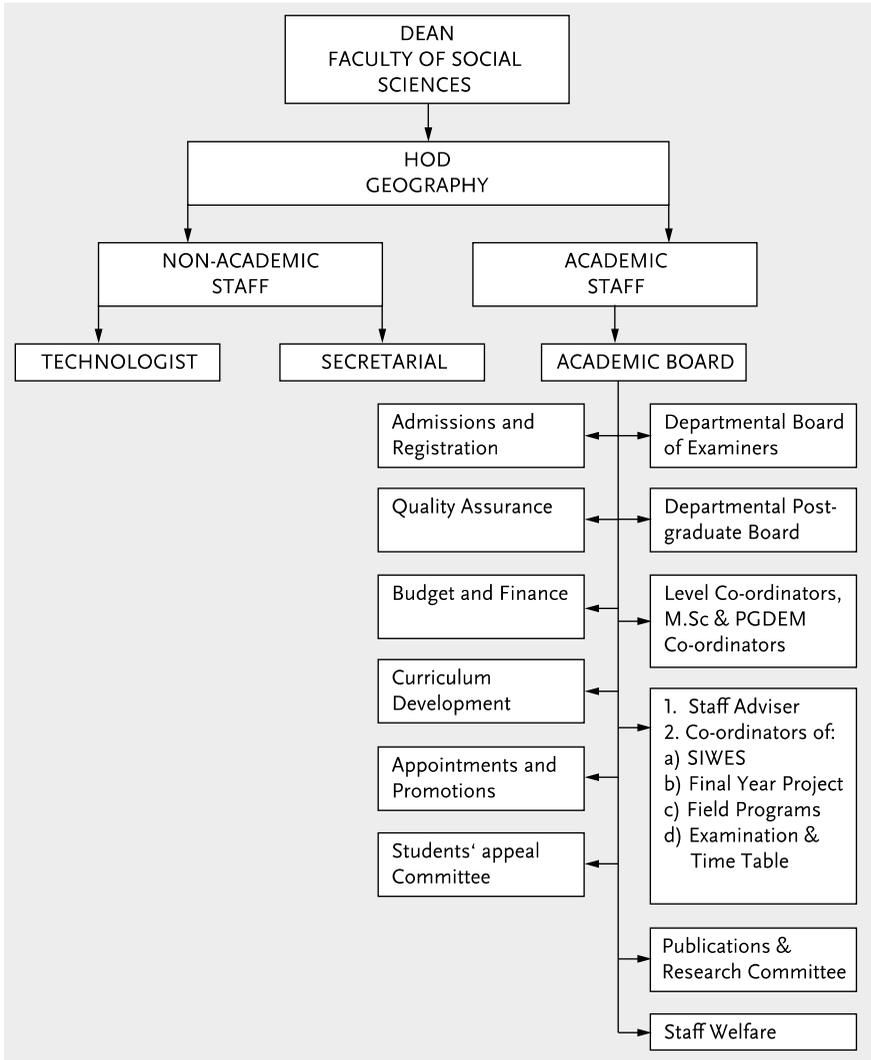
In the University of Maiduguri, Nigeria, the governance structure of the university and that of the Department of Geography are illustrated in Figures 1 and 2 as examples. These structures may vary depending on whether your institution is privately owned, state owned, or a federally owned. One important note is that as a head, you must acquaint yourself with the administrative structure of your university to help you while administering your department.



**Fig. 1:** Organizational Structure of the University of Maiduguri, Nigeria

**KEY**

- 1. College of Medical Sciences (Provost)
- 2. Faculty of Agriculture (Dean)
- 3. Faculty of Arts (Dean)
- 4. Faculty of Education (Dean)
- 5. Faculty of Engineering (Dean)
- 6. Faculty of Law (Dean)
- 7. Faculty of Pharmacy (Dean)
- 8. Faculty of Management Sciences(Dean)
- 9. Faculty of Sciences (Dean)
- 10. Faculty of Social Sciences (Dean)
- 11. Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (Dean)
- D** = Departments (headed by heads of department)



**Fig. 2:** Organizational Structure of the Department of Geography, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria

## The Responsibilities of an Academic Head

The department is under the leadership of a head who supervises the affairs of the department. The department head reports to the dean and is the chief academic administrator at the department level. The department head normally carries less teaching load courses each semester. As a faculty member, the department head continues to assume responsibilities in teaching, in scholarly activities and in service to the institution and the discipline. The department head's responsibilities in the area of scholarship may relate to the promotion of the scholarly efforts of the faculty as well as to his/her own personal productivity. The department head assumes administrative duties and responsibilities in the areas of department leadership and faculty development, department planning and program assessment, management of department funds and department relationships within and outside the institution.

The department head is responsible for establishing and maintaining an academic environment that motivates the department to achieve personal professional goals and to contribute to achieving departmental and institutional goals. He/she does so by articulating, in concert with the faculty, a vision for the department and its programs and a plan for pursuing that vision. The department head must, therefore, be well versed in the current issues in higher education and the department's disciplines and should be aware of the latest pedagogical theories related to the teaching of these disciplines. The department head must establish and maintain open, effective communication within the department and with other administrative and academic units throughout the institution.

As part of an effective communication plan, the department head must routinely share information with all departmental constituents: faculty, staff, students and the administration. To be effective, the department head must seek to develop consensus within the faculty to effect changes necessary to fulfil the department's goals. The department head must strive to prevent conflict among faculty members and staff members in the department, and, if conflict should occur, the department head must be able to reduce or resolve it.

The department head plays a major role in faculty development, both for new faculty members working toward tenure and promotion and for senior faculty who must fill leadership positions in the department, and continue to function as an excellent lecturer and productive scholar in anticipation of post-tenure review. The department head has primary responsibility for faculty evaluation on an annual basis and in reviews for tenure, promotions and post-tenure (contract) assessment. The department head ensures that the department's professional standards policy is cur-

rent, is in concert with institutional policies, is widely distributed to all department faculties and is rigorously adhered to.

The department head is the chief facilitator of planning at the department level and is responsible for ensuring that an assessment plan is developed and functioning for all program and activities of the department. The department head is expected to submit annual appraisal reports and annual budgets, which should be prepared in consultation with the faculty. Through these reports, the department documents the quality of each of its programs and the actions taken to preserve that quality; presents to the institution its needs in the areas of personnel, equipment, operating budget, and facilities; and makes the institution's administrative officers aware of plans for future program development or change. The department head is also charged with planning and directing of all activities related to accreditation and program review.

The department head assigns departmental committees, schedules courses, assigns teaching loads, plans and carries out programs for admission of students, and develops plans for the advising and counselling of students and assesses the success of those plans. He/she administers the departmental budget, sets budget priorities with the advice and counsel of the dean of faculty and ensures that funds are expended in an equitable manner. The department head is responsible for the management of departmental facilities and equipment, including maintenance and control of inventory. In addition, he/she is responsible for monitoring department security and maintenance and for ensuring that the department provides an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning. He/she is also responsible for the supervision and evaluation of technical and administrative staff of the department.

The department head represents the department in relationships within and without the institution. This responsibility most often relates to interdepartmental communications on curricular matters, but is also reflected in the expectations presented for departmental involvement in the life of the university and its students, the local community and the discipline.

## **Preparation of a Strategic Department Plan**

You just assumed the responsibility of the head of department. The clock is ticking and there are several deadlines approaching, and you are already asking “where do I begin?” This is the time to develop your own strategic department plan. The following steps are designed to guide you in the process of developing a department plan.

