



Open Letter

The e-newsletter of the Open Campus, UWI

Open Campus Developments



Working to Implement the UWI's Open Campus Strategic Plan

The fourth strategic aim of the University's plan is the creation of an Open Campus "to enable the University to expand the scope, enhance the appeal and improve the efficiency of its service to the individuals, communities and countries which it serves" ([UWI Strategic Plan](#), p.31).

Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Principal (Designate) Professor Hazel Simmons-McDonald has outlined the various ways in which UWI Open is working to achieve the strategic objective of The UWI Strategic Plan (2007 – 2012). The plan lists seven strategies for achieving this aim and over the last five months the staff of the UWI Open campus has focused on establishing the UWI Open Campus as a priority.

The PVC has reported to University Executive Management on the advances that have also been made with regard to the other strategic objectives. The progress report on the establishment of the UWI Open Campus and implementation of processes related to the main strategic objectives is described below:

Strategy1: *Establish University wide policies for the management, development and implementation of open and flexible learning including the use of off-campus, face-to-face and ICT infused programmes.*

In terms of the status of the main policy initiatives taken to integrate UWI Open with the UWI through the creation of policies for open and flexible learning, the Principal conveyed some positive news. First, that the UWI Open policy on 'open admission' is being refined and circulated for discussion.

Secondly, the financial policy on the cost of services and the fee structure for the Open Campus is also in progress. Thirdly, the inter-campus policy for the procurement and development of distance education programmes is being drafted for circulation and comment. Finally, on the matter of a consensus policy for distance education/online delivery, document has been drafted by a Committee drawn from across the University, and was circulated for discussion and comment/ The final draft will be submitted for consideration at University meetings in May.

In this report, Professor Simmons-McDonald reiterated that the UWI Open Campus is committed to the task of developing and implementing a range of methodologies and formats in the delivery of its programmes, including blended learning modalities – face-to-face, online, and Distance, involving the distribution of print and software materials.

Current News
February-March 2008

Working to Implement
the UWI's Open Campus
Strategic Plan

Call for IESALC-UNESCO
Papers Extended

Meet Some of the
People of the Open
Campus

Open Campus Quick
Facts

Your Feedback

Strategy 2 – *Establish a viable and sustainable financing mechanism for the UWI Open Campus.*

In this section of her progress report, the PVC pointed out that the original target date of launching the Open Campus in January 2008 had to be revised to take into consideration the practical systemic requirements and tasks that needed to be undertaken prior to the enrolment of students on the campus. However, she also noted that progress has been made with respect to the preparation of a unified UWI Open.

In addition, the campus is at present completing a detailed assessment of its development needs for the purpose of preparing grant proposals for submission to funding agencies. UWI Open is also furthering opportunities for accessing additional resources for support for technological development through partnerships with agencies such as the Caribbean Knowledge and Learning Network (CKLN) with which it also hopes to partner for the provision of services. The Campus is also exploring other avenues for funding its establishment in order to achieve financial viability.

Strategy 3 - *Establish and operationalise university wide policies for the development and management of inter-institutional relationships.*

The policies in question are those that guide UWI partnership arrangements with other institutions. The PVC pointed out that several policies already exist, having been developed through the work of the TLIU on behalf of UWI.

To this end, UWI Open is revisiting existing policies on the partnership arrangements, including franchising which is the arrangement that is most widely used at present. UWI Open has already made some advances with respect to partnership arrangements with educational institutions in the UWI-12.

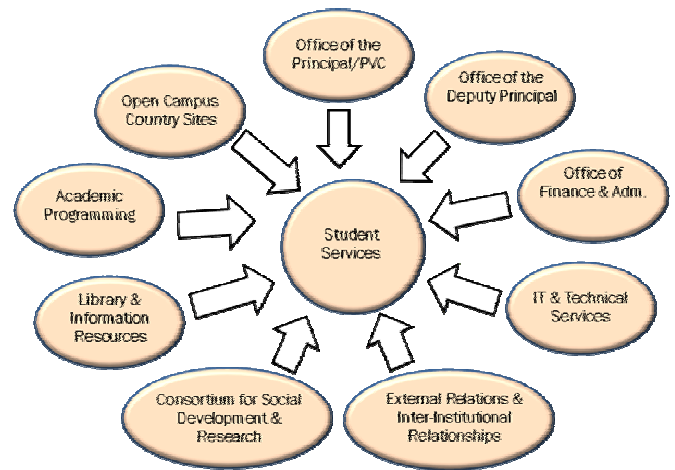
Strategy 4 - *Establish and Operationalise the UWI Open Campus*

The organisation of UWI Open has been designed on the basis of the functional imperatives that are required for efficient functioning within a distributed environment. These include the entities indicated in the following chart, in which Student Services is the focal point for the other units of UWI Open.

In keeping with the concept and the vision articulated for the Open Campus, the existing outreach sectors, namely, the School of Continuing Studies with the sites established in the UWI-12 as well as the sites existing in communities within countries with established campuses, the Tertiary Level Institutions Unit and the UWIDEC are incorporated and integrated into the campus structure to facilitate efficient functioning and delivery of services.

