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SALUTATION AND INTRODUCTION

Colleagues and Members of Convocation,

We have met here this afternoon, once again, to fulfil a very important statutory obligation in our University Statute 25, Subsection (a), enjoins the Vice-Chancellor to present to Convocation a report on the state of the University and its future plans. In keeping with this spirit, I also intend to apprise Convocation on other developments in the University in respect to its organs and related facilities which facilitate its smooth organisation and administration. As most of us will no doubt be aware, this is my penultimate address to Convocation and, hopefully, God willing, in March 2010, I will have the privilege of presenting my final "State of the University Address" to Convocation.

In view of the several uncertainties that characterized our financial inflows in the course of last year, our major emphasis has been on the development of systems which will facilitate the smooth administration of the university. This is not in any way suggesting that other areas of the University's development were left unattended to. In short, we were unable to do as much as we had planned simply because, for example, inflows from the GETFund were not predictable both in terms of the quantum and their timeliness. In addition, there was so much pressure on our internally generated funds primarily because a substantial proportion had been earmarked for the refurbishment of 21 laboratories in the College of Science.

Occasionally, we had to vie funds to enable us pay salaries promptly and to quickly reimburse those sources as soon as releases from Government were received. This continues to be one of the main sources of worry for all of us but unfortunately we have very little control over it. In spite of the foregoing, members of Convocation will, following this presentation, begin to appreciate how prudent the administration has been with respect to judiciously managing the little resources which came our way in 2008.

In order to further appreciate the state of the university, the presentation is structured along the lines of last year's address. Consequently, it follows the broad thematic areas outlined in our Strategic Plan; Plan2K 14. In addition to this, other important issues and matters which were of concern to us during last year have also been adequately addressed in this presentation. Towards the end of the address, some indications have also been given regarding where we stand as a university and what prospects there are for our growth and development.

After this presentation, the full text will be posted at the University's website, www.knust.edu.gh.through a link to the Vice Chancellor's speeches.

STUDENTS/FACULTY STATISTICS

The University currently has a total student population of 24,695 including 1,041 Distance Learning students. This figure comprises a total of 17,804 (72%) males and 6,891 (28%) females. The total postgraduate students population is 2,540 (10%) and the balance of 22,155 (90%) are undergraduates. The breakdown by Colleges is as follows: Engineering - 3,724 (16%); Art and Social Sciences - 9,964 (40%); Architecture and Planning - 2,226 (9%); Agriculture and Natural Resources - 2,063 (8%); Health Sciences - 2,095 (8%); and Science has a total student population of 3,582 (15%). There is a total of 724 international students, comprising only 3% of the entire student body, coming from more than ten different countries.

The figures for the College of Art and Social Sciences may appear exaggerated for a university of science and technology but this is largely attributable to its structure and composition. In spite of this, as a matter of policy, there will be conscious efforts to ensure that the rate of growth in the other disciplines outstrip the rate of growth in the Social Sciences.

The University staff strength currently stands at 3,176 with 850 convocation members at post. Of the Convocation members, 735 (86.5%) are lecturers and 115 (13.5%) are administrative/professional staff. The supporting staff strength is 2,326 (800 Senior Staff and 1,526 Junior Staff). The Faculty members are made up as follows: 20 Full Professors, 57 Associate Professors, 163 Senior Lecturers and 495 Lecturers. The College-by-College breakdown is as follows: the College of Engineering has 127 Faculty members, the College of Art and Social Sciences 175 faculty members while the College of Architecture and Planning has 65 faculty members. The rest are the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources 89, College of Health Sciences 125 and the College of Science has 122 Faculty members. The rest of ten members are professional staff in our Library system. Earlier comments made in last year's address about this bottom-heavy structure are still valid but there are efforts by all of us to modify it.

You would all recall that during the course of last year, an embargo was placed on the hiring of new faculty members by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning with a view to better managing the University's wage bill. This imposed severe difficulties on all programmes because of the unfavourable lecturer: student ratios in virtually all the Colleges. These ratios ranged from 1: 16 in the College of Health Sciences to 1:53 in the College of Art and Social Sciences. To enhance these unfavourable ratios, we will continue to employ more faculty members during the year ahead of us but preference will be given to holders of terminal degrees. It is for this reason that the University Appointments and Promotions Committee now meets weekly to minimise any delays likely to be experienced by prospective applicants.

ADMISSIONS

In consonance with our bid to providing manpower training in science and technology for national development, we continued to admit students into various programmes of study in this University. During the period under review, we admitted a total of 8,421 applicants made up of both graduates and undergraduates. Out of this number, 5,941 enrolled in various programmes. This included 1,486 graduate students and 4,455 undergraduates; implying that postgraduate students constituted 25% of admitted students. We therefore need to grow this number considering the important role graduate students can play in solving industrial problems. With regards to undergraduates, we admitted a total of 6,756 applicants made up of 4,685 males and 2,071 females, out of which 4,455 comprising 3,216 males and 1,239 females finally enrolled on our programmes. This year, we commenced the on-line admission exercise which was very successful and we intend to enhance it further next year.

Furthermore, as members are well aware, we pioneered the admission of students from Less Endowed Schools. During the 2008/2009 academic year, we admitted 249 applicants from these schools. However, only 149 of them enrolled because of financial constraints. It is in view of this that I wish to urge members to impress upon their home District Assemblies to come to the aid of such students to enable them pursue their programmes of study.

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Within the period under consideration, the University Appointments and Promotions Committee (UAPC) recommended the employment of 50 senior members. Besides that, 18 senior staff and 32 junior staff were also appointed to various positions in the University. Strategies adopted in the employment process included, posting of vacancy advertisements in the print and electronic media, searching by UPAC members, and poaching from other analogous institutions.

The first batch of three awardees of a Scholarship Scheme, admitted into Swedish Universities, under a collaborative arrangement between the Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education (STINT) will soon graduate. Mr Anthony Owusu Ansah, who was sponsored to pursue M.Sc. Degree in Real Estate Management under that facility, and was the most outstanding student on that programme, has expressed his de-sire to take up appointment in the University effective July, 2009. To date, nine past students have been sponsored under the STINT Scholarship Scheme and it is hoped that they will join the University following their graduation.

It needs to be emphasized that' we were constrained in our efforts to recruit more qualified lecturers, administrative, professional and other supporting staff to teach, research and man positions in the university, by government's recent directives to freeze employment as a way of better controlling the ever increasing wage bill.

Compared to the previous years, we achieved modest improvement in Student: Teacher Ratio in the Faculty of Agriculture as well as the Departments of Mechanical, Computer and Electrical Engineering. Similar improvement was also recorded in Chemistry, Computer Science, Biochemistry and Biotechnology, as well as Painting and Sculpture Departments. All this was made possible because we were able to fill our quota of 40 positions for lecturers out of a total of 150 for all categories of workers following formal approval granted for 2008 by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. The student: teacher ratio will be enhanced further after we receive our 2009 quota and fill the vacancies.

In pursuit of its quest to provide clear Guidelines for Progression and create awareness on upward mobility of staff, a Workshop was organized for newly appointed Deans and Heads of Department to introduce them to the management practices in the University including processes of appointment and promotion. The HRD has designed a programme to educate Senior and Junior Staff about the new Scheme of Service and opportunities available for career development in the University on College basis. This programme will be rolled out from April, 2009.

In order to attract, develop, motivate and retain high calibre staff, 37 senior members, 15 senior and 14 junior staff were sponsored to pursue various programmes in universities in Ghana and elsewhere. The Procurement Officer participated in a week's training programme in South Africa and six senior members from the Finance Office also participated in a training programme organised by Leicester University in the United Kingdom. Two senior members in the HRD were sponsored to attend a two-day Workshop on the Labour Act. In addition, two others from the same Division were assisted to attend a two-day Workshop in Human Resource Management which exposed them to how to handle labour issues and proper human resources practices respectively. Ten TEWU and FUSSAG Executive members were also sponsored to attend a two-day Seminar on the Labour Act to introduce them to labour relations and the Labour Act.