## Evaluation of Previous and Current Plans

The temptation is to dive right into the planning phase without having done an evaluation of past performance of your predecessor. The whole purpose for developing a new plan is to address issues that have surfaced in previous departmental meetings. Issues here do not necessarily mean poor performance. Maybe the issue is that your predecessor was so successful, you now must plan how to sustain or improve on the success. The following questions may help you to evaluate the previous year's results:

- What have you observed about the processes that take place in your department?
- How do you feel about the overall performance of your predecessor?
- How do others feel about it?
- Did the department meet its goals? Why or why not?
- What were some of the problems that the department encountered?
- How well did the processes of your department integrate with the other departments of the university?
- What were some of challenges that will have to be addressed by you?
- What do you recommend for future improvements?

## Determine the Objectives of Your Department

The second step in the preparation of a department-specific plan, therefore, is to determine the objectives that your department wants to achieve in the next two to four years (assuming you stay on as head for two terms of two years each), with more emphasis being placed on the coming year. The following steps may be helpful in determining your objectives (objective here is defined as "a precise, measurable, time-phased result that supports the achievement of a goal," see Allison and Kaye 1997):

- List the organizational goals that pertain directly to your department.
- List any additional goals that are specific to your department.
- As you look at this list, ask yourself, "What major objectives should my department attempt to achieve that might contribute directly to one or more of these goals?" In the development of objectives, it may help to break them down into three categories: (a) those that have to do with conceptual clarity, (b) those that have to do with commitment and (c) those that have to do with skill capabilities. Another way to say this is: What concepts or ideas will people need to learn this coming planning phase? What kinds of attitudes will they need to develop? And, what kind of new skills will they need to develop? Any of these three questions may help you to develop your objectives.
- Once you have your list of objectives, prioritize them by identifying the ones you feel provide the most potential for improving your department.

## **Decide What Will be the Criteria by Which You Will Measure Success**

Criteria should be established for measuring the success or failure of your overall plan. For some objectives, you may want a 100 % increase in some measurable item, such as a 100 % increase in income, or a 100 % (full) accreditation if you have a denied or an interim status. For other objectives, you may feel that 100 % is unrealistic. Instead, you would like to endeavour for 90 %, 75 % or just 10 %. In other situations, a simple increase of any level may be satisfactory. The important point here is that you need criteria to measure the degree to which you have accomplished your objectives.

## **Find or Create Tools to Measure Progress Toward your Objectives**

Criteria will mean nothing if you don't have a way to measure them. So, the fourth step is to find or create a tool (or tools) to measure progress toward your departmental objectives. Assessment tools should be selected based on their appropriateness for the criteria of success. In some cases, more than one tool may be used to assess a project or program. Measures may be direct or indirect. In direct measures, the department demonstrates the accomplishment of an objective through some numerical or otherwise palpable representation. Indirect measures are those that report people's perceptions (such as a staff survey, student interviews, etc.). Ideally, both types of measures will be used. If you're not already familiar with the concepts of quantitative versus qualitative research, you might want to do some reading on these two different ways to do research (see Creswell 1994).

## **Identify the Action Steps that Will Lead to the Accomplishment of Your Objectives**

You will notice that we are moving from extremely general "goals" toward evermore specificity. Now we are talking about the concrete actions that must be taken to achieve each of your objectives. Action steps should be listed for each objective. For instance, you desire every academic staff in your department to be computer literate. The following guidelines may be helpful as you work through this process.

- 1.** Stages are generally stated as nouns and action steps as verbs. For example, your plan may include a "training stage" that looks like this: Training Stage
  - a.** Research the subject
  - b.** Prepare the presentations
  - c.** Consult with your staff and determine training dates
  - d.** Gather materials

- e. Give first training presentation
  - f. Give second training presentation
  - g. Evaluate training effectiveness
2. Every action step should have a start and end date.
3. Make sure to take into consideration your organizational calendar, special events, holidays, etc.
4. Your action steps should be listed in sequential order.
5. Note that ongoing processes are not action steps. In other words, something like, "Continue meeting with parents of students in the department to discuss their support of the department," is not an action step. But to "Meet with the CEO of Coca-Cola Plc, in November of 2009" is an action step.

### **Assign Responsibility for the Different Parts of Your Plan**

The sixth step in the process of developing a department plan is to assign responsibility for the different action steps of your plan. Remember, "every task needs to be owned by someone, not a group, not a department and certainly not a 'to be determined.' Work only gets done when someone takes ownership of it" (Black 2004, p148). This concept is known as "single-point responsibility" (Black 2004, p147). Make sure that someone is willing to be accountable for each and every task that is involved in carrying out the plan. It is best to establish these assignments through a process of consensus rather than trying to simply assign them to people. In this way, your plan will have a better chance of success. Try to think of all the people whose buy-in will be essential for the accomplishment of your objectives. Do not proceed with the plan until you have acquired this essential buy-in. In many situations, detailed control is not needed. The department head needs only to ensure that responsibility for every task is clearly owned by someone.

### **Estimate the Cost**

Step number seven is to estimate the cost of your plan. You can do this by reviewing your budget from last year and comparing the estimated budget with the actual figures, estimating the costs required to achieve your objectives, and by comparing the income and expense projections.

## **Decide What You Will Do With the Information You Will Gather During the Implementation Phase**

Decide ahead of time what will be done with the knowledge that is gathered through the process of implementing your plan. Remember, your goal is not simply to have a smooth-running machine, but to grow in knowledge about how to continuously improve your department. Even if the plan fails, there is valuable learning to be acquired from the experience.

It is important, however, to capture, disseminate and use the knowledge you have acquired. The idea in this step is to determine beforehand what you plan to do with the knowledge once you obtain it. It is important to establish a consensus beforehand. In particular, how will you apply your learning to your policies regarding strategy, structures, processes, incentives and people?

Other questions that might help:

- How will your learning feed into the decision-making process?
- Who will need to see the data gathered through the implementation of this plan?
- How should the data obtained affect your management style? Future projects? Scheduling?
- What will be the process of review and evaluation of any data that you acquire?
- Who will be involved in the follow-up?

## **Launch Your Plan and Monitor Progress**

In this phase of your planning, you will determine the processes whereby you will monitor, control and report on the progress of the plan. Here, you must be realistic about your abilities. You can't solve all the problems in the department. Two concepts are very important here:

## **Follow Through on Your Plan**

The most important point of all: Now that you have a plan, do it! Don't just toss the plan into file xyz and forget it. This becomes a living document that you and your team will review frequently as you follow through on your plan.

## Quality Assurance

The national policy on university education sets out the cardinal goals as follows (Federal Ministry of Education Report, 2003):

- To provide self-reliant, high-level manpower for national development.
- To develop Nigeria as a united nation with an enlightened, ethical citizenry.
- To promote the cause of knowledge through research and scholarship.

The available evidence is that university education in Nigeria had a good beginning from the colonial times and was effective up to the 1970s as an instrument for national development, until its nature changed by mass admission from the 1980s. In 1980, total enrolment in universities was 73,425, but by 1990, enrolment had grown to 180,871, an increase of 246 %. Quality fell as an effect of greater numbers of students in the face of diminishing resource input due to worsening economic recession. The other factors responsible for the dwindling quality of university education were:

- Introduction of Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) in 1986 which led to the devaluation of the local currency, high inflation and decrease in real terms of budgetary allocations to the universities.
- Severe academic staff shortage due to the flight of some lecturers from existing universities to the newly established ones or to universities abroad in search of better prospects.

