

5/1/8
L
26
L25
-0)
2007



Actualising THE UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS of our DREAM



UNILAG Press

Professor Tolu Odugbemi, OON, NNOM, FAS

ACTUALISING THE UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS OF OUR DREAM

© Tolu Odugbemi, 2007

The University of Lagos has come a long way since its establishment in 1962 by an Act of Parliament. We must salute the vision and sacrifice of its founding fathers. Albeit, the University has been presided over by eight Vice-Chancellors.

ACTUALISING THE UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS OF OUR DREAM

reproduced in any form without the permission of the author.

Prior to my appointment as Vice-Chancellor, I have been reflecting on the role of the University of Lagos in the development of Nigeria.

by




Professor Tolu Odugbemi, FAS



© Tolu Odugbemi, 2007

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form without the permission of the author.



Printed by
University of Lagos Press
University of Lagos
Akoka - Yaba
Lagos, Nigeria
P.O. Box 132
University of Lagos

ACTUALISING THE UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS OF OUR DREAM

The University of Lagos has come a long way since its establishment in 1962 by an Act of Parliament. We must salute the efforts, vision and sacrifice of its founding fathers. Altogether, the University has been presided over by eight Vice-Chancellors. About 100,000 students had graduated from the University with 26,464 Masters, 398 M. Phil and 959 Ph.Ds. A large majority of these are now located in the strategic sectors of our economy making modest contributions to the society.

Prior to my appointment as the Vice-Chancellor, I have been reflecting on the popular perception about our image and perception of the public on our services, just what we are and what we should be. We may well be joyful at being number one in Nigeria but there is still the need for urgent improvement particularly when viewed from the current reports on the world-wide University ratings by some research organizations. We intend to make UNILAG not only number one in Nigeria but one of the top ten in the world.

I have reflected over my appointment and I wish to state that it is a collective triumph. The tasks ahead of us are daunting. But at the same time they pose great challenges and opportunities. The scarcest resources in any society are highly knowledgeable and technically minded people, those that are not found wanting in logical and critical evaluation of issues, those who are truthful, committed, transparent and hard working.

The Vice-Chancellor or Prof. Tolu Odugbemi alone cannot travel far, but with your sincere support and with God on our side, we can cover a thousand miles in an hour. The celebrated individual role in social history is often exaggerated. Individuals can only make history within a group of people bound by the same vision and aspiration.

The doors of the Vice-Chancellor's Office are wide open to your input, your constructive and empathetic critique of our interventions. I would like to assure you that I intend to sustain all the established channels of interactions with academic staff, administrative and technical staff, students, parents, friends of the University and other stakeholders in the University enterprise.

As an individual, I would seek no personal gain and I intend to administer the University with the **utmost trust, transparency, accountability and commitment**. I would neither sacrifice the rules and the procedures of the University in whatever I do nor will I discriminate. I shall place the University as my number one priority.

I thank you as I ask you to extend your hands of fellowship to me in the challenges ahead of us. God bless.

Prof. Tolu Odugbemi, FAS
Vice-Chancellor
University of Lagos
Lagos, Nigeria

May 2007

MY VISION

A University that will show leadership in teaching, research, service and excellent character relevant to the needs and aspirations of the country in the context of globalization.

MISSION STATEMENT

To serve as a team player and coordinator, to make the various units of the University of Lagos excel in the primary assignments of Teaching, Research and Service while supporting University Council in search of decent and legitimate avenues for fund generation

Consequently my core objective is:

To invest more in human capital, so that colleagues can excel in **primary assignments of teaching,**

research and service. Thus, I shall seek to sustain academic, administrative and technical staff through opportunities **for training, retraining and provision of full welfare entitlements and benefits** by working closely with various University organs, in particular, **the University Council and the Senate.**

Specific objectives:

1. To restore dignity of the best teaching and research practices with respect for good values.
2. To enthrone accountability and transparency in all campus activities.
3. To contribute to link "Town with the Gown".

FOCUS OF ADMINISTRATION

1. Academic Matters

(a) Career Mobility

Promotion exercises need not go beyond one academic session for all deserving and qualified staff both junior and senior staff of all categories.

The professorial processing takes years, which can lead to frustration of deserving members of staff.

Transparency will be the watchword in processing professorial appointments. The staff handling the processes will brief the Vice-Chancellor regularly in writing on stage/status of each candidate. In any situation when papers sent for assessment are not returned within three months after letter reminding assessors is not heeded, a replacement of defaulting assessor(s) is effected. The relevant Provost/Dean will be requested to provide additional names of qualified experts in consultation with the Professor/Head of that Department. This strategy will ensure transparency and accountability in completing an exercise within six (6) months to nine (9) months maximum.

