UNIVERSITY OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES, ACCRA



Gender Policy

2012

Table of Contents

Content Page

1.0 Introduction 1 2.0 Scope and Objectives of the Gender Policy 1 3.0 Vision 1 4.0 Mission 1 5.0 Context for the Gender Policy 2 6.0 Principles Guiding the Policy 2 6.1 Basic Gender Principles 2 7.0 Functions of the Gender Unit 3 8.0 Purpose of the Policy 3 9.0 Objectives of the Policy 3 10.0 General Strategies of the Gender Policy 4 11.0 Responsibilities of key Players 4 12.0 Monitoring and Evaluation 9 References 10

Gender Analysis Concepts 11 Diagram: The Policy

coordination Structure 7

UNIVERSITY OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES (UPS)

GENDER POLICY FRAMEWORK

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The University of Professional Studies (UPS) recognizing the need to create a more conducive environment for learning and work for both men and women, and realizing the need to promote, support and consolidate gender mainstreaming and equity in its community; and cognizant of the existence of some degree of gender imbalances and the need to move beyond the present gender indifferent disposition, set out this Gender Policy for use in the University's community.

2.0 **SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE GENDER POLICY FRAMEWORK**

The Gender Policy defines the University's gender vision and strategies to achieve this vision. It seeks to create an enabling environment for all staff and students of the University and implement programmes aimed at achieving gender equity and equality of opportunities.

3.0 **VISION**

The University for Professional Studies (UPS) strives to create an enabling environment for promoting gender equity and to create a supportive and inclusive environment where everyone can reach their full potential and have a real choice to participate in and contribute to the activities and processes, without prejudice and discrimination.

4.0 **MISSION**

To advocate for gender equity at the Institutional level and create an effective enabling environment to guide the process of achieving equality of opportunity and empowerment for the achievements of the objectives of the University.

To promote the equal rights of women and men with regard to studies, work, recruitment and other conditions of work as well as development opportunities within the university.

To promote an integrated system of teaching and learning, research, training, information and documentation in the gender mainstreaming activities of the University.

5.0 **CONTEXT FOR THE GENDER POLICY**

The following pieces provide the basis for the Gender Policy Framework. These documents highlight the importance of mainstreaming gender in policy planning and implementation.

- The Constitution of the Republic of Ghana (1992)
- UNESCO Chair on Gender Policy and Human Rights (418), 1997
- The National Gender and Children Policy (2001
- The UPS Staff Development Policy (2009)

- The **C**onvention on the **E**limination of All Forms of **D**iscrimination **A**gainst **W**omen (CEDAW),
- Affirmative Action Policy,
- Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,

.

6.0 **PRINCIPLES GUIDING THE POLICY**

The policy is founded on the principles of equity of all persons as a principle enshrined in the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, UNESCO Chair on Gender Policy and Human Rights (418) established in 1997 as well as the Staff Development Policy of the University.

6.1 **BASIC GENDER PRINCIPLES**

The University believes in the following principles as the basis of all the strategies of this policy.

- That both men and women have equal rights and must be treated equally and optimally served at all levels and in all functions.
- Fairness to all is a basic and fundamental human right
- Right to information and the right to be heard is a fundamental human right, which demands that all stakeholders are given a voice through representation in key decision making process and channels to air out concerns
- All individuals have the right to be safe and must be protected and that this University has the responsibility to offer protection to all community members.
- There is need for a channel for communication, thus the establishment of the Gender Unit

7.0 **FUNCTIONS OF THE GENDER UNIT**

- Reports to the Registrar and the Vice-Chancellor in the University
- Provides Administrative guidance for the Gender programmes
- Ensures that Gender is mainstreamed in UPS' activities
- Ensures compliance of the Policy
- Carry out coordinating research on gender and gender-related issues
- Provide capacity building in gender sensitization and mainstreaming for the UPS community •

Lead and coordinate advocacy work leading to gender mainstreaming and equity in the University

• To facilitate awareness-raising and confidence-building among female students • Preparation of report

• Monitor and follow up on implementation of Gender Policies

8.0 **PURPOSE OF THE POLICY**

The purpose of this Gender Policy Framework is to establish a clear vision and set of mainstreaming guidelines for the University, for the development of services, policies, procedures and practices based on equity between women and men. Furthermore, it suggests the development of specific interventions to meet the practical and strategic needs of female staff and students in order to ensure their empowerment towards the achievement of the University's objectives.

9.0 **OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY**

The focus of the policy is to provide equitable opportunities for both females and males. Both sexes have to be empowered to strive for the best.