All these are gradually changing as a result of increased interventions by government at all levels.

Professor Peter Mayer at the International Deans' Course for Africa 2009/10 in Germany said "quality is difficult to describe, but when you see quality, you can't deny it." Admissions into your department should take into consideration the philosophy of the program, facilities available, student-staff ratio and budgetary allocations. Most often, academic heads only consider the total number of students and the amount to be generated through their registration. The result is that quality is compromised.

You will have to determine the criteria that define quality for your department. These could be in the area of accreditation, students' admission, quality in terms of teaching, quality of teaching staff and tenure and in quality of facilities, amongst others. For me, accreditation covers virtually all these aspects, so I will focus attention on this. Accreditation of programs and departments has been an essential aspect of Nigerian universities since the establishment of such universities. The goal of accreditation is to ensure that education provided by a department or an institution of higher education meets acceptable levels of quality. The National Universi-

ties Commission (NUC), a parastatal organization under the Federal Ministry of Education (FME), is charged with the responsibility of ensuring quality assurance of all academic programs offered in Nigerian universities. The NUC accredits programs, departments and institutions in Nigerian Universities usually in cycles of two to five years, depending on the initial status of the program/department/institution.

The period shortly before the program accreditation exercise puts a lot of pressure on the academic head. It therefore makes sense for the academic head to regularly review processes and to have internal quality management systems in place before the accreditation exercise. As head, one way to do this is to measure the program/department in line with the evaluation criteria (also referred to as “self-study document”) developed by the NUC. Try to fill in this document as honestly as you can before the accreditation. This document helps you ascertain areas that require improvement before the accreditation exercise. A typical self-study form will include the title of program/discipline to be accredited, history of your department, description of how your department is administered, academic content of your program, staff strength, quality of teaching staff, graduates and facilities and the staff-student ratio in the department. There are over one hundred questions to be answered, and sample questions in this self-study form include:

- Indicate the type of accreditation required.
- Has any NUC accreditation panel visited your university to determine if the program/sub-discipline/discipline can be accredited?
- If yes please, attach a photocopy of main decision and recommendations of the commission.
- What is the name and qualification(s) of head of department offering the program to be accredited?
- Describe how the program/sub-discipline/discipline is administered.
- Appraise the adequacy of the operating funds for the department.
- Appraisal of standard of examination.

## **Conflict Management**

Conflict is an integral part of life and may occur within an individual, between individuals, between an individual and a group or between groups. Conflict is when two or more values, perspectives and/or opinions are contradictory in nature and haven't been aligned or agreed about yet. Conflict is a problem when it:

- Hampers productivity.
- Lowers morale.

- Causes more and continued conflicts..
- Causes inappropriate behaviours.

The current view is that if there is no conflict, the issue has not been thoroughly examined. When faced with a conflict as an academic head, instead of feeling averse to it, try to resolve it, applying various techniques. There are three basic categories of responses to deal with conflicting situations. In a conflict-avoidance response, one or all concerned parties keep the conflict from coming to a head. When you are criticized, you ignore it. In a conflict-diffusion response, the party concerned may try to cool the situation. It is basically a delaying tactic and it is possible to delay the flare-up indefinitely.

In a conflict-confrontations response, problem-solving methods are applied where both parties discuss the problem and try to find mutually agreeable solutions. Maya Pilkington, author of *Test Your Business Skills* (Pilkington 1993), describes the following styles that people adopt to resolve conflict:

- The brick wall approach: When a conflict looms, the brick wall type withdraws behind personal defences, refusing to get involved.
- The ramrod approach: The ramrod type builds up steam to force the issue. He fights and tries to dominate the situation because he will feel weak if he loses an argument.
- The feather-bed approach: The feather-bed type gets out the metaphorical oil to pour on the troubled waters. He hates to see anyone in conflict and tries to smooth ruffled feathers and makes soothing noises.
- The compromise approach: The compromiser hates extremes. He looks for the middle ground and expects to give up something in order to gain something.
- The wise, old bird approach: The wise one spends time to resolve conflicts, confronting all the issues with courage and the clear intention of learning something in the process.

Carter McNamara, in the *Field Guide to Leadership and Supervision*, gave the following key managerial actions/structures to minimize conflicts (Mc Namara 2006):

- Regularly review job descriptions. Get your employees' input on them. Write down and date job descriptions. Ensure that job roles don't conflict, and no tasks "fall in a crack."
- Intentionally build relationships with all subordinates: Meet at least once a month alone with them in the office and ask about accomplishments, challenges and issues.
- Get regular, written status reports and include accomplishments, current issues, needs from management and plans for the upcoming period.

- Conduct basic training about interpersonal communications, conflict management and delegation.
- Develop procedures for routine tasks and include the employees' input: have employees write procedures when possible and appropriate, get employees' review of the procedures, distribute the procedures and train employees about the procedures.
- Regularly hold management meetings, for example every month, to communicate new initiatives and the status of current programs.
- Consider an anonymous suggestion box, in which employees can provide suggestions.

## **Avoiding unproductive conflicts**

The following strategies are recommended by M. Robert, author of Conflict Management Style Survey, to avoid unproductive conflicts:

- Avoid being judgmental.
- Deal with the present problem rather than past or potential injustices. Pay attention to the nonverbal content of communication.
- Use 'I' messages to describe behaviours, feelings and effects. For example, "When I did not receive a call from you, I feared the deal was off," rather than, "you never return calls."
- Practice strategic openness about feelings.
- Choose your words carefully.
- Allow the other party to withhold information about feelings. This will, paradoxically, allow for the revelation of withheld feelings.
- Restate what the other party says.
- Actively listen to the other party.
- Use questions of clarification and avoid accusatory questions.
- Break the interruption habit by using silence and delayed response.
- Do not fear to tell others that they are correct about something.
- Avoid interpreting others' motives.
- Refrain from giving advice.

## **Financial Management and the Budgeting Process**

As head, you are administratively responsible for the department. This means, among other things, that you are responsible for the unit's budget. You have to develop at least some basic skills in financial management. Expecting others in the department to manage finances is clearly asking for trouble. Basic skills in financial

management start in the critical areas of cash management and bookkeeping, which should be done according to university financial regulations to ensure integrity in the bookkeeping process. This calls for prudent financial management, as the money is never sufficient to meet departmental needs.

In executing the budget for a financial year, you will be handed the budget form for your department/unit for the current year. In filling out the budget form, you will need to be guided by the following:

- There should be wide consultation within the department.
- Be sure your department is eligible for DTLC.
- You should make projections based on expected number of students.
- Academic departments are expected to have a balance or surplus budget (i. e., operate within the projected revenue and not to have deficit budget within a financial year).
- You may be required to defend your departmental budget before the budget committee.

## **Conclusion**

Any staff that is given the necessary skills and tools beforehand will be better prepared to assume the responsibilities associated with that office. Having the necessary qualifications or even being able to teach and conduct research are not sufficient to make one a good academic head. In addition, a hands-on manual (such as this one), that gleans on the experiences of previous academic heads could provide a good starting point for a newly appointed head.

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education in Nigeria and Africa be qualitatively developed and sustained for future generations to benefit from. May future heads of department benefit from this manual.