A total of 25 junior and senior staff were also supported to attend a five-day Workshop for Executive Assistants at GIMPA. Another 280 senior and junior staff were sponsored to pursue studies to enable them write and acquire the WASSCE. This was intended to enable them to qualify for promotion to higher grades and possibly pursue further studies. Based on satisfactory report, another batch will be sponsored to pursue the same programme this year. The first ever training programme for Basic School Teachers in the University was organized in 2008.

To strengthen the Quality Assurance and Planning Unit, a senior member in the Unit was nominated to attend a Workshop on the Preparation of Quality Assurance Guidelines for Public Universities at the Busua Beach Resort from 25th - 29th March, 2008. Two faculty members were also nominated to attend the Information Literacy Awareness Raising Workshop organized by the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries (CARLIGH). During the year under review, 67 senior members were sponsored to attend various conferences within and outside the country at a total cost of nearly US\$ 1, 050,000. We will continue with our current policy of sponsoring senior members to attend conferences so they can present papers. In addition, where members receive partial funding, the University will continue to pay their abated per diem.

CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION

Proposals for the promotion of senior teaching and non teaching staff have been under discussion for some time now because KNUST still operates the most lenient systems in Ghana. We have been particularly cautious about the intended changes considering that these criteria have been in existence since the early 1 980s. In the interim, we have taken the opportunity to present these criteria to several stakeholders in the University and received comments some of which have been very useful.

In recent times, I have been particularly impressed about the number of publications submitted by various faculty members for promotion. While on the one hand applicants present an average of four publications for promotion to Senior Lecturer, for example, the criteria for promotion still stipulate the minimum of one publication. Applicants for promotion to Associate Professor and Professor also submit an average of six and ten journal publications, respectively. In the case of non teaching staff, it is observable that some of them are now including evidence of publications albeit in less rigorous journals. In reality, these criteria may be new but in practice they are not and they partly justify the need for us to quickly revise our criteria for appointments and promotions. Times have changed since the early 1 980s when the current criteria were evolved and we cannot continue to be ridiculed and embarrassed by our existing criteria amongst our colleagues and the comity of Universities.

Another feature of the revised criteria is that they attempt to reduce the element of subjectivity in the assessment process to the barest minimum by defining scores or points for all categories of publications and services performed by a candidate. This, therefore, means that a candidate will be able to assess himself or herself in all the three assessable areas of teaching, research and service even before submitting his or her application and determine what the likely outcome will be. This is certainly preferable to some criteria in use in some sister Universities which are shrouded in secrecy and ambiguity.

We are hopeful that Council will approve the document for implementation when it is re-constituted.

FINANCIAL RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

In spite of the fact that PLAN2K' 4 expects us to aggressively mobilize financial resources for the University's development, a lot more is yet to be achieved because of some extenuating circumstances. We have not been able to hire a fund raiser as stipulated in the plan in spite of the several attempts made in the recent past. It does appear that most professionals in the field would rather work on commission basis than take up full employment with the University. We intend to seek Council's approval so we can engage such a person to help mobilise financial resources for the University.

Our expenditures are dependent on available income for both recurrent and investment activities. Unfortunately, for the past four years, the income received in any year is usually a fraction of our total funding requirements. Actual revenues for 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009 were only 69%, 56%, 43% and 50% respectively of our total funding requirements. Clearly, this shows a steady decline in estimated revenue required over the four-year period. On the average, out of the amounts received, 69% represents Government subvention for salaries and, therefore, this leaves very little money for recurrent and investment expenses.

In addition to Government subvention, or public funding, the University also relies on private funding which comprise fees charged to students and other internally generated funds. For the past two years or so, the share of public funding to the total University income has been consistently declining. In 2009, share of public funds declined from the 2008 level of 74% to 71 % while the private share for the same period also increased from 26% to 29%. While this would appear to be gradually absolving Government of its financial responsibility; it shows that our survival as a University is dependent on improving the level of income from these private sources including revenue from part-time programmes, sale of admission forms and the introduction of demand driven fee- paying programmes.

In view of the foregoing precarious situation, it has not been very easy for the University to maintain an active investment portfolio. Thus for, the only investment the University has is its shareholding in Standard Chartered Bank.

In respect of the GUSSS, management of the scheme, in pursuance of its goal to be less dependent on the University and Government, have embarked on investing in students' hostels and, so far, an amount of GH¢7 million has been invested over the past few years but the present worth of these investments is nearly GH¢20 million. In view of these returns on our investments, strenuous efforts are underway to increase them.

It is rather unfortunate that funding of Colleges in the University has been declining with little or no input from Government; apart from payment of staff salaries, electricity and water bills. On the other hand, investment activities in the Colleges have improved in view of projects funded by the GETFund. However, progress in completing them has been very slow and excruciating. The funding of recurrent expenditures in the Colleges is almost entirely from the AFUF and their share of tuition fees from fee-paying students. These are, however, inadequate because on average, the AFUF has usually been only 5% of total income received and 2.5% of the University's funding requirements from 2006-2008.

For most of us, we are more concerned about our monthly salaries than any other financial matters in the University. In the 2007 financial year, for example, the total payroll amounted to GH¢29.8 million out of which senior members' payroll amounted to GH¢ 19.38 million or 65%. Senior staff claimed GH¢5 million or 16% of this amount with the balance of

GH¢4.1 million or 16.4% going to the junior staff and pensions accounting for GH¢ 1.3 million or 4.3%. In other words, any time there is a delay in receiving our salary, we have to mobilise nearly GH¢2.5 million from various sources excluding overdraft facilities so we can pay salaries promptly.

Payment of allowances to members of staff for serving the University in various capacities is also becoming a major source of worry for us because the expenditures involved are rather high. These allowances amounted to about 42% or GH¢ 12.52 million. Ghana Government subvention was GH¢26.5 million and the University had to top up with the remaining GH¢3.3 million from its private funding which amounted to 15.8% of the private funding available to the University. The pattern was the same for the first quarter of 2008. In view of this unfavourable pattern, we need to commence a debate on the payment of honoraria so that an amicable compromise can be reached.

The foregoing gives a fair picture of the University's funding situation. Cash or funding is becoming a rare commodity in the University and this creates frustration and tremendous pressure on financial management. In view of this situation, it may be useful for all of us to reflect on how best we can increase and sustain our internally generated funds. More specifically, we need to enhance our postgraduate programmes and make them become increasingly fee-paying, introduce more parallel and demand-driven programmes as well as enhance our Distance Learning programmes as a way of enhancing internally generated funds.

EXPANSION AND APPLICATION OF INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

As part of our strategic objective stipulated in PLAN2K14 to expand Information Communication Technology infrastructure and institutionalise its application in the core business of the University, we have continued to embark on projects and programmes in this direction. Consequently, we were able to finalise work on the ICT Policy document to provide an overall framework for ICT development in our University.

During the year under review, I am happy to report to Convocation that, we were able to install Wireless Hotspots in all the six traditional Halls of Residence as well as other campus-based hostels to enhance internet speed and accessibility for students while they are in the comfort of their halls.

As a result of several complaints received on the slow nature of our internet connectivity, the Network Operations Centre (NOC) is in the process of setting up new proxy servers for internet accessibility solely for staff to speed internet access. With this programme, in place, we hope that there will be an increase in internet speed and staff will be encouraged to use our local email system instead of 'yahoo' and 'msn'. It is observable that 80% of our bandwidth is used for commercial email including 'yahoo'. If we are all to use the University's email system, it would help us curtail our bandwidth challenges.