Accordingly, UWI Open will comprise ten functional units that will be responsible for the management of the affairs of the campus and for the delivery of its services as illustrated below:

An Organisational Structure Based on Functional Imperatives

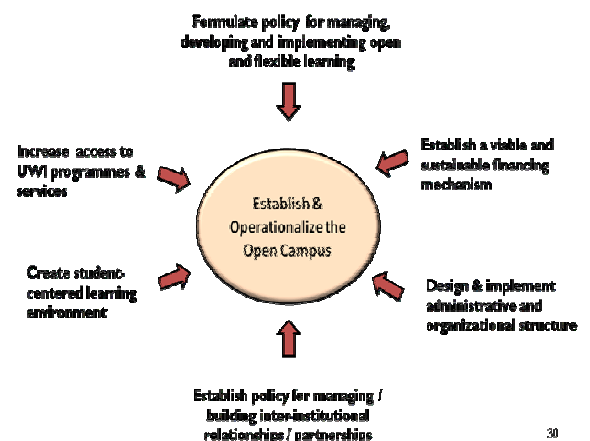


Strategy 5 - *Create a student-centred learning environment for a diverse student body.*

The fifth strategy focuses on the creation of a student-centred learning environment at the UWI Open Campus. As part of its ongoing development some of the key initiatives for this student-centred learning environment will include:

- the establishment of a prior learning assessment unit to provide students with the assistance they need and to facilitate their access to courses and programmes;
- setting up mechanisms for remediation through online and other modalities; these include the presentation of courses in English, Mathematics and IT literacy so that students might build adequate proficiency before undertaking more complex programmes. The introduction of IT programmes is intended to enable them to use the tools for accessing courses and programmes and to navigate the Web;
- implementing a student information system that will establish clear procedures and academic policies, organise orientation for students on admissions, assessment, fees etc;
- catering to students with special needs;
- creating virtual and geophysical communities to facilitate interaction and communication among students; provide better and more comprehensive training for e-tutors and e-advisors; and
- establishing a 24/7 help centre to provide support for students.

Open Campus Focus Areas



Strategy 6 – *Expand the scope of UWI by increasing the range, reach and access to University programmes and services by students from the relevant target groups.*

The PVC reported that the proposed organisational structure of UWI Open is designed to promote the achievement of this objective. The creation of a division dedicated to the development of pre-university and professional courses and programmes will provide the opportunity for people in the region to pursue various routes to access university education.

In addition, community-focused teaching and research units will be mobilised in a consortium that will collaborate to provide a wider range of preparatory and developmental programmes for an increasing number of applicants. This is a positive step in the direction of widening the net to capture those who otherwise would either not have had the opportunity for access or who, through lack of sensitisation, may not have had the motivation.

Further, the redesigning of programmes offered at the Open Campus sites for online delivery will make available to a much wider range of people preparatory programmes that will open up opportunities for access to higher education.

Strategy 7 – *Ensure an appropriate relationship between the Open Campus and the other campuses.*

The PVC of UWI Open revealed in that report that the Campus has adopted a very positive posture towards its sister campuses at UWI in order to detail the mandate of the Open Campus and respond to concerns that the other campuses might have had with respect to the scope and manner of operation of UWI Open. The discussions have thus far been helpful as UWI Open staff have been able to provide assurance that the campus is not interested in “appropriating” the courses and programmes of the other campuses, but will assist the campuses to develop and deliver their courses and programmes within the context of an acceptable framework for cost and income sharing.

Further, the PVC reiterated that the UWI Open will continue to have periodic consultations with the other campuses to keep them informed of developments within the UWI Open and to pursue opportunities for collaboration. The approaches outlined by UWI Open are intended to promote synergies and better relationships with sister campuses at UWI and affiliates in the UWI -12 and elsewhere.

Call for IESALC-UNESCO Papers Extended

IESALC-UNESCO invites articles for a special issue of the journal *Educación Superior y Sociedad* which will be devoted to the theme of higher education in the Caribbean. This issue is being produced in collaboration with The University of the West Indies Open Campus, with editorial assistance provided by Professor Hazel Simmons-McDonald.

Articles on the following themes – all related to tertiary education in the Caribbean – are welcome.

- New developments in higher education in the Caribbean
- Gender issues in higher education
- Expanding educational opportunities in the Caribbean

- Advances in the disciplinary areas (Pure and Applied Sciences, Humanities (including issues related to language proficiency, foreign language instruction etc.), Law, Social Sciences, Medicine etc.)
- Country initiatives in addressing issues in higher education
- The role of universities in tertiary level education in the region (The role of UWI as the premier institution of tertiary education in the Anglophone Caribbean)
- Social responsibility of tertiary level institutions in the Caribbean
- Other topics relevant to tertiary level education.

The deadline for submission of papers is March 15, 2008. And there are no particular requirements for the abstracts. Please do not make them more than around 500 words. Texts can be processed in Open Office, Word, or Wordperfect. IESALC will prepare Spanish translations of accepted articles themselves.

