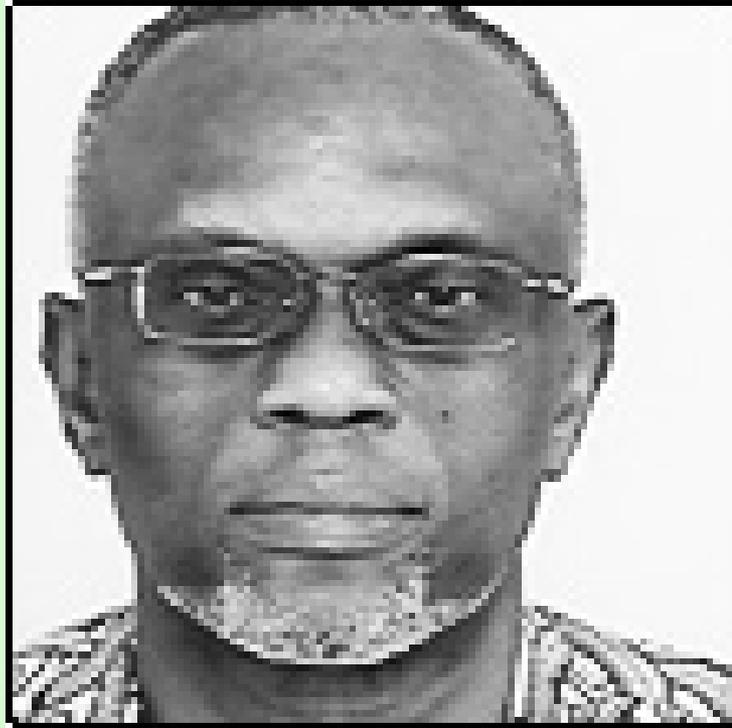**REPORT OF THE VISITATION PANEL**

TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

December 2007

Professor Akilagpa Sawyerr
Vice-Chair of the University of Ghana Visitation Panel
Secretary-General, Association of African Universities
Vice-Chancellor, University of Ghana, 1985-92

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Higher Education Specialist
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COMMONWEALTH *of* LEARNING

Institutional Trial Quality Audit
of the University of South Africa

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August 2007

Stamenka Uvalić-Trumbić
Chief of Section
Reform, Innovation and QA
UNESCO Higher Education

REPORT OF THE VISITATION PANEL

TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

INTEGRI PROCEDAMUS

December 2007

Stamenka Uvalić-Trumbić
Chief of Section
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UNESCO Higher Education

World Conference on Higher Education

6-10 July 2009

(one day devoted to Africa)

