

11th Annual Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education Week 2016

The University Council of Jamaica (UCJ) celebrated its 11th Annual Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education Week from March 7-11, 2016, under the theme "Assuring Quality in Programme Outcomes: Imperative for Graduate Effectiveness".

Dr Yvonne Marshall, Executive Director, said: "The week is an opportunity for the UCJ to inform and educate our stakeholders about quality assurance issues in tertiary education."

Dr Marshall added: "The key focus is on facilitating practical and relevant workshops and seminars to assist in the development of tertiary institutions, by providing meaningful training to promote quality enhancement."



Dr Yvonne Marshall, Executive Director, making a presentation on External Quality Assurance Principles and Procedures: the Role of the UCJ, during the Workshop for Assessors and Accreditation Officers.

UCJ Trains Assessors and Accreditation Officers



Participants at the UCJ Workshop for Assessors and Accreditation Officers engaging in a group activity.

The UCJ trained approximately 50 assessors and accreditation officers during a workshop at the Mona Visitors' Lodge and Conference Centre on Monday, March 7, 2016. The workshop, chaired by Professor Trevor Gardner, President, Northern Caribbean University (NCU), was held under the theme "Assuring Quality in Programme Outcomes: The Role of the Assessor".

The workshop included a presentation on "External Quality Assurance Principles and Procedures" made by Dr Yvonne Marshall, Executive Director. Ms Grace Gordon, Director of Accreditation, presented on "The Role of the Assessor" and "Writing the Evaluation Report". Three experienced UCJ assessors: Dr Felix Akinladejo, MPhil Coordinator, Faculty of Engineering and Computing, University of Technology (UTech), Jamaica; Dr Eva Lewis Fuller, former Chief Medical Officer of Jamaica; and Dr Jean Dixon, retired Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health shared presentations on Preparing for the Visit, Writing the Report and Examining the Governance Criteria.

The day's activities also included a panel discussion moderated by Dr Carol Gentles, UCJ Council member, and a group activity that required participants to review two sample reports, identifying areas for improvement.

"Hard Talk" for Institutions



Representatives from tertiary institutions participating in the discussions.

More than 100 Curriculum Developers, Deans, Faculty, Programme Directors/Co-ordinators and Quality Assurance Officers participated in the UCJ's Workshop for Institutions-"Hard Talk", chaired by Rev Dr Gordon Cowans, Principal, Knox Community College. The event was held at the Knutsford Court Hotel in Kingston on Tuesday, March 8, 2016.

The main feature of the workshop was a panel discussion on the theme, "Assuring Quality in Programme Outcomes: Imperative for Graduate Effectiveness". The discussion, moderated by Dr Christopher Clarke, Principal, Shortwood Teachers' College, examined the key requirements for graduate effectiveness, and the links between the identification of student learning outcomes, effective curriculum development, and effective graduates.

"Hard talk" offered institutions the opportunity to have open dialogue with each other and the UCJ,

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regarding the common challenges they face. Institutions were also able to get clarity on matters relating to some of the UCJ's processes.

Greetings were received from Dr Yvonne Marshall, Executive Director, and Ambassador, the Hon. Burchell Whiteman, Chairman of the Council.

Dr Christopher Clarke (standing), with the "Hard Talk" panellists from left to right: Professor Ronald Young, Council Member; Ms Grace Gordon, Director of Accreditation; Professor Ralph Robinson, Professor of Parasitology, Department of Life Sciences, UWI Mona; Dr Winsome Russell, Associate Vice President, Academic Management and Quality Assurance, UTech; Ms Denise Brown, Director Quality Management and Institutional Research, NCU; Dr Audette Bailey, Quality Assurance Officer and Senior Lecturer, Bethlehem Moravian College; Mr David Pearson, Academic Dean, Jamaica Theological Seminary; and Dr Wayde Marr, Chairman, Vector Technology Institute.



Assessing and Improving the Financial Health of Universities and Colleges



Mr Dwight Walters (2nd right), Manager of Pensions, Projects & Commercial Operations at the UWI assists participants with the calculation of the Composite Financial Index (CFI), during the Seminar.

Presidents, Principals, Chief Financial Officers and Bursars from tertiary institutions across the island participated in the UCJ Seminar on Assessing and Improving the Financial Health of Universities and Colleges, held at the Mona Visitors' Lodge and Conference Centre on Thursday, March 10, 2016.

The seminar, chaired by Mr Joseph Taffe, UCJ Council member, included a presentation on "Financial Management in Tertiary Institutions: Issues and Challenges", delivered by Mr Archibald Campbell, Chief Financial Officer/University Bursar, the UWI.

Mr Dwight Walters, Manager of Pensions, Projects & Commercial Operations, the UWI, addressed "Assessing Financial Health Using the Composite Financial Index (CFI)".