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# Determining the Unit Cost of Higher Education: The Case of the Faculty of the Built Environment at Uganda Martyrs University

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MARK OLWENY

## Abstract

While the growth in private universities in Africa has met a pent-up demand for university education and are meeting and fulfilling a social function, the economic realities of operating a university cannot be ignored. It is therefore no surprise that within two decades of their founding, private universities are now faced with the reality of the interstices of global economic forces, national societal functions and, for many, ideological mandates that now compel them to rethink the models that the institutions were founded upon. Increasingly, private universities are discovering the dependency complications related to a reliance on a single income source, which is on the whole unsustainable, as they are operating in an environment characterized by much uncertainty. There is a need for private universities to know how to generate additional income to fund not only their operations, but also to ensure an annualised profit as a buffer against any inevitable fluctuations.

This paper provides an overview of the cost of associated with teaching in the Faculty of the Built Environment at the Uganda Martyrs University. While the faculty offers a twenty-first century curriculum with an innovative teaching pedagogy, the faculty faces a challenge in using a higher education program financing model that does not acknowledge varying educational pedagogies, as is necessary in a professional program. Under the current model, the faculty is unable to achieve parity in its budget. The proposed model is based on an appreciation of the different inputs in architecture education, and while they are debatable, it does provide a starting point for dialogue of teaching inputs. The paper concludes by giving some proposals that may be useful to help manage expenditure in individual faculties.

**Keywords:** Unit cost; higher education funding; institutions; remuneration; workload; quality assurance

## Introduction

The need to know the true cost of delivering higher education in East Africa has become more important in recent years. While there are a number of publications that sought to understand the true cost of higher education in the context of higher education in East Africa, such as Aduol (2001), Mwira, et al. (2007) and Kasozi (2009), most attention has been on public universities, with little documentation of the costs associated with delivering education in the private universities (the term “private university” is used to incorporate both not-for-profit private universities along with for-profit universities as well as state supported private universities). The liberalization of the higher education sector in East Africa during the 1990s has resulted in an exponential growth in private universities, particularly in Uganda. It has been assumed for the most part that as these universities were operating in a true market system, and therefore were already aware of the costs they were faced with. However, a review of the fees charged by various private and public institutions across Uganda revealed that the tuition charged by some private universities was actually lower than that of the public universities. Given that public universities are subsidised, this suggests that there may be some inconsistencies in the reporting of the true nature of the cost of higher education, or, more succinctly, the true cost of delivering higher education in Uganda is still unknown.

Up until the 1990s, university education in Uganda was essentially free; consequently the introduction of fees for university education first in the newly opened private universities, and then in the public universities, is still regarded as being inapt. This reaction, it appears, is based more on nostalgia than on a rationalization of the cost of delivering higher education services. As a consequence, there is a widespread belief that the fees charged by private universities are extremely high, with suggestions that private universities are price gouging. This view, it appears, is based on a comparison with the fees charged by public universities, and as such does not account for the fact that public universities are heavily subsidised, not only through direct contributions from government, but also via policies that direct bilateral funding to public universities. The resulting price competition has essentially placed private universities in a no-win situation, trying to compete with the subsidised higher education of the public universities.

This particular study was prompted by a number of issues that had manifested themselves in the Faculty of the Built Environment (FoBE) at the Uganda Martyrs University (UMU) over the previous five years. These included the fact that the FoBE was perceived as being a financial liability to the university, as it had few students compared to the established faculties and had a high-expense structure. It therefore was not generating the desired income for the university. Unfortunately for the

faculty, the two largest income and expenditure units are completely out of its control, tuition income and staff salaries, which are set by the University Council. Consequently, on the one hand, the university endeavoured to ensure its competitiveness in terms of tuition, and on the other hand, the costs associated with operating the university are continually on the rise. Most private universities in Uganda also rely on tuition as the main income source, which, as already mentioned, is pegged to the public university fee structure, and they have tuition regimes that are the same or barely above those of the public universities. As such, a report by Talemwa and Wanyenze (2009) that the two programs offered by the Faculty, the Bachelor of Environmental Design (B.Envi.Des.) and the Master of Architecture (M.Arch.), were the most expensive in the country, may be correct, nevertheless, this could merely be a reflection of the actual cost of architecture education in Uganda.

In this light, the aim of this study was to reveal the cost of operating the faculty, which has always run a deficit. The objective of the study was to ensure that there was an appreciation of what it costs to deliver professional architecture education and thereafter to develop a model that ensured the financial sustainability of the faculty into the future.

## Higher Education Tuition Fees in Uganda

Until the 1990s, public universities had a monopoly in the higher education market in Uganda. Deregulation, as part of the structural adjustment measures of the 1990s, ushered in a host of private universities to meet a pent-up demand for higher education. The growth in the sector since has been nothing short of phenomenal. In 1990, there was only one public university (Makerere University) and one private university (the Islamic University in Uganda). By 2010, this number had grown to five public universities (Makerere University, Mbarara University of Science and Technology, Gulu University, Kyambogo University and Busitema University), and twenty-three private universities, of which six had received full Government Charters, a recognition that they had met the minimum standards of quality stipulated by the Uganda National Council for Higher Education (UNCHE). These are the Uganda Christian University, Uganda Martyrs University, Nkumba University, Kampala International University, Ndejje University and Bugema University (UNCHE, 2010).

Private universities in Uganda are, for the most part, self-financing, deriving much of their operational income from tuition fees. It therefore serves to reason that the programs provided were those that were in demand by the market, or more specifically, programs that would easily attract students, and as such guarantee an income

stream. It is therefore not unusual to find similar programs across private institutions: business administration, computer sciences, accounting, marketing, economics, etc., programs which typically do not require major infrastructure inputs (Varghese 2004; Kasozi 2009). This approach, described by Varghese (2004) as the ‘super market model’ of private university education, only works when there are sufficient numbers of qualified students for a particular program, and while they may be ‘profitable’ in the short-term, they are very vulnerable to shifts in market demands. Nevertheless, with less than 10,000 university places available, it is still a sellers market, highlighted by data released by the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB), indicating that for the 2010 academic year, 60,370 candidates passed the Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education (UACE) examination with at least two principal passes, making them eligible for admission into university level programs (Ahimbisibwe, et. al., 2010). This begs the question of why tuition charged by private universities is at times below the cost of delivering the education, given the large disparity between supply and demand. Further still, the ‘super market model’ has resulted in numerous, similar, and in some cases identical, programs across the various public and private universities, maybe even within the same university, with faculties and universities scrambling to attract students to bring in extra funding. This approach to higher education is fraught with problems: academic staff numbers are unchanged, facilities and other infrastructure aren’t expanded, and the pressure on academic resources, particularly the libraries, increased exponentially. The impact of this approach is being cited as the reason for increasing cases of cheating by students and for a drop in the quality of student projects, as academic faculty were not able to cope with the large student numbers. There is evidence now that this trend is finally being reversed, with Makerere University halving the number of programs it offers, from 130 to seventy, as it was discovered that many were duplicated across different faculties (Kagolo, 2010).