This type of speedy action will apply to other categories of staff in which fair play and merit will be guiding principles when APER forms are being evaluated. Furthermore, experienced, highly skilled and productive teachers, researchers and successful professionals currently practising outside the university system will be encouraged to bring in their skills. In line with the principle of recognizing academic excellence through research and teaching, the retention of productive academicians through adjunct and contract appointments would be encouraged.

(b) Academic Planning

To focus more on research, practicals, demonstrations and teaching aids backed by modern equipment, tools and reagents as may be necessary, with the objective of strengthening our academic programmes. New academic/professional

programmes relevant to societal needs will be encouraged and established.

To ensure that committee system follows approved guidelines and procedures on:

1. Admissions at postgraduate, undergraduate levels, and non full-time courses.
2. Discipline of students.
3. Full computerization of records of staff and students.

Examination results will be treated sacredly and released promptly. Efforts will be made to computerize students' examination results in order to ensure prompt release to students, so as to reduce the time often wasted by lecturers in preparing examination results. Efforts will be made to develop software for the University for compilation of students' results which can be adopted by Departments and Faculties. This will guarantee a uniform format for presentation of results to Senate.

(c) Academic Calendar

Academic calendar will be prepared regularly and strictly adhered to; all efforts will be directed at having academic calendar online.

(d) Exchange Programme

Exchange programme is a good academic activity that can enhance academic quality and vision of our staff members. Therefore, our staff will be encouraged to take advantage of opportunities for exchange programmes at reputable national, regional and international institutions.

(e) Attracting International Students and Scholars

The content and quality of our teaching and research activities will be enhanced and sustained to attract good students and staff from all parts of the world. This is a potential source for increasing revenue from fees and improvement of our university ranking. I shall constitute a team to package and sell UNILAG to Africa and the world with a view to attracting international students.

2. RESEARCH AGENDA

(a) Research Qualifications Requirement

The Senate decision on Ph.D requirement will be maintained and sustained with greater encouragement given to staff to acquire higher research qualifications as may be appropriate to various professional groupings e.g. MD, MS (Masters in Surgery) in College of Medicine.

(b) Research and Methodology Workshop

The University would identify some Nigerian problems and set up mechanism to solve them through researches. Faculties should be challenged with these problems, provided with facilities and funds to solve the problems within a specific period.

The University should be identified with these specific breakthroughs nationwide and worldwide.

The Annual Research Conference and Fair will be sustained. Each Dean of Faculty is to be encouraged to mount at least a research project for funding through the Central Research Committee.

3. FOCUS ON ADMINISTRATION

(a) The Collegiate System

The University has to be repositioned academically, technologically and administratively so as to be one of the leading and highly ranked universities in the world. The collegiate system has its many advantages in respect of effective coordination of staff and students to ensure discipline, peace and better academic productivity. The College of Medicine of the University of Lagos is a model worth emulating. The National Universities Commission (NUC) once advocated collegiate system for Nigerian universities; this was never implemented (Reference letter NUC/ES/273/Vol.VIII/169 dated 22nd November, 1990 from the office of the Executive Secretary to All Vice-Chancellors of Federal Universities). As a Vice-Chancellor, and Chairman of Senate, I will ensure that a committee will urgently be set up to prepare a paper on collegiate system for Council consideration. We have a pool of Deputy Registrars that can serve as College Secretaries for various Colleges that may come up; the same applies to the Bursary Department that can provide staff for accounting units in the Colleges. Certainly, my experience as a former Provost and also as President of the National Postgraduate Medical College of Nigeria will be useful to enable me to pilot the idea without unnecessary and additional financial burden. The use of the collegiate structure as a system of achieving effective decentralization of administrative operations, devolution of powers and delegation of authority and responsibility will be pursued for the following reasons:

- It will be a mechanism for minimizing the input of resources into while accelerating the process of decision-making and implementation.
- It will be an institutional framework for the vigorous pursuit of the academic objectives of the university.
- It will be a means for achieving much greater co-ordination and cross-fertilization of relevant disciplines.
- It will be a tool for better assessment of resource requirement and the resultant output.
- It is a tool for coping with current and anticipated expansion of the university's scale of operation without compromising quality of output.

The structure would also help the Colleges:

- To regain their roles of supervising and coordinating various academic programmes in their units/ departments.
- To ensure that all courses and programmes are appropriately accredited. Review of the syllabi of many programmes to meet present-day needs of Nigerians.