Even though our students at our Sunyani Campus also pay ICT fees, they have not been enjoying internet access as their counterparts on the Main Campus. An assessment was conducted on the best way to connect the campus to the internet but it was realised that, the fees we collect from students on that campus would be woefully inadequate to support any meaningful internet infrastructure. As a result, the University has procured some materials for internet connectivity to the Sunyani campus while Ghana Telecom, through an agreement we

have reached with them is currently installing broadband service for the Campus. Eventually, we will be connected to our Sunyani campus via the NOC.

Other ICT projects embarked upon during the year include the replacement of the damaged major fibre optic cable to the College of Art and Social Sciences, Faculty of Law, Administration Block II and other adjoining Departments and Units, organisation of a three-day workshop for Examination Officers on the online registration programme, an online admission programme and an e-Learning system on College basis; beginning with the College of Engineering to be followed by the College of Health Sciences. Others include an online KNUST Institutional Repository (called KNUST Space) to cover postgraduate thesis, Conference Papers, KNUST Journal and Technical Papers, an online Staff Directory and Blogging System which contains staff information and blog entries. The rest are an online Social Community System to collect data on KNUST Alumni worldwide, an online Students' Forum to enable students share ideas, as well as an authentication system which controls the usage of time students are allocated to use computers at the ICT Centre.

Members will recollect that I informed you during last year's address that our University was under consideration to become the Regional E- Learning Centre for Africa. This was as a result of Ghana successfully winning the bid for one of the five Super Specialty Regional University Centres for the Pan African E-Network Project. We won the bid and have successfully installed all the needed equipment at the Centre which is located in the New Central Classroom Block and the facilities are currently undergoing pilot tests.

To enhance punctuality, a biometric counter has been installed at the Central Administration on a pilot basis and I am happy to report to Convocation that, it has really improved punctuality of staff. We hope to replicate this initiative in other areas of the University in the year ahead of us. Administration Block II and Maintenance Department will be the next set of beneficiaries to receive biometric counters.

Members would recall that, I also reported in my last year's address that the University has negotiated with Ghana Telecom (GT) to install Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) modems in bungalows at non-commercial rates for interested staff through their Broadband4U service. This was part of an understanding reached with GT to accord the University, "the Golden Customer Status" where priorities would be given to all connections in terms of customer support and maintenance. So far, only 56 members have taken advantage of this opportunity. Even though I am informed that some members contacted GT directly and did not route their requests through the University, the number is still not encouraging. I therefore, urge members to take advantage of the facility to enhance our access to high speed internet in their homes, be they on or off campus, for our research activities. In the months ahead of us, we will work at increasing communication using the Internet and decreasing the amount of paper communication.

This year, we will continue with our on-going efforts to mainstream ICT into all facets of the University's activities; particularly in teaching and learning as well as administration. We also intend to connect the various auxiliary units including Transport, Maintenance, Estate, Security and Alumni Centre via a wireless system because of the expense involved if they are to be hooked on to the fibre optic backbone on account of their locations. Over the medium term, we will decentralise internet access services so that every College will have its own servers to enhance speed.

Ghana Telecom/Vodafone has introduced a special package involving KNUST staff under which beneficiaries enjoy 50% discount on all calls among members. This is a Special Tariff for KNUST and so far the first 100 beneficiaries started enjoying this service effective 1st March, 2009. We need to grow the list and, therefore, the Acting Deputy Registrar (General) has been asked to coordinate this initiative.

REVIEW OF THE COLLEGIATE SYSTEM

Following the implementation of the Collegiate System at KNUST in 2004, several opinions have been expressed about ways of enhancing the system's performance with the view to accelerating KNUST's growth and expansion as well as its effective management. It was to compile these sentiments and also to interact with various stakeholders that two high powered and separate committees were established; initially by the Vice-Chancellor under the Chairmanship of Professor S.A. Osei and subsequently by Council with Professor Ivan Addae-Mensah as Chairman.

Recommendations proffered by these two committees were initially discussed during Council's last meeting in 2008 and a date was even fixed for it to deliberate on the matter on 5th February, 2009 but it has not been possible to discuss the matter because of the dissolution of Council. As soon as Council reconvenes, the matter will be revisited together with Management's views.

In the main, the recommendations to Council related to the following broad areas:

- a. Ideal Number of Colleges;
- b. Academic Harmony;
- c. Relationship with Government and Other Bodies; and
- d. Increased Bureaucracy.

It is interesting to note that this report also makes some bold recommendations in respect of the composition of Boards and Committees including Academic Board and Executive Committee. These recommendations are all aimed at strengthening decentralization and governance of the University while enhancing our global competitiveness, promoting excellence and scholarship as well as reducing waste in the system. Over the past four years, the Collegiate System has been implemented implying that we now have the benefit of hindsight to review the system. What is now urgently required is Council's approval to mandate Management to implement the recommendations with a specified time line.

VICE-CHANCELLOR'S SPECIAL INITIATIVE

You would all recall that the rationale for introducing this initiative was to produce enough graduates with terminal degrees to join the faculty following their graduation from various programmes. Unfortunately, we have been rather slow in achieving this noble objective. Four years after the introduction of this initiative, less than ten people have graduated from their respective programmes with doctorate degrees.

Available data indicate that there are a total of 123 students enrolled on this programme with 10, 45, 42 and 26 in the first, second, third and fourth year respectively with an equal number of supervisors. In 2008, we made a total payment of GH¢262,050 to both students and supervisors in five tranches. In spite of this, it is rather unfortunate that we are not graduating as many doctoral students as we would have wished.

As a matter of policy, we sponsor each candidate for three and a half years initially with a six-month extension following which the sponsorship ceases. However, in view of our rather limited success, we would have to revisit this policy by examining any application for extension after the four years on its own merit. This way, we will be ensuring that we are realising adequate returns on our investments by not throwing out candidates who may require only a few more months to complete their programme.

It will be advisable that, subsequently, we properly scrutinize enrolments on to the programme to ensure that on graduation, the candidates would

KNUST'S PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

With the explosion in student numbers over the recent past and, therefore, a corresponding increase in the demand for all types of ancillary services; the question of a more efficient use of land within the University is becoming more and more critical. It was for this reason that Council mandated the Department of Planning to evolve a physical development plan to guide the physical growth of the University. This plan indicates where major uses of land or developments are to be located in future including areas to be conserved together with areas to be used for extension of academic facilities. For example, the plan recommends the gradual relocation of the security barracks, save the offices, to a location within the vicinity of Hall Six. The simple reason is that as the University grows, it would appear inappropriate to have such a use sited on prime land whereas more appropriate uses such as extension of the hospital and other related uses could be sited in those locations. Other features of the plan include the location of a new sewerage plant in the general hostels area located to the north of campus.

It is my hope that this physical development plan will indeed guide the location and distribution of all future physical developments on campus. The Director of Works and Physical Development will have to continuously monitor the implementation of the plan and to review it at the appropriate time. This way, we will have a more efficient and rational use of our scarce land resources on campus.

SUNYANI CAMPUS

Our campus at Sunyani is now the Centre for our Distance Learning programme in the Brong Ahafo Region. There is therefore the need to improve on the infrastructural facilities on that campus. The GETfund Students Hostel has been completed and occupied by students even though it is yet to be commissioned. We have also completed the preliminary studies on the campus for the award of a contract for internet connectivity. Currently only the GIS Laboratory is hooked onto the internet. It is our hope that the entire campus would be networked very soon because Ghana Telecom is keen on linking us up with the Sunyani Campus following our discussion with the new Chief Executive Officer.

As I have said already, there is the urgent need to improve on our facilities in Sunyani. Consequently, we have renovated 12 offices for staff. We have also begun with the renovation of some of the existing facilities for lecture halls and laboratories. Staff bungalows would soon be renovated and new ones built.