The Issue

How can external bodies best assist in the renewal of universities, particularly in Africa, that have suffered years of neglect and now face exploding demand?
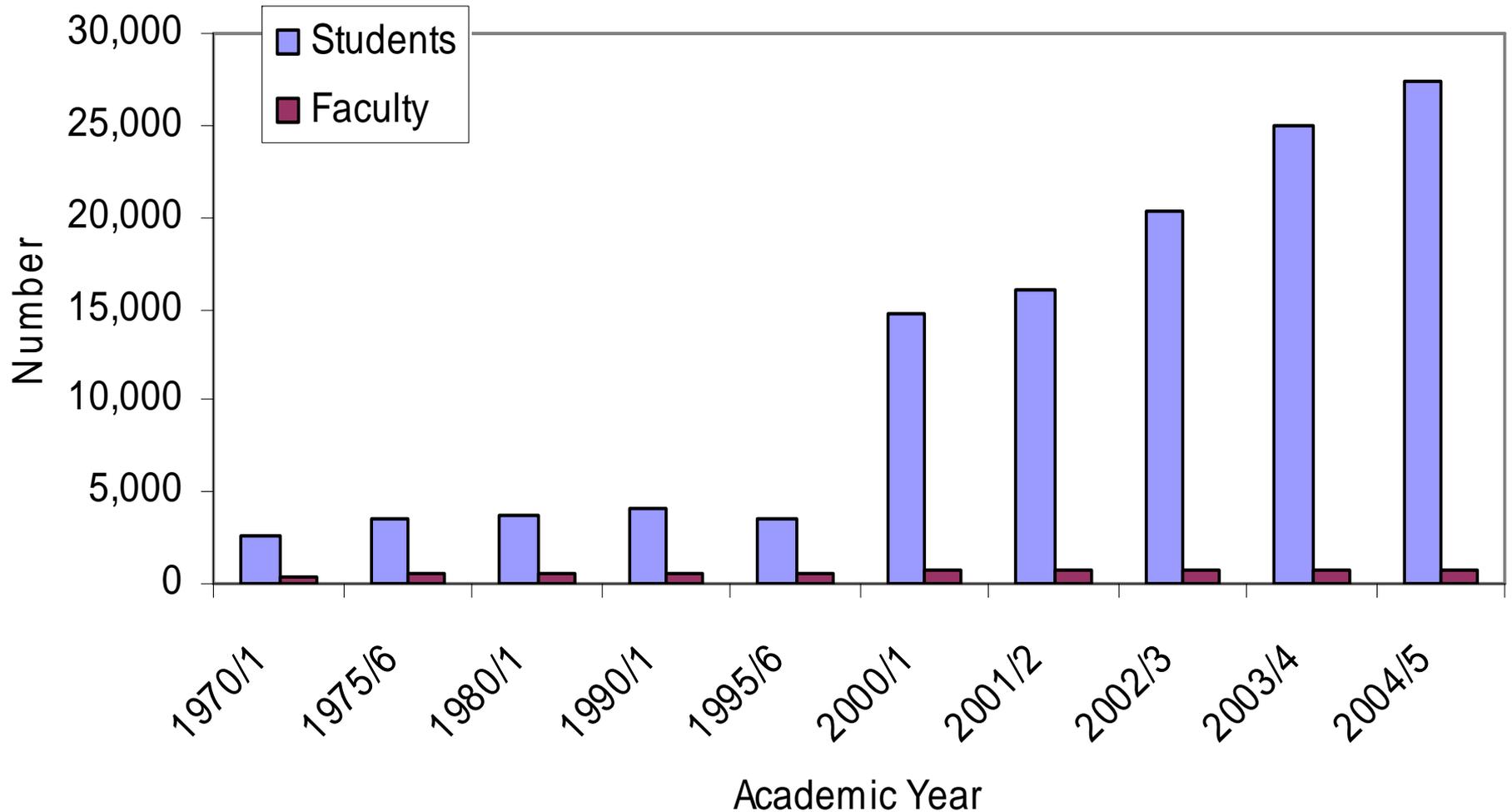
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August 2007

University of Ghana

Student and Faculty numbers 1970-2005

The Visitation Panel with colleagues from the University

Members of the Visitation Panel

- Sir John **Daniel**, President, Commonwealth of Learning (Chair)

- Prof. Akilagpa **Sawyerr**, Secretary-General, AAU (Vice-Chair)

With 13 other members

- 4 from Ghana

- 1 from India

- 1 from Jamaica

- 1 from Nigeria

- 3 from the United Kingdom

- 3 from the United States

- 1 from UNESCO

Supported by an excellent Secretariat and Team of Facilitators provided by the University of Ghana

Terms of Reference

1. The **academic programmes** at the University of Ghana to determine their currency, quality and relevance to the mission of creating world-class human resources and capabilities to meet national development needs.

2. The **infrastructure and resources** currently in place and to advise on additional resources (physical, financial and human) required to enable the University adequately discharge its mandate to an internationally accepted standard.

3. The University's **administrative and governance** structures, its systems and procedures and to advise on their appropriateness and adequacy in relation to the twin goals of effectiveness and efficiency.