It is being proposed and subject to the relevant amendment and Senate/Council approvals, the University be restructured along the following lines with related faculties:

- **College of Medicine** comprising of:
 - Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences
 - Faculty of Clinical Sciences
 - Faculty of Dental Sciences
 - Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences
 - Faculty of Public Health Sciences.

- College of Science, Engineering, Environmental Design and Technology comprising of:

- Faculty of Engineering
- Faculty of Science
- Faculty of Environmental Design
- Faculty of Technology (F.C.E.T).

- College of Education, Business and Social Studies comprising of:

- Faculty of Business Administration
- Faculty of Social Sciences
- Faculty of Education

- College of Humanities and Law

- Faculty of Law
- Faculty of Arts

- School of Postgraduate Studies

- Distance Learning Institute

The Distance Learning Institute will be developed to a Virtual Academic Centre of UNILAG. Various Faculty courses and programmes of the Human Resource Development Board and the Diploma programme will be encouraged to develop fully.

The physical infrastructures are already available in the University. The University Council with a focused, selfless and disciplined Vice-Chancellor can make a drastic positive change within two years. There will be improved interaction between staff and students.

(b) The Vice-Chancellor's Office

- i. The University guidelines and laid down procedures on admission, appointments, promotions, etc by various organs/units of the University such as Council, Senate, Faculty/ Department and various properly constituted committees will be maintained.
- ii. The use of Calendar of Events with the dates of Committee/ Board meetings, meetings of Senate/ Council, will be drawn and adhered to in true tradition of modern university setting.

(c) The Registry

There shall be well-defined job descriptions and effective/ orderly supervision. There is a need to ensure that the Registry is more proactive in the performance of its statutory functions; efforts would be made to train and retrain staff and ensure that there are no round pegs in square holes. Also greater use of information technology particularly the intranet would be ensured, and efforts made to ensure that meetings are held as scheduled and punctually too. The complete computerization and maintenance of students and staff records to be ensured.

(d) Welfare and Staff Development

Staff salary will be given special attention so that the Bursary Department is mandated to ensure prompt payment for all staff entitled to such in all Units/ College on the same date.

Approved allowances for which funds are released will be paid promptly.

House ownership schemes for all categories of staff are to be further strengthened in co-operation with private agencies and Government establishments.

The existing policies on house/land acquisition loans with furniture allowance and car loan will be made to the advantage of staff with support by the University Council. Lagos factor with respect to housing and transportation allowances and ownership would be taken up seriously with the University Council.

The University Staff School and International School to be encouraged and supported.

Children of staff will have improved access to coaching by tapping the expertise of the Faculty of Education. This will be made to be a self-sustaining project where children of staff will enjoy the rare privilege of being tutored by professionals from the Faculty of Education rather than staff expending huge sums of money on private coaching centres in the Lagos Metropolis. This is to enhance academic potentials so as to make them compete favourably with others.

University Medical Centre is to offer qualitative and modern health and medical services. A plan to upgrade the Health Centre will be intensified.

Equal, open, just and easy access to opportunities for all staff on issues relating to promotion and distribution of amenities without regard to sex, creed, religion, race, ethnicity and political persuasions of concerned individuals.

Provision would be made through the active support of Council for reasonable seed money for the take-off of furniture and car refurbishing loans for staff. Motorcycle acquisition loans would also be provided for junior staff.

Prompt attention will be given to legitimate requests / demands by various recognized groups/unions to nip any foreseeable problem in the bud and thus ensure industrial harmony.

(e) Sports

There is an urgent need to increase sporting activities at Local/International levels. Therefore additional standard sporting activities including indoor sports with construction of bowling alleys and swimming pools will be provided. The Wednesday recreational period will be maintained as a free period. As usual Wednesday afternoon i.e. 2-5p.m. will be lecture-free for sports activities for both staff and students.

(f) Security of Life and Property

The building of multiple localized fences around staff quarters and academic buildings, the lovely campus landscape is now seriously distorted. The issue of perimeter fencing will be given a priority. Guidelines and policies on preventing and treating security lapses will be made and circulated.

Security staff strength will be improved in quantity and quality. There would be training and re-training to improve attitude and services.

Appropriate communication gadgets to be provided while many street/park lights to be regularly maintained. There will be a provision of functional fire fighting vehicles and equipment in the main campus, Akoka and Idi-Araba campus. Smoke alarms in buildings to be installed/reactivated.

4. Student Matters

The Student Affairs Department is to be strengthened and restructured in order to cope with the social, physical, medical and psychological needs of various groups of students.