Since the faculties are run on AFUF, the more students we admit, the more AFUF we get. The low enrollment at Sunyani has put some constraint on infrastructural development. The current student population stands at 431, including 358 males and 73 females. There are 16 lecturers and technical instructors. This number is woefully inadequate considering the fact

that the Faculty runs many programmes. Efforts are being made to recruit more lecturers to augment the existing number.

In the interim, we intend to give serious consideration to either reducing the three-year diploma programmes to two-year programmes or converting the three-year Diploma programmes into four-year degree programmes to reduce the attrition rate and increase patronage of these programmes. In the long term, we need to consider expanding the range of programmes on offer to include some of the heavily patronised ones as a way of enhancing our financial base. The campus can now boast of a full complement of administrative staff.

SECURITY

Generally, the situation appears calm. However, the spate of stealing of valuables like mobile phones, laptops and cash in the students' Hall of residence and Hostels is embarrassing and is not abating despite disciplinary and administrative actions being taken against student culprits. It is imperative that Staff and students become more security conscious by adhering to security tit-bits. The attacks on students and staff on campus have reduced remarkably, though.

The security situation on campus early this year has not been all peaceful as a result of student riots. They marched to the Vice-Chancellor's Lodge in the night of 3rd March, 2009 when they had been granted audience rentals and annual commissions on the use of the University's Logo by Kingdom Bookshop and Stationery Ltd.

Currently, only limited financial assistance in the form of bursaries and work/study opportunities are provided to needy but brilliant students. Sources of funds for the scheme have not been forthcoming and this has affected the functions of the Office, especially, in providing scholarships and stipends to brilliant but needy students.

The Office received a total of 356 applications from students seeking financial assistance from the University during the year under review. The Office mobilised GHC 27,750.00 out of which GHC21,800.00 has been disbursed to 218 needy students to assist them with their academic work. In addition, the office received an amount of GHC29,626.81 for scholarships and bursaries from corporate bodies, District Assemblies and philanthropists for disbursement to 97 needy students. It is worth acknowledging the support given to students over the years by Poku Transport and ST Nakani for Excellence and Needy but Brilliant students respectively.

Currently, 26 needy students have started the work/study programme as Porters in the Halls of Residence. This has come as a relief to these students, who otherwise would have deferred their programmes of study. Presently, there are a number of proposals being considered to source for funds to support the scheme and members would be subsequently informed of progress being made.

PROCUREMENT OF VEHICLES AND INSURANCE PREMIUM

To a large extent, the mobility needs of most departments are gradually being satisfied through the acquisition of vehicles. We have also been able to procure vehicles for all Provosts. Unfortunately, we have procured all these vehicles without any guidelines and these partly explain why we see all makes and sizes of vehicles with different specifications. At the moment, our total vehicle fleet is about 245 with about 45 of them not being road worthy.

The capacity of our garage at the Transport Department has been exceeded with several new and old vehicles being in the open. Another unfortunate situation is the fact that the downtimes for most of these vehicles are so high that one begins to wonder if, indeed, there was a real need to buy the large capacity vehicles.

In addition to the above, the University pays substantial amounts in the form of insurance premiums for all our vehicles. This year, for example, our total insurance premium on these vehicles is estimated to be about GHC 300,000 and some vehicles in the fleet are fairly old, hence, they are characterised by high operating costs. In the months ahead of us, we will, as a matter of urgency, have to formulate a vehicle procurement policy for the University. Such a policy framework will guide the procurement, utilization and maintenance of vehicles owned by the University so that subsequent procurement orders can be better rationalized.

It is also anticipated that within the next few months, some of our unserviceable vehicles will be sold by auction. I have instructed that the listed vehicles be checked and reconfirmed before we seek appropriate approvals for the auction.

PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

The reduction in our GETFund allocation from GHC 59 million in 2007 to GHC 29 million in 2008 has had a very negative impact on the rate at which on-going physical infrastructural projects are completed. It is for this reason that we are unable to migrate several new projects on to the long list of on-going GETFund projects. Some of the projects in this category include Extension of Central Administration block, ICT Centre and a new lecture theatre/office block complex for College of Architecture and Planning. Thus far, the various on-going projects for which funding will be required to complete and their levels of completion are identified as follows:

- “ Examination Hall/Lecturers’ Offices Complex (25%);
- “ College of Art (Phase 1) (45%);
- “ College of Science Complex (87%);
- “ Refurbishment of 21 selected laboratories in the College of Science (50%);
- “ Clinical Students’ Hostel (KATH);
- “ Provision of Tartan Tracks (Phase 2) (60%);
- “ New Central Lecture Theatre (Air Conditioning) (90%);
- “ Business School/Institutes’ Offices (85%);
- “ College of Engineering Auditorium (Air Conditioning and External Works) (90%);
- “ Hale and Hearty Sports and Faculty Complex (65%);
- “ KNUST SHS Classroom (45%) and Headmaster’s Bungalow (90%)
- “ Faculty of Allied Health Sciences Block (55%); and
- “ Staff Club (75%)

In addition to all these projects, we will also need additional funds from GETFund to enable us install lifts ordered for the University by the Fund. This came to us as a windfall. It is our intention, once again, to prioritise these projects with emphasis on academic facilities and those projects which are nearing completion and would not require substantial funding.

Apart from the above projects, there are other projects that are currently on-going but which are funded from our Internally Generated Funds.

These are outlined as follows with their levels of completion:

- “ Royal Parade Grounds – (45);
- “ Security Block (10%);
- “ Semi-Detached Bungalow (Okodee Road) (90%);
- “ Rehabilitation of Eight Staff Bungalows (65%);
- “ Gate House Opposite Police Station (75%);
- “ Street Lights (60 Street Lights) (100%);
- “ Car Parks (Sites A and C) (30%);
- “ Transport Vehicle Park Fence (45%);
- “ Access Roads and Driveways (5%); and
- “ Drilling of Boreholes (100%)

In addition to all these projects, there are yet other projects sponsored by individual departments, external agencies and unions or other interest groups. They include Postgraduate Block in the College of Architecture and Planning, Alumni Hostel, CANR Training Centre and GUSSS Cafeteria. The Development Office exercises supervisory authority over these projects.

As you may be aware, proposals to develop our property at Ridge in Accra have been on the drawing board for some time now. In view of the fact that our collaboration with SSNIT is not yielding the needed result, a decision has been taken by Management, and approved by Council, to develop the property into an eight-storey structure to house the Accra Centre for our Distance Learning programme and offices for rental purposes using our own internally generated funds. The sketch designs have been completed by our Development Office and geotechnical investigations are currently on-going.

On the whole, we have received tremendous support from our Development Office in administering these projects but our major concern relates to the prompt payment for work done by contractors. As a result of this, there are instances where some Colleges have had to advance money to contractors to enable them complete some projects on time. In this direction, I would like to acknowledge the contributions made by the Business School towards the completion of their block.

REDEVELOPMENT OF COMMERCIAL AREA

Under the auspices of an MOU signed with the HFC Bank, there are plans to construct a complex – one side is three floors and the other side is a five storey. When completed, the complex will contain banking halls, shops, a supermarket, an eatry (fast food joint) with an internet café, a digital printing house, a movie theatre hall, an IT shop, offices for corporate bodies, conference rooms and corporate offices. All the architectural drawings have been completed and left with the signing of an agreement between the Bank and the Architects for the project to be advertised for firms to bid to construct the building. We hope construction will begin this year.