4. Any other matters which in the opinion of the panel, are relevant to the issues at stake.

Schedule of Work

- **One-week visit: 30 April to 4 May**

- Launch of Departmental Self-Assessments

- **One-week visit: 27 to 31 August**

- **Report drafting online – October/November**

- **Report submitted – 6 December**

Centre for African Wetlands

The Report

Preface

Executive Summary

1. University of Ghana: Background

2. The University of Ghana in its African and National Contexts

3. Analysis, Conclusions and Recommendations

Annexes

1. University of Ghana: Background

"My memory of the University of Ghana, from my student days in the early 1970s, is that of a serene, beautiful campus, a supportive learning environment, highly enthusiastic and dedicated professors, who took great interest in the development of individual students and inspired me to strive for outstanding academic performance."

2. The University of Ghana in its African and National Contexts

2.1 The Importance of Quality in Higher Education in Africa

2.2 The National Context

2.2.1 The Economy of Tertiary Education in Ghana

2.2.2 The Challenge for Government
The Fees Regime
Expanding Private Institutions
Distance Learning

2.2.3 Challenges for the University of Ghana

2.2.4 The Challenge of Quality Assurance

3. Analysis, Conclusions and Recommendations

3.1   The University as a Corporate Body: Governance, Management and Administration

     3.1.1   What are Governance, Management and Administration?

     3.1.2   Role and Composition of Council

     3.1.3   Academic Board Structure

     3.1.4   The Organisation of Management and Administration

     3.1.5   Student Representation

     3.1.6   Improving Student Life

3.1.2 Role and Composition of Council

- Review of arrangements in South Africa, UK, Australia and New Zealand.

ANALYSIS

"In summary, current good practice calls for a governing body of between 15 to 30 members, with a lay (external) majority of about two-thirds to one third, with a significant proportion of the lay majority brought on to the governing body through a nominations committee process to ensure that there is expertise in areas such as finance, property management, legal matters, and human resource management."

3.1.2 Role and Composition of Council

- Review of arrangements in South Africa, UK, Australia and New Zealand.

CONCLUSION

"Set against practice in countries that Ghana uses as comparators in higher education and against the emerging consensus about governance referred to earlier, the Council of the University of Ghana is unusual in three ways. First, at 15 members, it is smaller than the governing bodies of many universities of similar size, where a figure of around 25 might be more usual. Second, the Council membership is mostly nominated by external bodies or drawn from internal constituencies. Third, and most unusually, a majority of the membership is from these internal constituencies."

3.1.2 Role and Composition of Council

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *The membership of the Council should be expanded to over 20 members and its composition should be substantially changed to enable it to play an effective role as the governing body of the University.*

3. *The Council should have the following committees:*
    (a) Audit
    (b) Finance and General Purposes;
    (c) Nominations;
    (d) Physical Development

3.1.2 Role and Composition of Council

TO NOTE:

"The Panel believes that if, in recent years, the University of Ghana Council had had the role and composition that we recommend some of the problems that the University now faces, notably in its financial management, would have been avoided."

3. Analysis, Conclusions and Recommendations

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   **3.1.4 The Organisation of Management and
           Administration**

   3.1.5 Student Representation

   3.1.6 Improving Student Life

3.1.4 The Organisation of Management and Administration

ANALYSIS

"The structures for managing the University, undermined by the managerial reforms introduced in 2003, have allowed the University, overwhelmed by student number expansion, to slide into a poor state of organisation and effectiveness."

3.1.4 The Organisation of Management and Administration

CONCLUSIONS

"In 2003 the then Vice-Chancellor introduced a new organisational structure…

"…Whatever the theoretical merits of this reorganisation it clearly has not worked. The Vice-Chancellor needs what in some universities is called a Chief Operating Officer, a senior officer who integrates the management of the many services that are necessary to the running of the University...

"This reorganisation is all the more necessary because there are serious operational problems in the management of the Finance Office and in the physical maintenance of the campus and its facilities."