Financial assistance in form of scholarships and bursary awards to be organized for deserving students. The Work Study Programme will be given due attention.

(a) Admissions

- College / Faculty Admissions committees will be allowed to function following specific guidelines / criteria.
- Departmental admissions committees will be allowed to present and defend their admission lists before the Faculty Admissions Committee, which in turn will present and defend them before the University Central Admissions Committee. The University Central Admissions Committee will present the admission lists for Senate's attention to ensure transparency.

- Admissions should be by merit even for catchment areas and educationally disadvantaged states.
- Admissions should be for candidates who took University of Lagos as first or second choice.
- Candidates who score 220 and above in the University Matriculation Examination (UME) should be given the opportunity to write the University post-UME and candidates who score 50% and above should be considered for admission. (This aspect will depend on Government policy on post-UME screening).

The admission exercise should end on time to enable every admitted and registered student attend at least 65% of lectures and practicals scheduled for the first semester.

(b) Records

Complete and proper students' results records are necessary. Many times students request for transcripts from Records department and they claim they don't have results for some semesters/sessions. Such students are referred to their individual department. This is not tidy. I believe results approved by Senate should be forwarded as part of the attachment to the Minutes of Senate to the Vice-Chancellor's Office for signature and then to Records department.

The Institutional Research and Management Information System (IRMIS) that is in charge of computerizing the University academic records will be given necessary support to perform efficiently and maximally.

(c) Hostel

To support completion of new hostels for students through partnership with private groups on Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) basis.

(d) Student representation

A disciplined and virile student representation would be encouraged at all levels.

5. University Finances/ Internally Generated Revenue

(a) Bursary

To be restructured with emphasis on internal and external auditing. Prompt release of approved funds for various academic, research and administrative units/ projects to be ensured. The Bursary Department will be strengthened to enable it to perform optimally. Assets Registers to be available and updated on university property.

(b) Fund Generation Endowment Alumni and Public Relations

The University Council under the able leadership of Chief Afe Babalola, OFR, SAN, LLD has provided leadership in fund generation and endowment in cooperation with the Alumni Association. It is a challenge for a new Vice-Chancellor to not only ensure the judicious use of various funds but also to explore other avenues through which the university could legitimately generate funds especially through the conduct of research that would be relevant and provide answers to issues in the community, thereby attracting patronage from the industries.

(c) Consultancy Services

Expertise of staff will be tapped and encouraged through adequate remuneration for consultancy services to meet societal needs and challenges of national development. There are quite a number of modern hospital equipment that are spread over the whole country and they require installation, servicing or repairs.

The Biomedical Engineering in the College of Medicine in collaboration with the Faculty of Engineering will be empowered in providing manpower needs of the nation. Income generation will be enhanced.

(d) Non-FTE Programmes

The non-FTE programmes will continue to be supported and improved upon particularly in quality and relevance.

(e) Decentralization of Finances/Approval

College/Faculties/Schools/Departments/Units to have direct access to funds approved for them. Each Head to be Accounting officer for the money approved with a specified limit as laid down by University Council.

6. Information Communication Technology

Computer Literacy and Internet/Intranet Services will be a priority. Efforts would be made to expand the current capacity and distribution, students to be given access to connection in the hostels and academic areas through secure means, and all offices to be connected. Efforts would be made to activate and ensure the use of campus-wide intranet. The

University website to be updated on a daily basis and made more interactive. The University would liaise with various agencies to ensure that all staff can each own a personal computer or a laptop, which can be purchased on installmental basis. Computer laboratories will be maintained to ensure that our students have easier access.

Online lectures will be encouraged.

Media and Corporate Affairs

Effective and positive media relations will be supported and encouraged at all times. Media and Corporate Affairs with its various components like Information Unit, Passages Unit and Protocol Unit will be strengthened to perform its duties independently and ethically with improved collaboration with Mass Communication Department. The University Calendar will be published regularly in print and electronic forms. The Information unit will now be on its own and reports directly to the Vice-Chancellor. Radio UNILAG will go back to its original mission and vision as stipulated by the founding fathers. That is to say, to be the broadcast laboratory for Mass Communication Department. Consequently, Radio UNILAG will now be under the Department of Mass Communication.

Library

To be restructured, and provision of library services to be modernized. College libraries to be expanded and stocked with up-to-date books. More emphasis to be placed on the use of information technology in

retrieval. Faculties are to be assisted to expand their libraries with Internet connectivity.