Greetings were received from Dr Yvonne Marshall, Executive Director, and Ambassador, the Hon. Burchell Whiteman, Chairman of the Council.

The discussion during the seminar focused on the translatability of the CFI to colleges and universities in Jamaica in light of the challenging economic environment in which the institutions operate. Audited financial statements and the elements which contribute to the CFI calculations were also explored.

The seminar closed with a lively vote of thanks from Dr Nicholeen DeGrasse-Johnson, Principal, Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts.

Overseas University receives Certificates of Programme Recognition



Representatives from tertiary institutions at the UCJ Awards Ceremony.

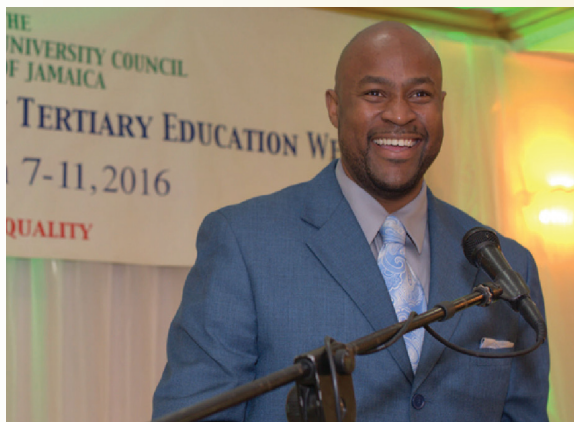
Representatives from the Jamaican tertiary education community were on hand at the Mona Visitors' Lodge and Conference Centre, on Thursday, March 10, 2016, to witness the UCJ present the first ever Certificates of Programme Recognition to overseas-based, Walden University.

The Awards Ceremony, chaired by Ambassador, the Hon. Burchell Whiteman, UCJ Chairman, saw 12 institutions receive Certificates of Programme Accreditation, while another three institutions were presented with Certificates of Registration.

Greetings were received from Dr Yvonne Marshall, Executive Director, and Mrs Maxine Henry-Wilson, Commissioner, The Jamaica Tertiary Education Commission (J-TEC).

Dr Maurice Smith, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Youth and Information delivered a thought-provoking keynote address. He encouraged those present to allow excellence to define them, and issued a call for a 'back to basics' approach to tertiary education.

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Dr Maurice Smith, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information delivering the keynote address during the UCJ Awards Ceremony.

Guests were treated to ensembles from Las Voces Melodiosas from The Mico University College.

The ceremony closed with a response from Dr Asburn Pinnock, President, the Mico University College.

Students discuss workplace skills and attributes at UCJ forum



Professor Lou Ann Barclay (left), UCJ Council member, moderates the panel discussion during the UCJ's Students' Forum, with panellists (from left): Ms Mona-Lee Blidgel, student at the UTech; Ms Lenisha Malcolm, student at the Mico University College; Mrs Marcia Dwyer, formerly of Grace Kennedy and Ms Sandra Grey, Human Resource Relationship Manager, the National Commercial Bank (NCB).

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL OF JAMAICA AWARDS CEREMONY March 9, 2016

Certificates of Accreditation

- Caribbean Graduate School of Theology
- Catholic College of Mandeville
- Excelsior Community College
- Jamaica Theological Seminary
- Knox Community College
- The Mico University College
- Montego Bay Community College
- Northern Caribbean University
- St Mary's University of Minnesota
- University College of the Caribbean
- University of Technology, Jamaica
- Vocational Training Development Institute

Certificates of Registration

- The Hydell College
- International University of the Caribbean
- Sigma College of Nursing and Applied Sciences

Certificates of Recognition

- Walden University

More than 130 students representing 14 tertiary institutions attended a lively Students' Forum at the Mico University College on Friday, March 11, 2016. The forum was held under the theme "Workplace Skills and Attributes: Employers' Expectations and Students' Perceptions."

Greetings were received from Mr Errol Holmes, representative from the Human Resource Management Association of Jamaica, HRMAJ.

Dr Jessica Dunn and Dr Gareth Phillips, Accreditation Officers with the UCJ, presented the findings of a preliminary study carried out with members of HRMAJ; and final year undergraduate students from a local tertiary institution. The study identified the skills and attributes students need to develop and hone, in order to enter the job market and be successful in their career.

The results from the study suggest that employers, when hiring recent graduates, place importance on communication skills; emotional intelligence; personal appearance and deportment; and the level of knowledge and skills specific to the graduates' chosen career; the accreditation status of the programmes from which graduates have come, and the practical experience students have in the area of employment.

Employers' expectations of skills and attributes required for the workplace were ranked as follows: working with others in a team; coping with stressful situations; intellectual ability and intelligence; honesty, accountability and ethical standards; and taking responsibility.