A different approach to university education, presented by Thaver (2008) as the ‘boutique model,’ advocates for the formulation of programs based on high quality and prestigious programs. Under this approach, private universities offer premium programs, cutting edge facilities and small class sizes and also have high calibre academic faculty and students, consequently charging a premium. This is the model used by the Ivy League universities such as Harvard, Yale and Princeton. The ‘boutique model’ is suited for professional programs that require a high level of student-instructor interaction, as well as demand high-infrastructure inputs. Olivera presents this scenario in a slightly different way, as follows, “Suppose the public university (which must set a low, or zero tuition fee) imposes a high admission standard. Faced with this, the private university has two options; it can either set a lower standard, thus meeting the unsatisfied demand from students not able to

pass the public university's admission threshold, or it can set a stricter standard and admit few high-ability students, who can be charged a higher fee because they receive higher quality education than in the public university. For a sufficiently high standard set by the state university, the former may be preferable. On the other hand, for the same parameters, if the public university sets a lower standard, the private university will be able to choose a stricter admission threshold and charge correspondingly high fees" (Oliveira 2006, p.2).

Regardless of the model used, inevitably, the issue of operational costs and an income stream to service these costs comes to the fore. To be able to set and charge appropriate fees, three things have to be known: the nature of the market that the program operated in, the purpose of higher education and the actual cost of delivering that education. For the most part in higher education in Uganda, these are gravely misunderstood and under-appreciated.

Briefly, in regard to the nature of the market, and the purpose of higher education, it is often assumed that the number of students applying for a particular program is an indication of the market demand for that particular program. This simplistic approach, however, does not account for a number of personal factors that impact the nature of the application process to university programs. An investigation by Olweny and Nshemereirwe (2006) and Olweny (2008) has shown that in a number of instances, students take a course offered to them for a number of unexplained reasons, among them for the fact that it is a university-level program, regardless of what it is or the institution it is offered by. In some instances, they are instructed to take a particular program by their sponsors. As such, in the context of Uganda, the actual relationship between the market and the demands by students is not clear-cut. Another study by Olweny (2010) suggests that many students are not even informed of the programs they are applying to, let alone what opportunities these could offer them after graduation.

In the case of architecture for instance, the FoBE receives only about 100 applications each year for the undergraduate program. Makerere University, the only other university offering architecture, receives between 150 and 200 applications. Of these, only about twenty to twenty-five percent of applicants are admitted. This, however, certainly does not reflect the market demand for architectural services, as reflected in the architect to population ratio for Uganda (see Table 1).

**Tab. 1:** Number of Architects in Different Countries  
(Adapted from Tombesi, 2004 and Kasozi, 2005)

| Country        | Population    | Architects | Ratio   |
|----------------|---------------|------------|---------|
| Italy          | 57,500,000    | 99,300     | 579     |
| United Kingdom | 59,050,000    | 30,600     | 1,930   |
| Australia      | 19,414,000    | 9,500      | 2,044   |
| Malaysia       | 23,802,000    | 1,600      | 14,876  |
| South Africa   | 44,812,000    | 2,700      | 16,597  |
| India          | 1,032,473,000 | 25,000     | 41,299  |
| Kenya          | 33,400,000    | 800        | 41,750  |
| Uganda         | 25,000,000    | 130        | 192,308 |
| Tanzania       | 37,100,000    | 120        | 309,167 |

While there is no ideal ratio of number of architects in a population, a target of 1:40,000, similar to Kenya, would require an additional 500 registered architects today, while a ratio of 1:15,000, similar to South Africa or Malaysia, would require an additional 1,500 architects. Based on current admission and graduation rates, this would translate into around 5,000 and 16,000 applications respectively. This scenario suggests that there is a mismatch between the ‘market’ and the actual societal requirements, indicating that market demand may well be a lagging rather than leading indicator of the actual requirements of society. This relates back to the purpose of higher education as being more than just a transmission of knowledge and skills, but a foundation for future professional growth. A further complication of the current private university education model is the fact that private universities in Uganda appear to be competing on tuition rather than on anything else.

**Tab. 2:** Program Fees in Different Universities (UGX)

|  | Uganda Christian Univ. (2010) | Uganda Martyrs Univ. (2010) | Makerere Univ. (2009) |
|--|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Bachelor of Business Administration    | 1,995,000                     | 3,695,000                   | 2,913,500             |
| Bachelor of Science (Computer Science) | 2,641,000                     | 3,695,000                   | 3,133,500             |
| Bachelor of Architecture               |                               | 4,697,000                   | 2,923,500             |

The figures presented were garnered from the universities’ websites and indicate that for some programs, private universities are charging less than comparable

programs at the public universities and in some cases substantially less. This begs the question as to whether the tuition charged by some universities is a true reflection of the cost of the programs, and, if not, how these universities make up the shortfall.

It is at times argued that the ability to pay is a significant factor to consider in the tuition structure of private universities, an argument that is based on the fact that the large majority of Ugandans live in poverty and therefore cannot afford to pay for education. As such, private universities, particularly those founded on religious principles, maintain that they cannot charge fees at a rate commensurate with the actual unit cost, as they are also providing education for the masses. While this is a noble gesture, it does present these universities with a dilemma relating to the cost of offering this service. To meet the cost therefore, they are left with few options: either escalate the number of students admitted to increase revenue or keep expenditure to a bare minimum, which for the most part relates to two areas – staff costs, and infrastructure. The ramifications of such an approach are well documented (see Thaver 2008).

It is often assumed that the cost per student is derived by taking the total expenditure and dividing it by the number of students in a program in order to find the unit cost (Babalola 1998). This simplistic model, however, does not account for the complexities of pricing within faculties and programs. This approach also does not ensure that internal cost structures are in line with best practices, and merely transfers costs to the end user. Further still, in relation to professional programs, such as medicine, dentistry and architecture, the ability to transfer the full cost to the student is limited by a number of factors, in particular the social imperative in relation to education, particularly to professional education. Were students to pay the full cost for these programs, it would not only make the programs unviable, with few students being able to afford them, such a cost structure would effectively also restrict entry to the wealthy elite. In this regard, in setting higher education fees, the Australian Government, in recognition of the social purpose of education, allows for greater subsidies for professional programs such as medicine, architecture and agriculture than is given for other programs (Australian Government 2010). In addition, consideration is given for the future earning potential of graduates, with Oliveria noting, “higher education determines a wage premium in expected lifetime earnings” (Oliveira, 2006 p.4). As such, it is common to find business and law programs having higher tuition than science programs, as is the case in Australia and the United States. This reality is not evident in the tuition structure of university programs in Uganda.

As it is not feasible to continually increase tuition fees, nor cut the quality of education, which can have severe consequences, it is imperative that the role of faculties in the management of resources is vital. For this purpose, this study sought to address these concerns in relation to the Faculty of the Built Environment at Uganda Martyrs University. A faculty, which, due to the nature of professional education, has to utilize the 'boutique model' of education to ensure quality and consistency in its endeavours.

## **The Faculty of the Built Environment**

The Faculty of the Built Environment (FoBE) at the Uganda Martyrs University was founded in 2000 as the first built environment program in Uganda and East Africa to be based in a private university (the Kampala International University had initially stated a program in architecture during the 1990s, but abandoned it within two years). The mission of the faculty is to provide an education to students who wish to become responsible built environment professionals. In order to achieve this goal, it was necessary to implement a 'boutique model' of education, taking in a small number of students, and providing them the best contemporary built environment education to enable them to effectively compete in increasingly competitive and quickly changing professional fields. Currently, the faculty offers two degree programs: an undergraduate Bachelor of Environmental Design, as well as a graduate professional degree, a Master of Architecture, the first professional master's degree program in East Africa. This was only the second professional program in architecture in Uganda and one of six programs in East Africa. In addition to these programs, there are currently plans to introduce two additional master's, a professional Master of Landscape Architecture, as well as a post professional Master of Environmental Design. As the faculty enters its tenth year, there have been questions of its viability, purely in relation to financing rather than academics. In regard to academics, the faculty could not be in a better position, having recently earned Validation from the Uganda Society of Architects (USA) and the Uganda National Council for Higher Education (UNCHE) for its professional architecture program. The faculty is now preparing for international validation by the Commonwealth Association of Architects (CAA), giving international recognition to the program and its graduates.

