



Thoughts on University Autonomy



Prof. John Akec

A word from the Vice Chancellor

When I was growing up, I did not see myself working anywhere else except serving as an academic at a university. And as far as I was concerned and could remember, being a university professor was the most fascinating vocation to pursue. And by the way, so far, I have no regrets. I didn't care and it didn't matter which university I was going to end up at.

Universities in many ways are very similar in what they do, their rituals and traditions are the same, and in type of customer base they serve; from Harvard to Oxford; from Paris to Berlin; from Cape Town to Nairobi, you name it. They share a lot in common. Not surprisingly, universities trace their lineage to Greek Academies that were established by Plato, Pythagoras, and Sophists back in the sixth century Greece. The departments of humanities at our universities are rooted in Plato academies that were devoted to discovering truth for its sake, and truth for philosophers destined to be kings. Engineering and science departments originated from Pythagorean academies which taught mathematics and astronomy. And our social sciences departments drew their inspiration from Sophists who taught rhetoric seen as necessary for success in life.

The modern university began to take shape in the medieval era, and was defined as a "community of masters and students" with a unique personality and soul. This unique personality is identified by "a name and a central location, masters with a degree of autonomy, students, a system of lectures, and a procedure for examinations and degrees...and an administrative structure with its faculties," according to Clark Kerr.

Early universities were founded and run by religious institutions, mainly Christian monasteries and Islamic madrasas, and supported by kings. Their targets were elitist boys. However, the development of printing press in the sixteenth century enabled books to be published in large numbers, and led to spread of knowledge. It also allowed learning to move from the ancient system of one-to-one instruction, to the one-to-many learning mode of today. As universities spread, higher education began to massify with support of the church. Other universities were established as private foundations supported by endowments from wealthy individuals. The number of universities worldwide increased from 10 between 1800 and 1809 to 131 between 1850 and 1859. And by the 1990s, the number of university degrees awarded in the United States alone rose to 1.05 million compared to 28,600 in early 1900s. And by 2000, the US alone had some 4,000 higher education institutions.

However, from the seventeenth century, government influence on universities began to increase as religious influence was waning. In fact, universities today can neither be strictly classified as private or public, but unique. And while more than 80 percent of European universities would classify as "public," the majority of leading US universities are private foundations, and most civic universities in Britain have foundation status. Compared to American or British universities, European, Japanese, and Chinese universities are heavily regulated by the state. American and British universities enjoy more autonomy than found anywhere in the world. Influence is exercised by their governments indirectly through incentive systems and performance-based funding.

And as higher education continues to expand globally in order to include those from lower income brackets, public funding to universities has been declining. Governments are encouraging universities to innovate and reduce overdependence on public funding. However, research has also shown that heavy regulation by the state can stifle creativity and ability of universities to think out of the box and react promptly to the opportunities and threats in their operating environments. The current global trend is to shift to the American and British university governance model that gives universities more autonomy.

Finally, the University of Juba has many values that support our vision. Besides cherishing independent thought, and celebrating scholarship, creativity and initiative, our University values autonomy. Thus, through our governing structures, guided by our internal statutes, and upholding what is in the interest of our students and staff, we will continue to respond promptly to trends and changes in our operating environments, nationally, regionally, and globally.



Update on Revision of University Calendar

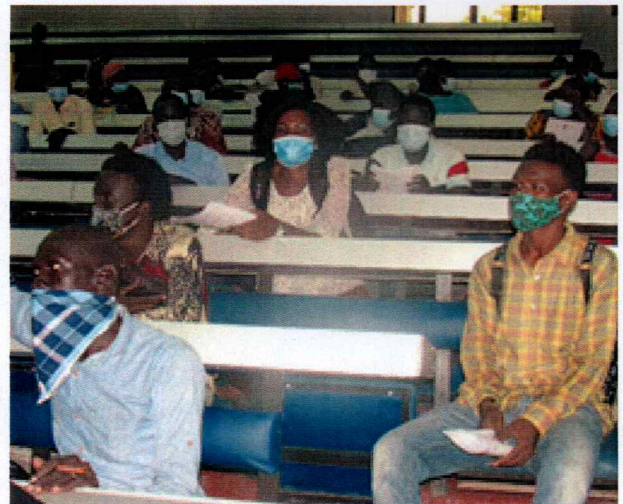
The Academic Registrar (AR) has issued a circular requiring deans and directors to instruct students to engage in face to face learning as of Monday, 21 September 2020 while abiding by the following modalities:

- Only students who have paid, for at least the first semester, are entitled to sit in a lecture hall and attend face to face lectures;
- There should be strict adherence to COVID-19 guidelines in areas of social distancing, wearing of face masks, washing or disinfecting hands regularly; and
- Where the number of students in a class cannot allow for social distancing, such a class should be split up and taught in small groups.

Moreover, the AR advises that for smooth teaching and learning to happen:

- The onus is upon each dean to ensure that all academic staff have their learning materials ready, in the form of handouts, to be issued to students in bulk or following each lecture;
- The Dean of CHRDCE has to ensure that the outstanding results of all diploma students are out before resumption of teaching so that they start with the rest; and

- The Dean of Students should ensure that students who have paid are issued with identity cards.