7. Social and Physical Infrastructure

(a) The Works & Physical Planning Unit

The suggestion on merging the various units to a new PROPERTY SERVICES DEPARTMENT will be carefully studied by a technical committee and recommendations therefrom will be implemented in the overall interest of the whole university. This unit will ensure improved maintenance of campus infrastructure including roads, drainage and parking areas.

The perimeter fencing of the campus will be given a priority instead of multiple localized fences which is destroying campus beauty.

Annual budget would include vote to maintain buildings, equipment, roads, vehicles, lecture theatres and classroom furniture. Funds approved for such maintenance and repairs would be monitored and judiciously used.

(b) The Environment

The University environment must be a shining example with respect to nature and cleanliness. The Estate Unit (formerly Parks and Gardens Unit) will be strengthened to perform its functions including landscaping the University campus, general beautification and environmental care of the campus, planting and maintaining shade trees and flowers. Commercialization of products such as fruits and nurseries will be reactivated. The environment will be made clean, orderly and secure enough for

conducive learning, teaching and research. Provision of functional and well-maintained toilet facilities for the use of staff and students in every building in the university.

Maintenance of all facilities will be actively pursued. There are junks inside various buildings and surrounding areas defacing the landscape. All unserviceable items and junks are to be removed to restore the old glorious and decent sceneries.

BOTANICAL AND ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS to be rebuilt for learning, research and services.

The waterfront of the University is to be developed and beautified. The UNILAG waterfront is an asset, which could be developed as a holiday resort, for camping and conferences as found in some countries like the Gambia, even in Lagos e.g. 'Whispering Palms'.

WATER TRANSPORTATION from the campus to adjoining places like Victoria Island, Ikorodu, Bariga to be developed in partnership with private organizations/Lagos State Government.

(c) Power Supply

Electricity and water supply systems need urgent attention/overhaul by maintenance experts. The necessity for additional cost-effective satellite substations for water and electricity generation/distribution may be considered as may be recommended by technical team.

- Repair and maintenance of old generators.

- Repair and maintenance of transformers.
- Purchase of new transformers and generators as may be found necessary.
- Staff dedication and efficiency are vital for improved power generation and distribution.
- Supply from the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) will be monitored.
- The relationship between the Works & Physical Planning Unit and PHCN will be monitored.

(d) Water Supply

- Local boreholes to be monitored.
- Supply from Lagos State water works will be monitored.
- Staff dedication and efficiency will be monitored.

SUGGESTION BOXES

Suggestion Boxes will be located in strategic locations on campus including the College of Medicine, Idi-Araba for effective networking with the Vice-Chancellor's Office. Staff members who have something to say but are unable to get to the Vice-Chancellor in good time can send their observations, comments, etc through the Suggestion Boxes. Information received through the Suggestion Boxes shall be processed urgently.

INFORMATION CENTRES

In addition to the existing Information Centres beside the Student Affairs, each of the Faculties is to have an Information Centre to facilitate effective intra- and inter campus communication. Notice Boards are to be located at strategic places to prevent

indiscriminate posting of notices on the walls and doors.

8. Ethical Re-armament: Getting it Right Orientation

Staff and students must fulfill all their obligations as to teaching, learning and service as may be applicable. Punctuality at work and in attending all University functions/ activities is to be encouraged.

Culture is vital in African tradition; this will be projected at all facets of our University - in particular students respecting their teachers and elders while the teachers serve as role models/mentors for the students and not tormentors.

Ethics as applicable to various professional groupings to be encouraged and adhered to.

Dignity of labour needs to be preached to all workers, junior members of staff should not be looked down on because they clean offices or carry out unskilled jobs; mutual respect is vital for human interactions for us to achieve our target goals to excel.

There will be zero tolerance to misconduct by students and staff, in particular cultism and examination malpractice. Consequently, I shall introduce orientation courses/workshops with emphasis on Transparency, Accountability, Culture, Ethics and Dignity of labour/output (publications) (TACED). To re-orientate our students towards responsible, and disciplined unionism.

Democratization of unions of students to be encouraged. College/Faculties/Departments to have representations on enhancing their welfare and providing conducive learning environment.

Workshops, seminars and various orientation courses/ programmes will be mandatory for all students at College/ Faculty/Departmental levels. Social interactions among staff and students will be encouraged on regular basis.

CONCLUSION

The challenges of making our University of Lagos one of the best in the world are attainable by our working as a team with faith in God and positive thinking within this decade.

Prof. Tolu Odugbemi, FAS

5/28
L
36
L25
-0)
2007



Actualising THE UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS of our **Dream**



UNILAG Press

Professor 'Tolu Odugbemi, OON, NNOM, FAS