It was evident that the cost of delivering professional built environment education was higher than had been foreseen. The need for specialized equipment and specialized instructors, are here key factors, bringing this issue to the forefront. With the needs of the faculty, different from those of the other social science faculties, it soon became evident that the prevailing funding structure was out of line with the

needs of the FoBE. With academic units taking more control of their budgeting, it was evident that some adjustments were required for both the income and expenditure in order to ensure a more streamlined process. It was also evident that the faculty, along with the other academic units at UMU, did not have much control over the largest expenditure item on their budgets, staff expenditure. Nor did they have control of the main source of income, student tuition.

Under these circumstances, where salaries represented about fifty percent of faculty budgets, and tuition over seventy-five percent of income, the ability to make any adjustments within such a structure was impossible, to say the least. To increase income essentially meant increasing the number of students in programs and reducing the number of staff teaching them – an approach that has only one possible outcome, reduced quality. While such a scenario may be possible in some programs, it is not in the FoBE given two things, a lack of physical space and a shortage of qualified built environment academics in Uganda. Any increase in student numbers requires a substantial increase in physical space for studios and tutorials. It would also have required a radically different model of architecture education, which, under the prevailing competitive educational system, would be difficult to implement. The shortage of staff and the funding crunch is certainly not unique to Uganda, nor to private universities, as was highlighted by Ostwald and Williams (2007), who found similar problems in their study of architecture education in Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea.

## **Project Action Plan**

The construction of this Project Action Plan (PAP), which I carried out during the International Deans' Course 2009/2010, was a result of the recognizing the virtually impossible task of having to balance a budget based on parameters largely outside the control of the faculty and the need of ensuring quality is upheld, in reference to stipulated criteria from the UNCHE as well as the CAA, for which the faculty is obliged to meet. The 2008 Validation Visit by the UNCHE and the USA highlighted this, with a recommendation that space and academic staff were key issues that had to be addressed. The need to address the entire structure of the faculty had been evident since 2005. However, adjustments had, for the most part, been in relation to pedagogy and curricula issues. It was evident the financial issues needed to be addressed as well, particularly in relation to the largest expenditure unit, staffing. This would of course relate back to the income, and the actual unit cost of running the program. The aim of the investigation was therefore to establish some mechanisms to enable the faculty to appreciate its cost structure and how best to optimize this, while maintaining the quality of education it had become known for. For this

paper, I will be reporting primarily on the cost structure related to academic faculty, which represent a major expense for universities, not only in Uganda, but in much of Africa. The role of academics is also misunderstood, raising questions about key roles of the universities.

Information was gathered from existing university documentation, literature on different approaches to determining faculty finances and through interviews with key stakeholders. It became evident that there were a significant number of unknowns in this area, and as such, the PAP became an ongoing project that will not only help the FoBE, but UMU and other private universities as well. Two publications were particularly useful in formulating of the PAP, Tsang (1999) and Ehrenberg (2002). Tsang (1999) presents the cost of higher education in a broad frame of reference, including, as part of cost structure, individual and societal costs as well as those directly attributed to the higher education institution. Ehrenberg (2002) concentrates on the costs associated with the institutions themselves. For this PAP, I was concerned only with the institutional costs, which include direct, recurrent (personnel costs), non-personnel (instructional materials supplies, utilities, maintenance, student welfare etc) and capital costs (buildings, plant and equipment, etc.). It should be noted, however, that the individual costs associated with a program should not be overlooked, as they can be quite significant, as in the case for architecture programs, where expenses of students in completing projects can be quite substantial.

A key aim was to ensure that the unit cost was derived systematically. As such, a key assumption is the use a steady-state-condition, based on optimum student numbers in the faculty. As such, for this study, the cost basis is calculated based on thirty students per year in the undergraduate program, and en per year for a single graduate program, giving a total of ninety undergraduate students and twenty graduate students. It is also assumes that there is adequate physical space available to accommodate these numbers, which currently is not the case.

## **Staffing and Teaching**

A common approach to staffing of academic programs in private universities in Uganda according to Varghese (2004) has been to rely on part-time academic staff, often 'moonlighting' from public universities, to undertake teaching in various courses. This has been rationalized as being a cost effective option, as recruiting full-time academic staff was regarded as a costly exercise. It was also the case that academic staff from public universities were considered to be the best. Full-time faculty were considered expensive as they were not always in

front of a class teaching, and when semesters were out, faculty were viewed as idle, considering teaching at the narrowest and most basic level – standing in front of a class. This approach has effectively made private universities little more than teaching institutions, with no academics engaging in the other important areas of academic life – administration, research and community engagement, ironically, the basis of promotions. Consequently, it is not unheard of to have full-time faculty teaching more than twenty hours a week. Given time for preparation of course material, student consultations and marking – just on teaching and teaching related activities – academic staff are working over sixty hours a week (based on an internationally recognized model that equates one lecture hour to two hours outside the classroom). With a standard workweek of forty hours, academics, it appears, were working more hours than stipulated in their contracts. An obvious consequence of this is the almost non-existent research output from the many universities across Uganda. Further, the reliance on part-time, seconded staff from public universities essentially renders the private universities no more than teaching centers of the public universities.

This state of affairs was evident in the FoBE, with a severe shortage of professionals in the architecture, planning and engineering disciplines, making it inevitable that faculty would be teaching in more than one university. This approach, however, has serious implication to the nature of education delivered, with academics teaching the same content across the different programs in the various universities, regardless of different epistemological or pedagogical differences that are part of the identity of a particular university. This also has consequences for research and community engagements, as these are always undertaken in the primary place of work. As such, the research output of the private universities has been virtually non-existent. For the FoBE, this also exacerbated an already serious problem, the low level of research and publications in the built environment fields in Uganda.

## **Academics in the Faculty**

A key principle for the Faculty of the Built Environment approach to education is quality, thus the 'boutique model' being employed as its educational model. As mentioned earlier, the faculty currently offers two programs, the Bachelor of Environmental Design (B.Envi.Des.) and the Master of Architecture (M.Arch.) professional program. In addition, the faculty anticipates starting a Master of Landscape Architecture (M.Land.Arch.) professional program within the next year. Accreditation bodies that oversee these programs are the Uganda Society of Architects (USA), the Commonwealth Association of Architects (CAA) and

the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA). Within their rigorous quality framework, the programs can only be validated if they show they meet the stipulated criteria.

As part of its effort to meet these quality benchmarks, the faculty adopted ‘problem based learning’ (PBL) as its primary teaching pedagogy in 2006. For the faculty, currently the only faculty at UMU using PBL, this was a major and bold step, which unfortunately put the faculty out of step with the prevailing approach to private university education in Uganda. It became apparent in the move to PBL, which was largely for epistemological reasons, it could be useful in addressing the financial shortcomings that the faculty was faced with. It is suggested by Mennin and Martinez-Burrola (1986) that staff costs under PBL are approximately the same as under the traditional lecture-based pedagogy. However, in the traditional lecture-based teacher-centered and subject-oriented curriculum model, it was found that two thirds of staff time was spent preparing for courses, while in the problem-based, student-centered curriculum, which for the most part is undertaken within small-group tutorials, two thirds of the instructor’s time could be spent interacting with students, which is a better ratio in regards to faculty productivity and effort. A key factor to consider, however, was a change to the existing financial model that was based on a lecture-based pedagogy and could not account for the myriad of new cost centers that PBL invariably generated.