Welcome to all students who have resumed classes

Insight Limited donates COVID-19 Preventive Items to the University



University administrators receive donation

On Tuesday, 8 September 2020, Insight Limited donated liquid soap, hand sanitizers, face masks, and water containers to the University to support its efforts to conduct normal activities while adhering to COVID-19 guidelines.

The University thanks the company for this generous donation, and requests other companies to positively respond to our appeal for assistance so as to resume teaching and perform other activities the country requires us to carry out.

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University Employs More International Academics

The University has embarked on recruiting international academics to improve the quality of teaching, knowledge production and dissemination, and other services to our community in particular and humanity in general. It recently welcomed three academics, whose profiles are provided below. We are expecting the arrival of academics from Sudan in the coming weeks.



Dr Negash Alemu Gerzo

Joins School of Engineering and Architecture as Associate Professor

He holds a Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering from Ethiopia's Defense University, a Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering from Addis Ababa University and a PhD in Materials Science and Engineering from China's North Western Polytechnic University. He previously served at Defense and Addis Ababa Science and Technology universities as an instructor, Head of Directorate of Research & Development Institute, Head of Metallurgical & Materials Engineering, and University management member.



Professor Michael Ibrahim

Joins School of Medicine as Professor

He holds a BSc in Biology & Chemistry from Cumberland College, an MSc in Physical Chemistry from University of California, an MD in Medical University of the Americas, and a PhD in Biophysics/MR Imaging from Medical College of Wisconsin. He previously held postdoctoral fellowships at Massachusetts General Hospital-Harvard Medical School and University of California.

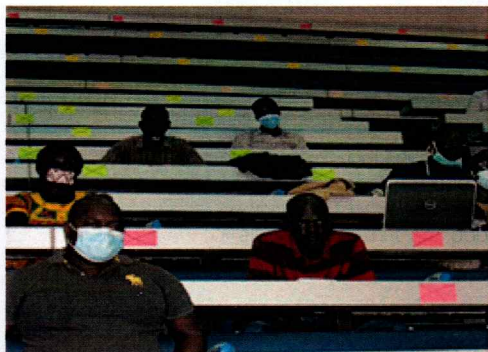


Dr Peter Juma Wanyama

Joins School of Applied & Industrial Sciences as Assistant Professor

He holds a Bachelor of Science in Industrial Chemistry and a Master of Science in Chemistry from the University of Nairobi. He worked as a part-time chemistry lecturer at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa. Thereafter, he joined Kenya Sugar Research Foundation where he was involved in administrative duties and undertook research in the area of sugar extraction and processing. Subsequently, he enrolled for a PhD in Organic Chemistry at the University of Witwatersrand, after which he worked as a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Johannesburg.

E-Learning Taskforce Trains Academics on Digital Tools



Participants in the workshop

The University of Juba is capacitating academic staff so as to leverage ICT in teaching and research. Accordingly, from 10 to 11 September 2020, the University's E-Learning Taskforce conducted a two-day workshop on basic digital tools for delivering home-based lectures. This workshop is a part of ongoing training and other activities aimed at equipping staff with computing skills so as to effectively use software applications, such as Microsoft and PowerPoint. The specific objectives of the workshop were:

- To support trainees to prepare lecture notes that can be delivered using PowerPoint and other digital tools;
- To enable trainees to pass knowledge through emails, WhatsApp etc.; and
- To acquaint trainees on how to use the University's E-Learning portal.



University of Juba Academics Contribute to the Economic Crisis Management Committee

On 25 August 2020, H.E. Salva Kiir Mayardit decreed the establishment of an Economic Crisis Management Committee (ECMC) under the chairmanship of Vice President Dr James Wani Igga and including nine other members. Dr Abraham Nyuon, the Dean of School of Social and Economic Studies, is secretary to the Committee. In its first meeting, on 27 August 2020, the ECMC resolved to constitute an eight-member technical committee, which includes Dr Michael Lawrence from School of Management Sciences as well as Ms Reja Gladys Joseph, Mr Bosco Okumu Achire and Mr Morris Maboch Madut from Department of Economics, School of Social and Economic Studies.



*Dr Abraham Nyuon
Dean, School of Social and Economic Studies*

Clearly, these University staff are playing an important role in the ECMC, whose core remit is streamlining the collection of non-oil revenues into coffers of the government; supervising and monitoring all financial transactions and payments from the Ministry of Finance and Planning; assessing and making recommendations on immediate measures to be undertaken towards managing the current economic crisis; and assessing the economic sector, make recommendations on immediate policy review and economic reforms and implement thereof. Their contribution to the work of the Committee is a part of ongoing outreach activities the University expects academics to engage in for the good of our country.

Maintenance of University Clinic is Complete

The University of Juba Clinic has been renovated and is to be officially inaugurated, after which it will reopen its doors to staff and students seeking medical attention.

The newly appointed director of the clinic, Dr Susan Peter Lado, told the Juarsity that, "The clinic is to handle COVID-19 cases within the University. As we plan to open, we have requested a lot of requirements from the University administration and Juba Teaching Hospital. We have received small quantities of medicines and are waiting for more."

The renovation and employment of qualified staff is a welcome first step towards transforming the clinic into a health facility that meets the needs of staff and students.



*Dr Susan Peter Lado
Clinic Director*



Clinic Director and other staff

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