KNUST’S PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

With the explosion in student numbers over the recent past and, therefore, a corresponding increase in the demand for all types of ancillary services; the question of a more efficient use of land within the University is becoming more and more critical. It was for this reason that Council mandated the department of Planning to evolve a physical development plan to guide the physical growth of the University. This plan indicates where major uses of land or

developments are to be located in future including areas to be conserved together with areas to be used for extension of academic facilities. For example, the plan recommends the gradual relocation of the security barracks, save the offices, to a location within the vicinity of Hall Six. The simple reason is that as the University grows, it would appear appropriate to have such a use sited on prime land whereas more appropriate uses such as extension of the hospital and other related uses could be sited in those locations. Other features of the plan include the location of a new sewerage plant in the general hostels area located to the north of campus.

It is my hope that this physical development plan will indeed guide the location and distribution of all future physical developments on campus. The Director of Works and Physical Development will have to continuously monitor the implementation of the plan and review it at the appropriate time. This way, we will have a more efficient and rational use of our scarce land resources on campus.

SUNYANI CAMPUS

Our campus at Sunyani is now the Centre for our Distance Learning programme in the Brong Ahafo Region. There is therefore the need to improve on the infrastructural facilities on that campus. The GETFund Students Hostel has been completed and occupied by students even though it is yet to be commissioned. We have also completed the preliminary studies on the campus for the award of a contract for internet connectivity. Currently only the GIS Laboratory is hooked onto the internet. It is our hope that the entire campus would be networked very soon because Ghana Telecom is keen on linking us up with the Sunyani Campus following our discussion with the new Chief Executive Officer.

As I have said already, there is the urgent need to improve on our facilities in Sunyani. Consequently, we have renovated 12 offices for staff. We have also begun with the renovation of some of the existing facilities for lecture halls and laboratories. Staff bungalows would soon be renovated and new ones built.

Since the faculties are run on AFUF, the more students we admit, the more AFUF we get. The low enrolment at Sunyani has put some constraint on infrastructural development. The current student population stands at 431, including 358 males and 73 females. There are 16 lecturers and technical instructors. This number is woefully inadequate considering the fact that the Faculty runs many programmes. Efforts are being made to recruit more lecturers to augment the existing number.

In the interim, we intend to give serious consideration to either reducing the three-year diploma programmes to two-year programmes or converting the three-year Diploma programmes into four-year degree programmes to reduce the attrition rate and increase patronage of these programmes. In the long term, we need to consider expanding the range of programmes on offer to include some of the heavily patronised ones as a way of enhancing our financial base. The campus can now boast of a full complement of administrative staff.

SECURITY

Generally, the situation appears calm. However, the spate of stealing of valuables like mobile phones, laptops and cash in the students' Hall of residence and Hostels is embarrassing and is not abating despite disciplinary and administrative actions being taken against student culprits. It is imperative that Staff and students become more security conscious by adhering to security tit-bits. The attacks on students and staff on campus have reduced remarkably, though.

The security situation on campus early this year has not been all peaceful as a result of student riots. They marched to the Vice-Chancellor's Lodge in the night of 3rd March, 2009 when they had been granted audience by the University Authorities the previous morning. The Vice-Chancellor called the campus guards and the Police to quell the rioters.

The rate of attrition in the Security Department is high. This has made deployment of adequate personnel to man guard points difficult, which is also compounded by the fact that more structures are being put up to enhance academic studies. Out of the 106 National Youth Employment Personnel attached to the department only 58 are still at post due to resignations and desertion of post. We shall therefore recruit at least 100 people to augment the present strength of 236 all ranks.

The acquisition of five motorbikes for the department has enabled commanders to improve on their supervisory roles to guard at their work places. Cooperation with the military and police to combat crime on campus through patrolling and prosecution of criminals has improved this year. More crime preventive measures will be stepped up for all campus residents through education via Focus FM and crime alert notices.

EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE

During the year under review, the Legal Office represented the University in some landmark cases such as Elvis Boamah versus KNUST, Alfred Obeng Boateng and Ato Kwamena Sam-Ghartey versus KNUST. In the case of Elvis Boamah versus KNUST, Elvis Boamah, the then President of the University Hall, initiated legal action against the University for rustivating him and others for students' unrest and damage to properties at the University Hospital, following the death of a student. The High Court in Kumasi dismissed the action and gave judgement in favour of the University.

Alfred Obeng Boateng and Ato Kwamena Sam-Ghartey, who were third year students of the Faculty of Law, took three civil actions against the University for dismissing them for examination malpractice. They also brought two actions for contempt against the Vice-Chancellor, Registrar, Dean of the Faculty of Law and the Examination Officer for the Faculty of Law, on one hand, and the Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Registrar and the Dean of the Faculty of Law on the other hand, for the High Court to punish the Officers for, respectively preventing them from taking part in an examination paper and refusing to readmit them after High Court (2), Kumasi had reversed their dismissal.

The University quickly appealed against the decision of High Court (2), Kumasi reversing the dismissal, and the matter is currently pending before the Court of Appeal, Accra. Of the other two civil actions, High Court (1), Kumasi has dismissed one, and upon application by the University, High Court (7), Kumasi has suspended the other one, pending final determination of the one before the Court of Appeal. High Court (2), Kumasi has dismissed one of the contempt cases against the Officers and, consequently, the students appear to have lost interest in the other one.

The most important thing is that the University has legally succeeded in preventing the reinstatement of Alfred Obeng Boateng and Ato Kwamena Sam-Ghartey who were rightly dismissed by the University for examination malpractice. I have mentioned these cases in details for us to appreciate the rate at which students are resorting to court when aggrieved in one way or the other. There are several cases pending at the law courts. In order to limit the

spate of legal cases against the University, there is the need for us to ensure that the due process is followed at all times.

Some 27 students in the second year who were dismissed for forgery of their entry requirements are currently challenging the University in court. What they may have forgotten is that the onus was on them to read the instructions carefully before completing their forms. Some shaded 'E' for 'D7' and 'E8', an interpretation not given by the University. Since then, the University has made good this shortcoming.

DISCIPLINE ON CAMPUS

We do not have a catalogue of 'dos' and 'don'ts' for all categories of stakeholders on campus. In addition, our Statutes do not spell out a clear code of conduct for all of us but, all along, we have been guided by the ethics of common sense.

Any senior member who reports to work, leaves before closing time, travels without permission, seeks favours from female students and engages in all manner of activities which are against common sense, cannot be considered disciplined. I would like to use this forum to remind all senior members to be alive to their responsibilities so that we can discipline those we work with.

Towards the end of 2008, we installed a biometric counter at the main Administration to check on attendance. While it is a very good vehicle for checking attendance, it is difficult to fully enforce its use. In spite of this, we would like to recommend its use in all Colleges, faculties, Departments and Sections in the University given the unreliable nature of manual clocking.

I would like to appeal to members of Convocation to be mindful about the need for discipline to prevail on campus. We must be disciplined ourselves and also ensure that those working under us and our students are also disciplined. There may be real challenges in our bid to instil discipline but we need to stay on course. You would recall that during the recent clashes between Unity and University Halls, and the recent agitation on the students' front because we had disciplined some students; we stayed on course and, I believe that, in the end discipline will prevail.

UPDATE ON RECENT STUDENTS' AGITATION

Following the unfortunate incident of October 11, 2008, a Committee was established to investigate the matter. The Committee submitted its report and the Executive Committee discussed the matter on 9th February, 2009 following which the recommendations were accepted. Since then, there have been other developments on which Convocation was briefed during a special meeting held on 12th February, 2009.

Following that meeting, the Chancellor intervened because of a special representation made to him by the SRC. I am happy to announce to Convocation that; the matter has been appropriately determined by the Chancellor under the following terms:

Removal of Photocopier Operators

It was agreed that the University should identify and create centres for photocopier operators. The operators would be identified and controlled. The Estate Office/Faculty Administrators would jointly manage the centres in order to control their activities.