## Teaching Hours

**Tab. 3:** Working Hours for Teaching Activities, FoBE

|                          | <b>Total Teaching Hours</b> | <b>Lectures</b> | <b>Tutorials</b> | <b>Studio/ Workshops</b> |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| B.Envi.Des. – Yr. I      | 976                         | 412             | 308              | 256                      |
| B.Envi.Des. – Yr. II     | 1,099                       | 338             | 346              | 415                      |
| B.Envi.Des. – Yr. III    | 1,200                       | 300             | 324              | 576                      |
| <b>Under-Grad. Total</b> | <b>3,275</b>                | <b>1,050</b>    | <b>978</b>       | <b>1,247</b>             |
|                          |                             |                 |                  |                          |
| M.Arch. – Yr. I          | 1,120                       | 280             | 280              | 560                      |
| M.Arch. – Yr. II         | 1,354                       | 226             | 360              | 768                      |
| <b>Grad. Total</b>       | <b>2,474</b>                | <b>506</b>      | <b>640</b>       | <b>1,328</b>             |

The initial step in this process was to determine the actual number of teaching hours for both the undergraduate and graduate programs. This had to take into

account the quality standards, as stipulated by the Uganda National Council for Higher Education (UNCHE), which recommend student to staff ratios for different academic programs. The faculty the impact of PBL is certainly clear, with substantially more teaching hours dedicated to tutorials and studio/workshops than for lectures (See Table 3). Based on a full student complement, the faculty is required to provide 5,749 hours of instruction each year, 3,275 at the undergraduate level and 2,474 at the graduate level.

Using this data, it was also easy to determine the proportion of hours that could not be covered by full-time academic staff, based on a maximum teaching load of twelve hours a week<sup>1</sup>, and as such, providing a quick indication of the number of hours that had to be covered by part-time and sessional faculty. These are detailed in Table 4 below, which indicates that about fifty percent of teaching hours for the 2009/10 academic year had to be filled by part-time or sessional faculty. This approach, however, does not account for the different specializations that need to be covered as part of the architecture program, for which a more detailed breakdown of teaching hours has to be undertaken.

**Tab. 4:** Teaching Hours, FoBE 2009/10

|                        | <b>Total Teaching Hours</b> | <b>Covered Full-Time Staff</b> | <b>Part-Time/ Sessional Staff</b> |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| B.Envi.Des. (Year I)   | 976                         | 598                            | 378                               |
| B.Envi.Des. (Year II)  | 1,099                       | 507                            | 592                               |
| B.Envi.Des. (Year III) | 1,200                       | 715                            | 485                               |
|                        |                             |                                |                                   |
| M.Arch. (Year I)       | 1,120                       | 390                            | 730                               |
| M.Arch. (Year II)      | 1,354                       | 689                            | 665                               |

A goal of the PAP was to ensure that costs associated with instruction were kept in check. As such, it was necessary to ascertain the nature of the inputs (i. e., lectures, tutorials, studio sessions, etc). Under the lecture-based system, there was no differentiation between lectures, tutorials or studios, which were all lumping together as ‘teaching,’ with remuneration awarded at a standard rate. A key differentiation factor is preparation time for the different activities, which varies considerably, as presented in Table 5 below:

1 Stipulated by the university Office of Human Resources.

**Tab. 5:** Working Hours for Teaching Activities, FoBE

| Activity           | Contact Time | Preparation Time | Total Time |
|--------------------|--------------|------------------|------------|
| Specialist Lecture | 1            | 3                | 4          |
| Lecture            | 1            | 2                | 3          |
| Tutorial           | 1            | 1                | 2          |
| Studio             | 1            | 0                | 1          |

Taking these variations into account is essential in PBL and is key to ensuring that staff workload is distributed equitably, as well as to utilising staff to their full potential. Naturally, this approach has implications to remuneration.

## Remuneration

Determining the remuneration levels was perhaps the most controversial element of this PAP. Given the lack of any clear guidelines, this was a difficult task. However, a key goal of any remuneration strategy is to attract and retain qualified and dedicated staff for the different teaching portfolios. Under the current strategy, most private universities have on the whole failed to achieve this, with academics at a comparable level of service working in a number of private universities paid below the rate offered by public universities

It was necessary to establish a base rate on which to base the value of each teaching activity. In determining the cost of education, however, it is often perceived that the entire cost of the academic staff is directly related to tuition, as was evident in the model by Aduol (2001). While their remuneration does contribute to the cost of the functioning of a faculty, not all their time is directly related to the cost of tuition, as only a proportion of their time is directly engaged with teaching and teaching-related activities. In this case, it was determined that the base rate should be derived from the proposed remuneration for a new senior lecturer. The use of a senior lecturer as the base rate for teaching is related to the fact that a senior lecturer position is the median academic position in a university<sup>2</sup>.

The proposed model also sought to ensure a connection between the hourly rate for the various teaching activities and staff remuneration for both full-time and part-time/sessional staff, which was critical in plotting a way forward for the faculty, as under the current system part-time and sessional staff could easily earn more than full-time academics, who, in addition to a heavy teaching load, are also burdened with administrative duties that part-time and sessional faculty were not obliged to do, nor were they obliged to undertake research.

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2 Under the British model of academics, which is in use in Uganda.

The initial step was to determine the actual hours available to academics as part of their contracts. These were derived by Nshemereirwe et. al. (2010) as part of a workload assessment model for UMU. The actual days available to work each year are determined by taking account all the weekends, public holidays, religious holidays and leave entitlements as presented in Table 6:

**Tab. 6:** Available Annual Working Days, UMU

|                  |     |     |
|------------------|-----|-----|
| Days of the Year | 365 | 365 |
| Weekends         | 104 | 261 |
| Easter           | 3   | 258 |
| Public Holidays  | 10  | 248 |
| Annual Leave     | 30  | 218 |

It was determined that there are actually 218 working days available each year for academic faculty, 109 days per semester. According to the stipulated rules for employees, staff are to work eight hours a day, which, based on the number of working days, makes for 1,744 working hours for the year. This figure thus becomes the basis for calculating the base rate for remuneration.

Taking the base gross remuneration for a senior lecturer at UMU as being UGX 2,400,000 per month, the hourly base rate was determined to be UGX 16,500. This figure therefore becomes the base rate for one teaching unit in the faculty and the basis for calculating pay rates for the different teaching activities: lecturing, tutorials/seminars, studios and workshops. These are presented in Table 7, with Table 8 presenting a comparison between the remuneration rates under the existing model and under the proposed differentiated model.