3.1.4 The Organisation of Management and Administration

RECOMMENDATION

*6.	The Council should give the Registrar the responsibilities of Chief Operating Officer with a mandate: (i) to integrate and professionalise the services necessary to the running of the University and make them work; (ii) to present a new administrative structure chart to Council and the Academic Board after consultation with the Vice-Chancellor and the Policy and Executive Committee; (iii) to introduce modern human resources practices throughout the institution so that the operating units are empowered and supported in fulfilling their functions; and (iv) to implement an effective and transparent management information system.*

3. Analysis, Conclusions and Recommendations

3.1   The University as a Corporate Body: Governance, Management and Administration

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3.1.4 The Organisation of Management and Administration

3.1.5 Student Representation

3.1.6 Improving Student Life

3.1.5 Student Representation

ANALYSIS

"*Students are not well represented on the governance of the University particularly in areas where academic matters are discussed. They are not satisfied with the constitutional role of the Dean of Students and wish to represent themselves in discussions with the university authorities.*"

3.1.5 Student Representation

• UNESCO Review of Student Participation in Governance (Europe)

CONCLUSIONS

"The Panel noted the almost universal Western practice of student involvement in University governance structures because they are universities' key stakeholders. As payment of tuition fees becomes more and more universal this pressure for taking account of students' views will only increase.

"The major strategic committees of the University should not be dealing with detail of student examination results and staff promotions – agenda items which are cited as a reason for excluding students from these bodies."

3.1.5 Student Representation

RECOMMENDATION

That the University introduces student representation on the Council, the Academic Board, the Faculty Boards and committees of these bodies as appropriate.

3. Analysis, Conclusions and Recommendations

3.2 The University of Ghana as an Academic Institution

Launching of a departmental self-assessment process conducted between the two visits of the Panel.

3. Analysis, Conclusions and Recommendations

3.2 The University of Ghana as an Academic Institution

3.2.1 Introduction

3.2.2 Student Population
3.2.2.1 Enrolment Explosion
3.2.2.2 Balance of Science & Technology and the Humanities

3.2.3 The Academic Core
3.2.3.1 Faculty
3.2.3.2 Curriculum
3.2.3.3 Academic Organisation
3.2.3.4 Graduate Study
3.2.3.5 Examinations

3.2.4 Elements of Quality Assurance

3.2 The University of Ghana as an Academic Institution

Executive Summary

3.2.2   Student Population
3.2.2.1 Enrolment Explosion

"The enrolment explosion is the cause of many of the University's problems. The Panel recommends reducing the intake of students; placing a limit on class size; balancing student numbers with physical infrastructure and faculty capacity; introducing stronger policy for gender parity; promoting distance learning to absorb continuing demand; and expanding Accra City Campus."

3. Analysis, Conclusions and Recommendations

3.3 Infrastructure and Resources

3.3.1   The Financial Administrative System
Report of the Investigating Team

3.3.2   ICT and Management Information Systems (ICT-MIS)

3.3.3   Balme Library

3.3.4   Human Resources

3.3.5   Water, Electricity and Sewerage

3.3.6   Security

3.3.7   Health Service

3.3.8   Epidemics

3.3.9   Counselling and Psychiatric Illness

3.3.10 Gender Issues

3.3.11 Halls and Hostels

3.3.12 Academic Infrastructure

3.3.1   The Financial Administrative System

- Report of the Investigating Team

ANALYSIS

"The team's view is that the financial administrative system at the University of Ghana is in a very bad state, is not providing anything approaching the services needed by the University, and needs radical change."

3.3.1   The Financial Administrative System

- Report of the Investigating Team

CONCLUSIONS

"The Finance Office needs new leadership as soon as possible. The current direction of the Office's work is wrong."

"The ITS financial software can be made to serve the University's needs, probably serve them well, so should be retained."

"Budgeting, reporting and accounting by the Finance Office has to be transformed by new practices, so that the University's financial position and prospects are understood at all levels of management."

3.3.1   The Financial Administrative System

- Report of the Investigating Team

THE GOOD NEWS…

Most institutions with such weaknesses find they are in a financial hole; but the University of Ghana has significant unspent balances – which could be harnessed to the agenda for change.

We have focused on issues of governance, management, student representation, enrolment planning and financial systems.
The point we wish to stress is that unless a university has robust and effective structures and processes in these areas it will not be able to undertake any process of renewal effectively.

Institutional Trial Quality Audit
of the University of South Africa

UNISA
university
of south africa

August 2007

Thank you and best wishes for success