Report on the October 11, 2008 Incident

The SRC was asked to contact their representative on the Committee for any briefing about the Committee's report. They have further been asked to contact the Vice-Chancellor and Registrar for further discussions on any aspect of the Committee's report that affects the generality of students for possible redress.

Ban on Hall Activities

It was agreed that students could make a case for Hall and Inter-Hall activities through the Dean of Students to the Vice-Chancellor for approval since the ban is not permanent. However, the ban is still in force for the University and Unity Halls.

Undertaking by First Year Students

It was agreed that copies of Student's Guide should be made available to students at the time of the signing of the Undertaking.

Withdrawal of 27 Students

It was agreed that, only 12 students out of the number could have a possibility of an appeal but this would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Congregation Charges and Sale of University Souvenirs

As a result of the huge costs involved in the organisation of Congregations, it is only fair that students also bear a portion of cost involved. It has been agreed that the sale of souvenirs should be optional for graduands. In view of the linkage to the assistance for needy students, the SRC was asked to submit a Memo on the alternative ways of funding for the Students Financial Services Office.

Rustication and Dissolution of JCR Committee Executive Members

We agreed that, the period of rustication for two Hall Presidents should be reduced to one semester instead of the initial two semesters with a possibility of restoration of their residential status after they have served their punishment.

On the dissolution of the executive of the JCRs, it was realised that those who were found culpable had been summarily punished. However, those who were exonerated by the Committee would be allowed to, at least remain in residence and or, retain their positions on the JCRs.

In spite of all these agreements with the SRC, students in the two affected Halls have embarked on processions, contacted the Regional Minister, Minister of Education, Regional Police Commander, and other high office holders with the view to persuading management to reinstate the dismissed and rusticated students. At a point, they even attempted to see the Chancellor. I would like to assure Convocation that none of these overtures will change our stand.

PIPELINE ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES

Further to our objective of providing the needed manpower in science and technology for the prosecution of our national development agenda as well as meeting the millennium development goals, we keep introducing new programmes of study in a bid to equip the youth with the needed skills, knowledge and abilities to meet the future challenges. For that matter the under listed programmes will be introduced effective August, 2009 in addition to the Biomedical Engineering programme introduced in August, 2008:

College	-	Programmes
(a) Agriculture & Natural Resources	-	Agribusiness & Extension Agricultural Biotechnology Landscape Design & Management Dairy, Meat Science & Technology
(b) Architecture & Planning	-	Real Estate
(c) Health Sciences	-	Sonography, Veterinary Medicine
(d) Engineering	-	Petroleum Engineering

In addition to marketing these programmes, it is our hope that both faculty situation and related ancillary facilities would be enhanced with funding from private and public sources to enable us place all these programmes on offer in August, 2009.

FUNDING OF RESEARCH

Research is one of our core functions as members of Convocation. Indeed, it is research that advances the frontiers of knowledge and informs our teaching to a very large extent. We may not be involved in cutting edge research or technology development but, whatever we do directly informs our teaching and service to the community. However, one of the challenges that confront Convocation members as researchers is how to fund our research agenda. The situation was really bad several years ago but it appears to have improved somewhat in the last few years.

It was in view of this major challenge that the Administration decided to use about 20% of its Faculty Development Fund provided by GETFund to sponsor a limited number of Faculty research projects. In the last two years, for example, we have funded such projects from Agriculture, Planning, Economics and the Medical School. Currently, two projects under consideration are from Physics and the Centre for Cultural and African Studies. Total expenditure from this source may not be much but amounts to about GHC 20,000 per annum. We believe that this is a good start and needs to be sustained. Other Colleges are complementing this effort. The College of Engineering, for example, has established Research and Innovation Fund with proceeds from operation of the Guest House and I trust that others will follow this shining example.

By far, the University has attracted substantial resources from offshore by the University Authorities the previous morning. The Vice-Chancellor called the campus guards and the Police to quell the rioters.

The rate of attrition in the Security Department is high. This has made deployment of adequate personnel to man guard point difficult, which is also compounded by the fact that more structures are being put up to enhance academic studies. Out of the 106 National Youth Employment Personnel attached to the department only 58 are still at post due to resignations and desertion of post. We shall therefore recruit at least 100 people to augment the present strength of 236 all ranks.

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but, all along, we have been guided by the ethics of common sense.

RANKING OF ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS

Following Academic Board's approval of the ranking methodology, all academic departments in the University were ranked last year. The results were interesting but may have surprised a lot of faculty members. Indeed, that was the very essence of the exercise - to make all faculty members a little more sensitive to the critical factors which directly impact on our work as teachers in a University as well as other factors which will gradually enhance our regional and global competitiveness as teaching and research departments. It is also advisable that you take time to properly answer the questionnaire that has been sent to you so that we can take full stock of your department's activities.

One of the immediate effects of the ranking exercise has been to generate some level of healthy competition between the various departments with each department wanting to outperform the other. To sustain this level of competition, the first three departments will be recognized and awarded prizes during Congregation in June 2009. These three departments are Crop and Soil Sciences, Pharmacognosy and Pharmacology. Congratulations to these departments but let the performance of these three departments spur us on to enhance our performance in the next ranking exercise.

The methodology is far from being perfect and therefore, we will continue to review and update it as well as add other relevant factors which may have been overlooked in our current exercise. As is usually the case, comments on the methodology are invited from faculty members.

On a closely related issue, the recent ranking of the top 100 African Universities dated January 09, 2009 puts KNUST at the 53rd position and the University of Ghana at the 55th position. All the other Universities in Ghana did not even make the list. Congratulations to all of us and let us all work together to enhance our visibility of the continent.

UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

As we are aware, the University Hospital is a 100-bed general hospital which caters for staff and their dependants, students as well as the general public mainly from the University's surrounding communities. With staff strength of 170, the Hospital operates a 24-hour service as well as an Accident and Emergency Unit, a Diabetic and Hypertension Clinic, an Eye Clinic, a Paediatric Clinic, Radiology reporting as well as the Students' Clinic. Plans are at an advanced stage to establish a 24- room VIP ward with semi-private rooms. The sketch design and estimated costs have been finalised and awaiting the approval of the appropriate Committees.

Out-patient department attendance has increased rapidly over the last few years. Last year, for example, daily attendance at the main hospital was between 200 - 250 with about the same number attending the Students' Clinic. This is primarily on account of the enhanced level of service offered by our hospital system.

During the year under review, the Hospital was able to complete projects such as an Eye Clinic, a Laundry with an Industrial Washing Machine, a mechanised bore-hole and the procurement and installation of a 185 KVA stand-by-generator to provide 24-hour electrical power to the Hospital.

The Hospital in the past year begun the process of registering students on the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS). Thus far, I am happy to report to Convocation that, virtually, all students and staff members have been registered under the Scheme and as a result, they are' required to use their NHIS cards any time they visit the hospital. Incidentally, this is an area where we appear to have many problems and so I would like to use this opportunity to solicit your cooperation in this matter.

The Hospital still grapples with the problem of inadequate Doctors and Nurses, irregular reimbursement from the NHIS, as well as an ageing staff population: particularly the nurses. It was for this reason that we have done everything possible to attract nurse assistants to help the professional nurses. The University has plans to relocate the Security Barracks from its current location and when this is done, the Hospital will be able to embark on its expansion plans.

Over the next few months, the Hospital plans to embark on an aggressive human resource development including recruitment of essential staff such as full time surgeons, obstetrician and gynaecologist as well as the introduction of additional services such as Endoscopy. We hope that the six staff currently on study leave will complete their studies and resume duty to augment the staffing situation.