**Tab. 7:** Hourly Rates for Teaching Activities, FoBE

| Activity                          | Time Allocation | UGX    |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|--------|
| Specialist Lecture (Graduate)     | 4               | 66,000 |
| Lecture (Undergraduate)           | 3               | 49,500 |
| Tutorial (Graduate)               | 3               | 49,500 |
| Tutorial (Undergraduate)          | 2               | 33,000 |
| Studio / Workshop (Graduate)      | 2               | 33,000 |
| Studio / Workshop (Undergraduate) | 1               | 16,500 |

**Tab. 8:** Comparison of Hourly Rates for Teaching Activities, FoBE

| Activity                          | Existing System (UGX) | Differentiated System (UGX) |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Specialist Lecture (Graduate)     | 50,000                | 66,000                      |
| Lecture (Undergraduate)           | 30,000                | 49,500                      |
| Tutorial (Graduate)               | 50,000                | 49,500                      |
| Tutorial (Undergraduate)          | 30,000                | 33,000                      |
| Studio / Workshop (Graduate)      | 50,000                | 33,000                      |
| Studio / Workshop (Undergraduate) | 30,000                | 16,500                      |

Under the exiting system, all teaching was paid under the same rate, regardless of the inputs required, with the total salary bill for undergraduate teaching using the hours presented in Table 4 being UGX 98,250,000 for the undergraduate program and UGX 123,700,000 for the graduate program, for a total of UGX 221,950,000. Under the revised differentiated model, the costs would be UGX 104,824,500 for the undergraduate program, while for the graduate program it would be UGX 108,900,000, for a total of UGX 213,724,500. This represents a savings of four percent, lowering the wage bill for teaching related activities, while increasing remuneration for activities that require higher preparatory inputs (on costs are not included in this calculation).

Differentiating the cost of activities in this way acknowledges the difference in preparation inputs that are generally not acknowledged under the existing model. The revised model makes it imperative to allocate staff hours wisely, with more experienced and/or qualified faculty being allocated activities in the higher, rather than early years of a program. More experienced academic staff would take on more mentorship roles, for example, having a mix of staff in studio sessions with qualified academics, overseeing and mentoring junior faculty. It could also support the initiating of recent graduates and graduate students as part of the teaching faculty, particularly for workshops and tutorials, which under the existing system was not possible due to the standard means of remunerations.

Adoul (2001) suggests that the cost relationship between the different faculty levels – lecturer, senior lecturer and professor – should be in the ratio 3:4:6, a ratio commiserate with remuneration models used in Australian universities (University of Adelaide, and Flinders University of South Australia among others) and useful in the allocation of teaching duties within faculties. An additional benefit is the ability to use this understanding of cost, along with the appreciation of teaching inputs, to allocate staff where their inputs are best needed, as well as to ensure that the

workload of staff is evenly spread; staff giving lectures could be allocated less contact hours, while those taking tutorials or studios could take up more contact hours. As such, faculty only engaged in giving lectures could only be allocated a maximum of ten hours per week, while on the other hand, if they were only engaged in tutorials, this could go up to fifteen hours, or twenty hours for studio sessions. The allocation model does enable both an equitable distribution of workload, as well as for equitable remuneration between full-time and part-time/sessional staff.

## Discussion and Conclusion

Putting these factors together to get a working structure is critical in getting this proposal operational. While it is still in the process of being formulated, the importance of identifying areas that could be rationalized and where it was possible to cut costs without compromising quality was an important step in the process. Key to enabling these findings to be implemented successfully, as part of the process of transforming the faculty, would be to have a reporting and remuneration structure that is easily understood by faculty and to ensure that staff take ownership of it.

The faculty will be working with an existing structure that allows for the implementation of this model. All courses have course coordinators, who are responsible for the administrative duties associated with the particular courses, including programming appropriate instructors, arranging field trips, etc. Using this existing mechanism, it is possible to determine the different inputs for each course (lectures, tutorials, workshops or studio sessions) and therefore be able to determine the cost for each course unit. This was achieved using a standard spreadsheet format as presented at the end of this paper.

While it was not the objective of this paper to discuss the entire cost structure of the faculty, it is necessary to touch on some other aspects that affect the cost of operating a university faculty. Although teaching is generally the most visible of the cost centers for higher education and therefore where most attention is spent, a number of other costs are evident in determining the unit cost of delivering higher education. These are often neglected, yet they have a direct impact on the quality of the education provided. They include administrative costs of the university, costs associated with infrastructure, and space in the university – neglected as they are operating in existing spaces, or funded from external sources to the university. Nevertheless, there is a cost to the university, particularly in terms of maintenance and running. Infrastructure costs include any physical plant and equipment necessary for undertaking teaching and research, including but not limited to computer

hardware and software, stationery, other consumables and all other non human resources needed to accomplish the academic objectives of the faculty. For the FoBE, additional costs relate to the operation of the Building Materials Testing Laboratory as well as for building environmental research (acoustics, thermal comfort and lighting in particular) can be substantial and need to be factored in to the course structure of the various courses. Other cost centers include research and internal transfers between faculties and departments, particularly for accessory teaching, etc.

Taking these additional aspects into consideration, the study found that the cost of delivering professional architecture education, based on the old expenditure model, was about UGX 9,527,500 per student per annum (UGX 47,637,500 for the five-year program). Under the revised model, this is reduced by approximately eight percent to 8,780,500 per student per annum (UGX 43,902,500 for the five year program). This does not take into account the difference between the undergraduate and the graduate programs. Certainly, the reduction in staff costs is an important factor to consider in the overall financial viability of the faculty. The proposed revision to the remuneration structure would be a step in this direction, however, there would need to be further assessment of the viability of implementing this model, not to mention the need to invest in appropriate teaching aids to ensure this approach is not only realized, but is sustainable. Key to this is to ensure that the remuneration is competitive and as such able to attract academics of the caliber desired by a progressive faculty. Evident also is the fact that the current tuition fees charged are only about fifty percent of what it actually costs to run the programs, which is likely to be the same across other programs in other universities.

As part of the investigation process, a number of bottlenecks were discovered. For example, any talk of finances was unsettling, as it was perceived to be confidential information. As such, deriving information was rather arduous. Further, the persistence of the myth that education in private universities in Uganda is already expensive is a continuing problem. However, it is evident that this is being viewed from the perspective of the public university tuition model and not from the viewpoint of the actual cost of providing the education. It is however evident that the ability to charge fees that are commensurate with the full cost of running a program in the context of Africa is difficult, and therefore, there is a need to ensure that additional income sources are found. There is also a need to balance the social wishes of a faculty or university with the needs to offer quality education, to attract the best students and academic faculty, and to ensure its own existence. Without knowledge of the true cost of the service it is not possible to plan within this context. In the United States, where the cost of private education is probably more accurately

known, the income from tuition and fees constitute about two-thirds of the total budget of universities (College Board 2006). As such, with the current model for private university funding, it is likely that the minimum additional funding required from external sources to ensure the operation of private universities is thirty percent of the overall budget. These targets are also stipulated in the Uganda Universities and other Tertiary Institutions Regulations 2005.

This paper has deliberately concerned itself with expenditure, given that raising income for teaching is generally the role of the university finance office and not the faculty units. This is the case with most private universities in Uganda, where tuition fees are completely outside the control of the faculties. Understanding and appreciating the cost implications of the various teaching inputs has been particularly useful for the Faculty of the Built Environment, as it has helped to ensure the faculty meets the standards of quality it set out to achieve under the 'boutique model' of private education, and necessary for it to maintain its validation status.

Undertaking this PAP has been extremely useful in determining a formula for not only the financial management of the faculty, but also as a means of determining an effective means of running the faculty itself, ranging from the recruitment and allocation of staff to the ability to monitor expenditure, therefore planning for the future. The methodology could certainly be extended to other programs and faculties, and one would hope that this is undertaken in order to dispel the myths associated with the cost of higher education in Uganda. While the task is ongoing, as the full implementation of the outcomes is currently underway, the full impact will not be evident for at least one or two years into the future.

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