Several other factors were considered important including: students' academic achievements; and knowledge and skills beyond the areas of employment.

There were similar patterns in relation to what students perceived to be some of the key factors employers valued as important when hiring, however, ranked in a different order. These were: knowledge and skills specific to their chosen career; communication skills; the accreditation status of the programmes; emotional intelligence; and academic achievement.

Students' perceptions of the skills and attributes for the workplace were: having a positive attitude towards work; working with others in a team; honesty, accountability and ethical standards; critical thinking and reasoning skills; and taking responsibility.

The forum concluded with a robust panel discussion on the findings.



UCJ launches Facebook Page

The UCJ is officially on Facebook! The page was unveiled during the 11th Annual Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education Week. Users can access the page at <https://www.facebook.com/UniversityCouncilofJamaica>

The page has up-to-date information including three specialised tabs that provide users with the lists of registered institutions and accredited programmes, and the "Know Before You Enrol" advice and tips for those considering tertiary education.

Users can look forward to regular updates from the UCJ via this channel.

UCJ representatives take part in International Quality Assurance Programme

Dr Yvonne Marshall, Executive Director, and Dr Gareth Phillips, Accreditation Officer, took part in the International Quality Assurance Programme (IQAP) hosted by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Higher Education, UK, at the British Academy, London, England from January 18–22, 2016.

The IQAP attracted representatives from ministries of education, higher education institutions, and quality assurance agencies from Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Qatar, Hong Kong, China, Mexico, Morocco, Portugal, Sweden, and Jamaica.

The programme aimed to strengthen participants' ability to comment on major contemporary issues facing quality improvement in education globally; to provide comparators to their own experiences; and acquire knowledge, and new skills for planning improvement of quality assurance within their organisations.

Participants were able to focus on quality assurance in higher education, specifically working with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

The programme also included visits to two universities: the London South Bank and the London Metropolitan University, where participants met quality assurance officers to learn about the operative systems, and practices within these institutions.

Quality Assurance and HE issues discussed at international conference



Dr Yvonne Marshall, Executive Director, with Dr Varda Ben-Shaul, Deputy Director-General for Quality Assurance at the Council for Higher Education (CHE), Israel (left); Ms Michal Neumann, Deputy Director-General for Academic Affairs and Secretary of the CHE; and Dr Steven Parscale, Chief Accreditation Officer, Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs, Kansas, USA.

The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) annual conference, and International Quality Group (CIQG) meeting took place in Washington DC, from January 25 – 28, 2016 at the Capital Hilton Hotel, under the theme: "The Future is Now: Where Is Accreditation?" Dr Yvonne Marshall, Executive Director, and Mr Richard Rose, Director, Communications and Public Education, attended both events.

The plenary and concurrent sessions included discussions on managing student aid; consumer protection from rogue institutions; graduation and completion rates; programme and student learning outcomes; establishing benchmarks; and the growth of non-traditional providers and online education.

The CIQG meeting under the theme "Quality Assurance and Accreditation: Multiple Demands; Multiple Challenges" opened with a presentation from Dr Dirk Van Damme, Head of the Innovation and Measuring Progress Division, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Dr Van Damme said that there is an "explosion of demand" taking place in parts of the world where quality assurance systems are much younger and their capacity is being challenged. He indicated that in 2013, there were 140 million students and by 2030, there is likely to be between 300-400 million based on current trends.

Dr Van Damme noted that there was greater student mobility, with over 50 per cent of the students coming from Asia; an increase in the cost of education; and the need

for institutions to demonstrate more than in previous years, that a degree from their institution was worth the investment.

The CIQG annual meeting closed with Dr Judith Eaton, President of CHEA, inviting delegates to work more closely with CHEA through the signing of a new Memorandum of Affiliation (MoA).

JCTE hosts Lecture Series during March 2016



Dr Yvonne Marshall, Executive Director of the UCJ, making a presentation on "What students should know about accreditation and quality in tertiary education: the role and function of the UCJ" at the Dr Nadine Scott Lecture Series and Professional Development Day.

The Joint Committee for Tertiary Education (JCTE) hosted the Dr Ethley London and Dr Nadine Scott Lecture Series for educators and students during the month of March.

More than 100 educators participated in the Dr Ethley London Lecture and Professional Development Day for Lecturers, held at the Northern Caribbean University, in Manchester on Tuesday, March 1, 2016.

The Dr Nadine Scott Lecture Series and Professional Development Day saw over 500 tertiary students participating in the event, held at the G.C. Foster College of Physical Education and Sport in St Catherine, on Wednesday, March 23, 2016.

The information-filled days provided participants with an opportunity to have open dialogue with stakeholders from various industries.

The events were established to honour two stalwarts in the education arena: Dr Ethley London, former Executive Director of the UCJ and the late Dr Nadine Scott, Principal of the Excelsior Community College.