KNUST TEACHING HOSPITAL

Following some preliminary discussions on the Teaching Hospital, the College of Architecture and Planning was mandated to provide sketch designs for the project. This assignment was executed to our satisfaction but the College is yet to be compensated for its services. Based on preliminary cost estimates, the funding requirements were determined and it became very clear that this was far beyond the University and hence the need to seek funding for the project. Consequently, it was decided that the technical services and sourcing for funds should be considered as a package. It, therefore, became necessary to advertise the project in the media and on our website.

To publicise the project and give it the visibility it required, you would all recall that on 17th July, 2006, the Chancellor of the University cut sod for commencement of work on the project. Since then, it would appear that nothing has happened but on the contrary, a lot has happened behind the scenes.

In September, 2007, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the International Hospitals Group, following Council's approval, for them to assist us with the preparatory work and, additionally, to source for funding. Their fees were so high that we simply could not pay them but it was going to be taken from the secured funds. In addition, we could also not meet other requirements including a sovereign guarantee.

In the interim, we had also been contacted by Stardust Investments Holding Ltd. and some other companies to give them a mandate to seek funding for the project. After some preliminary discussions, Stardust Investments was given the mandate to seek funding for the project. As at the end of 2008, they had not been successful but are still pursuing our interests.

In view of the Procurement Laws, we had to advertise in the print media and on our website requesting for proposals to develop our Teaching Hospital as a turnkey project including detailed funding arrangements in February, 2008. Following some initial objections, or

queries, from the Public Procurement Board, we decided to re-advertise the project. When the tenders were opened, it was realised that the bids were generally high and within the £41 0,660 or GH¢821,320 range for the pre contract services for a project which has been estimated to cost about US\$220 million or GH¢380 million. Instead of seeking for funds for the project, each bidder proposed that the company would introduce KNUST to funding agencies.

As a result of these difficulties, it has been decided that we abort the on- going exercises of recruiting a consultant for the pre-contract stage and form a team to be supervised by the Director of Works and Physical Development, to review earlier sketch designs prepared by the College of Architecture and Planning. In addition, instead of paying a minimum of £41 0,660 for pre-contract services, this amount can be used to start constructional work together with an amount of GH¢950,000 already allocated to us for the Teaching Hospital by GETFund.

BOTANIC GARDEN

The 12.9 ha Botanic Garden which is managed by the Department of Theoretical and Applied Biology, also serves as a resource site for practical lessons in Ecology, Plant Physiology, Agroforestry and Conservation. It is also used for project and practical work by students in the Colleges of Engineering as well as Agriculture and Natural Resources.

The Garden also serves the University community as an area for retreat and socialising. Most of our students meet in the recreational areas in groups for social and religious activities. It provides a cool and refreshing environment conducive for meditation, relaxation and sightseeing. The Garden is also open to the general public for social events, all of which bring some income to the University.

However, the conservation areas are restricted to the public but they help with protection of plants. Several rare and endangered species are found growing in the area and their conservation is essential for sustenance of their genes. River Wewe flows through the Garden and provides a natural habitat for water plants and aquatic animals. The mystery rock located in the course of the river has been the most recent attraction to the public.

In spite of these clear advantages, this Garden faces several challenges and over the next year, efforts would be made by the Department to tackle them. This is important because of the need for biodiversity conservation. The Garden cannot be replaced; hence, every effort should be made to ensure its conservation of species, protection of the area as well as development of its resources. Eventually, we intend to develop the Botanic Garden, Swimming Pool and Hale and Hearty Sports Centre in an integrated manner during the course of next year.

UNIVERSITY CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

Just as any other semi autonomous self accounting unit, this company has operated fairly well but not without difficulties. It has experienced very serious cash flow challenges which have arisen primarily as a result of the non payment of certificates by its major stakeholder, which is the University. Currently, the company keeps only a skeletal staff of eight persons; including three who are on the University's payroll with the other five being paid by the company.

The company works primarily for the University and its operations have cantered around

refurbishment, landscaping and new construction. It has built a good reputation for itself following the successful execution and completion of projects such as the Pharmacy Block at the University Hospital as well as the male and female wards.

Even though the company has experienced some hiccups in the recent past, it has tremendous potentials to execute contracts just as any other construction company and, therefore, it needs to be bailed out of its present circumstances. Some of the feasible options include the University off-loading some of its shareholdings to individuals and interest groups within the University, capitalization of the company and making a commitment to give jobs to the company as well as promptly paying mobilisation fee and certificates on due completion of jobs.

However, considering the University's current financial circumstances, these may not be very easy options but we will do our very best to sustain operations of the company. The company also needs to become increasingly competitive because of some relevant national laws. As a first step, all Departments and Units in the University are to give preference to this company in the execution of minor works which are less than GH¢ 10,000.

WATER SUPPLY

It is gratifying to know that the University has made giant strides in the provision of water to various parts of the campus during the period under review. We have completed the installation of a New Press Steel Tank at the Booster Station. It has the capacity of 50,000 gallons and it is the same as the existing reservoir. The cost of this installation was GH¢9,980.00.

It would be recalled that as at the time of the last Convocation address, two new pumps were fixed at the Booster Station out of four. Steps are being taken to install additional two pumps at the Booster Station. GWCL has submitted quotations for the award of the installations. When this is done, it is expected that for the next ten to fifteen years, it is not likely that we will face any problems with the Booster Station. It is anticipated that when GWCL completes its task of providing sufficient water to the City of Kumasi, KNUST will be in the position to provide constant water supply to areas supplied from our Booster Station.

The Borehole serving the Central Class Room Block has been connected to the Dean of Students Facility Two and so the water problem there has been solved. To solve the erratic flow of water to Queens Hall we have contacted GWCL which has submitted quotations for the extension of water from the borehole at the Unity roundabout to the Hall. The quotations are currently being considered for the immediate execution of the project. This Borehole is already serving Unity and Independence Halls. In addition, with the assistance of GWCL, we are trying to find a permanent solution to the water problems at Africa Hall, University Hall, Great Hall, Library and the Faculty areas.

You may have also noticed the intermittent flow of water from your taps. This is a city-wide problem and so a general notice has been issued already explaining the situation together with a schedule.

ELECTRICITY

It is an understatement to say that the supply of electricity to the University campus has been the best. This appreciably interrupts the smooth running of University activities. The Engineering Sub-Station was devastated by fire on 14th April, 2008 and this brought to a halt

all activities within its catchment area. The equipment was replaced at the cost of nearly GH¢40,000.00, excluding labour.

During the year under review, the SRC provided ten {10} 400 Watts Street Lights complete with the University providing sixty {60}. VODAFONE is donating eighty with the initial consignment of forty two {42} already delivered. This project, when completed, will give a total number of one hundred and fifty {150} poles which will go a long way to enhance security on campus.

The University is on a Ring Main and this means that when a fault develops on our underground high tension cable, we will all still get power until the problem is solved. However, for the past few years, there has been a break in the Ring Main.

As part of efforts being made to rectify the problem a contract for the laying of cables, covering a distance of two kilometres {2 km}, has been awarded and work on the project has just begun. When this project is completed the Ring Main will then be restored to ensure better power supply to the University Community.

To link the Faculties of Law and Art to the national grid and to ensure constant power supply to these areas, the University has awarded a contract to Messrs Western Omega Ltd. to extend electricity to these Faculties. I am pleased to inform you that work on these projects will begin soon.

ROADS

Major works on our roads on campus are normally undertaken by the three road agencies - Ghana Highway Authority, Department of Feeder Roads and the Department of Urban Roads - for gratis. This means that sections of the Botanic Garden roads, roads in the Hall Six area, Business School Road, Gaza Road; amongst others, will be appropriately packaged and the three agencies contacted for assistance. This approach has become necessary in view of the fact that road construction in Ghana is a very expensive venture. In the interim, our Roads and Culverts Unit has started a programme of pothole patching and other routine maintenance activities on the major campus roads.