Formal responses will only be sent to authors in cases where an abstract is not accepted. Authors should therefore prepare and submit papers online by the deadline indicated to the following e-mail address.

iesalcjournal@cavehill.uwi.edu

Meet Some of the People of the Open Campus

Chairman of the Open Campus Council



Sir K Dwight Venner was appointed as the first Chairman of the Open Campus Council in 2007. As Chairman, he will be responsible for ensuring that the Council effectively serves and supports the higher educational and outreach needs of the regional University in the fifteen countries in the English-speaking Caribbean – Anguilla, Antigua & Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Montserrat, St Christopher & Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent & the Grenadines and the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago.

Sir Dwight is the Governor of the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, a position he has held since December 1989, according to the EECB website (www.eccb-centralbank.org). Sir Dwight is an Economist by training and was educated at the University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica where he obtained both a Bachelor of Science (BSc) and a Master of Science (MSc) Degree in Economics. He served as a Junior Research Fellow at the Institute of Social and Economic Research at the University of the West Indies and then as a Lecturer in Economics from 1974 to 1981.

Sir Dwight received the award of Commander of the British Empire (CBE) in 1996 in St Lucia and was recognised as a Distinguished Graduate of the University of the West Indies on its 50th Anniversary in July 1998. In June 2001 he was awarded Knight Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (KBE) in St Vincent and The Grenadines for services to the financial sector. In October 2002, Sir Dwight was recipient of an honorary degree, the Doctor of Laws from the University of the West Indies.

His hobbies include cricket, racquet ball, netball, pistol shooting, hiking, jogging, music, reading, collecting paintings, crystals, miniature boats and coins, travel and photography. Sir Dwight is married to Lynda Arnolde Winville Venner (nee St. Rose) and they have seven children. (*Sourced from the www.eccb-centralbank.org website*).

Deputy Principal Designate of the Open Campus



Dr. Vivienne Roberts is a Jamaican by birth. She received her early education in Jamaica and holds a B. Sc. Degree in Natural Sciences from UWI's Mona campus. She also holds a Diploma in Education from UWI's Cave Hill campus, an M.S in Educational Administration from the University of Tennessee and a Ph D. in Educational Administration, also from the University of the West Indies.

Dr. Roberts has been involved in education and educational administration for several years both in Jamaica and Barbados. In 1975 she joined the Barbados Community College as Assistant Tutor for Chemistry and Anatomy and Physiology and from 1986 to 1991 served as Head of the Division of Health Sciences.

UWI has benefited from Dr. Roberts' expertise from 1991 to the present in a variety of capacities. These positions include Project Coordinator for the OUS/USAID Development Training Project from 1991 to 1995, Programme Officer for OUS from 1995 – 1996 and Senior Programme Officer of the Tertiary Level Institutions (TLI) since 1996. She has acted as Director of the Unit on several occasions.

Although her full time job at UWI Cave Hill is mainly administrative, she also provides guidance to graduate students in the Masters in Education programme at UWI and has been associated with the development and delivery of the On Line M. Ed. in Educational Administration.

The numerous journal articles she has written cover a range of tertiary educational issues including inter-institutional relationships and the evolution of tertiary education in the Commonwealth Caribbean. Her published contributions also extend to several monographs and reports to USAID, CDB, UNESCO/IESALC & Caricom as well as a book published by the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Open Campus Quick Facts

The University of the West Indies (UWI) is established to provide tertiary level education to the fifteen English speaking countries scattered throughout the Caribbean and Central America. The countries supported by UWI include:

1. Anguilla
2. Antigua and Barbuda
3. The Bahamas
4. Barbados
5. Belize
6. British Virgin Islands
7. Cayman Islands
8. Dominica
9. Grenada
10. Jamaica
11. Montserrat
12. St. Kitts and Nevis
13. St Lucia
14. St Vincent and the Grenadines
15. Trinidad and Tobago
16. Turks & Caicos (non-supporting country)

The University has an undergraduate and graduate population of 39,000 students scattered throughout the Caribbean, although the majority of the students are located on one of the three main campuses located in Mona in Jamaica, Cave Hill in Barbados, and St. Augustine in Trinidad & Tobago.

In addition, the UWI currently has 31 Distance Education Centres, 23 School of Continuing Studies Centres, five (5) specialised units and at least eight (8) satellite sites scattered throughout the fifteen (15) participating countries. These regional centres support a current student population of about 6,800 undergraduate and graduate students and approximately 13,000 continuing studies students each year.

More information on the Open Campus will soon be available on our new web site at <http://www.open.uwi.edu>, scheduled to be ready by the end of February 2008. However, **prospective students** may now apply for UWI undergraduate and graduate programmes and courses through our latest online application website at <http://dec.uwi.edu/admissions/>. Associate degree students may also apply on-line.

About the Open Letter

This e-newsletter of the Open Campus of the University of the West Indies is intended to provide our colleagues and clients with an up-to-date source of news and information about the developments of the Open Campus. The page, which is maintained by the Office of the Deputy Principal of the Open Campus, will be updated regularly, as new developments occur.

Your Feedback is Welcome

We welcome your comments on the Open Campus, UWI, and encourage you to send your thoughts to the Open Letter to us via e-mail at our temporary email address@ lifelong@uwimona.edu.jm.