As some of you may be aware, some major drains on campus have caved in or have failed due to lack of maintenance and the penetration of tree roots. So far, we have commenced efforts to reconstruct the drains at the Hall Six area. We also plan to desilt some portions of the Wewe river to reduce the incidence of flooding. A major drain that serves the Security /Transport area has also been traced and desilting is currently ongoing in our attempt to reduce the flooding situation at the area.

PARKING ON CAMPUS

You would recall that during the last address, I made comprehensive remarks on how the vehicle population has grown on campus and, as a result, how it has become increasingly difficult to find parking spaces in the teaching area, the commercial area and at the Main Administration. I believe that you have seen some modest efforts being made to tackle the problem through the construction of two parking lots next to the Commercial Area Market and behind Administration Block II.

A third parking lot will be constructed at the Commercial Area as part of an integrated development to be financed by Home Finance Company. When this facility is completed,

there will be ample spaces for various commercial uses so that the area will really become a one-stop shopping centre to serve the University community. It is understood that the Home Finance Company is far advanced with the process of procuring a contractor to execute the project.

We will also have to examine the problem of parking in the general teaching area considering the now widespread use of vehicles by students. I have already instructed the Director of Works and Physical Development to examine this problem and provide some solutions. The Administration Block will also receive an equal attention in this regard in the year ahead of us.

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMES OFFICE (IPO)

During the period under review, several in-country and offshore institutions expressed interest in establishing collaboration agreements with our University. Among those we were able to sign agreements with several institutions including: Sheffield Hallam University of UK, University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), Kenyatta University, the State University of New York at Geneseo, University of Flensburg, University of Bamako, the University of Dares Salaam, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, University of Tromso, University Paris-Sud II, Indiana Institute of Technology and Universite D'Abomey-Calavi. Some other institutions have also expressed interest in collaborating with us. They include the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, School of Architecture (Denmark), British Council Ghana for the Africa Knowledge Transfer Partnership, the Midland Pharmaceuticals Ltd. Ghana, University of Technology (Jamaica), Data Link Institute, and the Gratis Foundation (Terna).

Currently, one student from the University of Massachusetts is on a student exchange programme with the University. Dr. K. D. Kessey (Department of Planning) is also currently on a staff exchange programme at the Minnesota State University, while Dr. Miriam Porter from Minnesota State University is currently on a staff visit to our Department of Planning. Other institutions that sent visitors to our campus in the course of the year include Guilin University of Science and Technology (GUET), China, University of Bamako, the French Ambassador to Ghana (Mr. Arnaud Dornon), Scientists from the Royal Society of UK as well as a delegation from the Royal College of Art of UK.

The French Embassy in Collaboration with the IPO also organised a French University Fair on 20th February, 2009. The Programme brought to the University, "Campus France" - the French version of the British Council and fourteen (14) other prestigious French Institutions in Engineering, Science, Business, Management, Humanities, and the Social Sciences to shed light on further study opportunities in France as well as French research centres in West Africa.

We plan to strengthen our collaboration with more institutions, but would like to plead with members who review such applications to expedite the submission of their reports to enable the University take a firm decision on such applications in time.

AFFILIATIONS

The University has signed MOU with four (4) institutions namely: the Spiritan University College, Ejisu, the Garden City University College, Kumasi, the Central University College - Accra and the Ho Polytechnic. Arrangements are far advanced for the signing of MOU with the Osei Tutu II Institute for Advanced ICT Studies in Kumasi. We have also received eight

(8) new applications from the following institutions for consideration during the year under review: the Institute of Local Government Studies, Accra, IGNIS University College - Accra, St Karol University College - Accra, Narh-Bita College - Tema, Data Link Institute - Tema, MountCrest University College - Larteh-Akwapim, Kintampo Rural Health Training School-Kintampo, University College of Agriculture and Environmental Studies - Bunso and Premier Nurses Training College - Kumasi, in addition to those already under consideration by the Planning and Resources Committee.

As I informed you during the 2008 Convocation address we need to strengthen our internal mechanisms to be able to review such proposals and mentor the affiliate institutions properly. The worry however, is that if we are not careful we may be overwhelmed with the influx of the applications and subsequently compromise on quality. The Planning and Resources Committee has resolved to scrutinize such applications thoroughly before they are forwarded to the Academic Board for approval. We cannot compromise on the stature and reputation we have achieved for ourselves over the years.

The process of accreditation may not be a very worthwhile economic exercise but we need to assure quality in whatever we do. What this calls for will be more and thorough work on those who serve on the various panels.

ALUMNI AFFAIRS

During the year under review, we continued our collaboration with Alumni in our quest to move the University to greater heights. Locally, the Tema Chapter was the most active branch and we participated in their activities to the extent possible. I attended their end of year get-together which was held at the Ghacem Club House with the National President. The event was fairly well attended and offered me an opportunity to meet with more members of our association. The Koforidua Chapter has also picked up somewhat because of its close collaboration with the Tema Chapter. Other active chapters include Akuse and Akosombo as well as Bolgatanga. The national congress could not be held in 2008 as planned and has been rescheduled for May 2009 to enable greater patronage. It is our hope that this congress, once again, will offer the University and its alumni an opportunity to interact to determine how best we can synergize to the benefit of our alma mater. This way, we can continue to rely on alumni to participate in the affairs of the University.

The Alumni Centre continued to play a very useful role in linking the University with Alumni all over the world. It coordinated the shipment of books from the United Kingdom and the United States to the University. On our return trip from Barbados with the Chancellor, the Registrar and I met the U.K. and Ireland group in London and had discussions with them on developments in the University and how they can all contribute to the on-going efforts to develop the University. A few of them expressed interest in offering block teaching whenever they visit home but follow up activities have not been encouraging. Other Alumni in North America presented back issues of professional journals and used computers to the University. The University will participate fully in the 10th anniversary celebration of the North American Chapter of the KNUST Alumni Association slated for July 2009 in Chicago.

Another group in Australia presented rock samples and compasses to the Geological Engineering Department to facilitate teaching and learning. This particular group has also commenced efforts to recruit faculty for the University the first of which is likely to be hired before the end of the first quarter.

In the months ahead of us, we expect a greater participation by Alumni in the affairs of the University. It is even conceivable that some Alumni would, in the near future, begin to mobilize financial resources for the University through various endowments, award of prizes and the establishment of various chairs. We will also continue to rely on Alumni to serve as external examiners to various programmes within the University.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Colleagues and members of Convocation, I believe that this presentation has given you a comprehensive view of the status of our University and its constituent parts. You would also appreciate the scope and range of activities that we have pursued as a University within the past year. It would have been clear to all of us that these activities have been dictated, largely, by our Strategic Plan and its overall framework. There are occasions when we have also taken advantage of opportunities that have come our way to move on to greater heights. While pursuing these activities, we have encountered some challenges including the timely release of funds for various activities. Once again, this emphasizes the urgent need for all of us to enhance our internally- generated funds. Without such all effort, frustration and despondency will soon set in. On the whole, this year will be a rather difficult one in view of the global economic crunch and its implications for us at the national and local levels. We need to reduce cost in all our activities to the extent possible.

In general terms, we are on the right track so far as the growth and development of the University is concerned; albeit at a slower pace than anticipated because of certain un-anticipated constraints. We will continue on this general path and trust that each of us, as members of Convocation, will contribute his or her quota. This is our time to serve our generation by moving the University on to greater heights. Each person's contribution is important. As Ryunosuke Satoro has observed, "Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean". In the view of H.E. Luccock, "No one can whistle a symphony. It takes an orchestra to play it".

God bless all of us as we continue our journey, as a team, on to the next phase of our University's development.

Thank you.

Professor Kwasi Kwafu Adarkwa
Vice-Chancellor, KNUST