To promote and enhance gender equity in UPS, the University shall:

1. Ensure that gender equity is integrated into institutional strategic planning and that policy development, operational practices and procedures are all informed by the principles of equity
2. Ensure that all staff and students are fully aware of and accept their responsibilities to perform their roles in a way that genuinely promotes fairness and respect for one's self and others
3. Address any perceived barriers in providing and promoting inclusive practices for all staff and students and target areas to remove inequities
4. Establish a mechanism to monitor compliance with policies
5. Ensure that any breaches of the policy are reported and dealt with in an appropriate way
6. Monitor the effectiveness of the actions taken to promote equity

7. To sensitize both staff and students on HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention and management.
8. Ensure that pregnant female students are aware of the policy on pregnancy and examinations

10.0 **GENERAL STRATEGIES OF THE GENDER POLICY**

The University shall adapt the following general strategies to meet the objectives of the Gender Policy.

1. **The University shall establish a Gender Committee to advice Management on matters of Gender Equity in the University**

   The Committee shall execute the following functions:

   • Develop a Gender Action Plan for the University
   • Ensure the provision of resources for the Gender Programmes
   • Identify the sources of equal opportunities and treatment of men and women in the University
   • Promote equal opportunities in the University and partner with other Universities Women Organisations as well as other key stake holders to help empower women • Receive and monitor complaints of members of the University's' community regarding Gender discriminatory practices and incidences of harassment. • Organise an annual diversity week for members of the University to showcase different cultures and their effect on gender roles
   • Implementation of cross-cutting issues such s HIV/AIDS awareness, management and prevention, etc.
   • Stimulate and encourage women to show interest and seek involvement in the University's governance and decision making processes.
   • Ensure general compliance with the University Gender and Harassment policy through constant monitoring and evaluation
   • Report on Gender issues to the Academic Board annually.

2. **Gender Equity shall be integrated into Institutional Strategic Planning**

   • Ensure that Gender Mainstreaming in factored in the strategic planning process • Develop Annual Work Plan to ensure that Gender Mainstreaming Activity are in line with strategic focus of the University
   • Gender Committee shall meet as required by the Statutes of the University and report to the Academic Board annually.

   • Two students shall be represented on the Gender Committee with one being a female or a male

• The Gender Committee shall include representatives from all key stake holding groups in the UPS community, which shall include one male and female representatives from the academic and from non-academic

3. **Creating awareness of responsibilities to promote equity of opportunity**

• Dissemination of Policy to staff and student twice yearly and as may be required for all fresh students and newly recruited staff during orientation seminars • Establish a mechanism to support staff and students for Gender Mainstreaming activities

4. **Addressing any perceived barriers and target areas to remove inequities**

• A Gender Forum shall be established to discuss key cross-cutting issues, and develop strategies for mitigating challenges

• Grievances Policy shall be developed and communicated, and channels of communications will be introduced in a way that would reduce perceived barriers

• The Gender Office shall collaborate with the Students' Representative Council and UTAG, UPS branch and TEWU (UPS) to develop information gathering strategies to help remove perceived barriers

5. **Improve our ability to recruit, retain, support and develop female and male staff and students**

• Develop and disseminate a Gender focused Admissions Policy for the University
• Develop and disseminate a Recruitment Policy for the University

6. **Establish a mechanism to monitor compliance with policies**:

The University shall:

• Develop and disseminate it's Ethics and Grievance Policies which shall be reviewed as and when required
• Establish data collection strategies and encourage members to report grievances or non-compliances
• Create awareness of the available channels of communications and systems for complaints and redress
• Analyze data on non-compliances and observations made and report annually

7. **To sensitize both staff and students on HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention and**

management.

- HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention and management seminars will be organized for staff and students

8. **Ensure that pregnant female students are aware of the policy on pregnancy during examinations**

- A Pregnancy Policy will be developed
- The Pregnancy Policy will be disseminated to all female students

Diagram 1: The Policy Coordination Structure

The coordination structure is centered in the Gender Unit which is accountable for the delivery of the University's Gender Programme. This is illustrated in the diagram below.

Vice-Chancellor

REGISTRAR

GENDER COMMITTEE

DEPARTMENTS AND FACULTIES

GENDER UNIT

DEPARTMENTS AND FACULTIES

The Gender Unit, in consultation with departments and faculties, develops key frameworks for delivery. To perform efficiently, the Gender Unit will draw upon the skills of the Gender Committee for the University's Gender Programme. The functions of the each Unit have been spelt out in the diagrams below.

11.0 **RESPONSIBILITIES OF KEY PLAYERS**

Every part of the University has a responsibility for ensuring compliance with the duties of the gender policy. All staff and students must ensure compliance.

The Vice-Chancellor

The Vice-Chancellor has the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the University complies with the Gender Policy.

The Registrar

The Registrar is responsible for ensuring that the University's Gender Policy is implemented, and that appropriate action is taken against individuals who do not abide by the precepts of the policy.

Deans, Vice-Chancellors and Heads of Departments

They are responsible for the implementation of the policy within the areas reporting to them. This involves putting the policy and its strategies and procedures into practice; making sure all staff know their responsibilities, and receive support and training in carrying these out; following the relevant procedures and taking action against staff or students who discriminate for reasons of gender.

Staff

Staff has to create and maintain an environment where discrimination is considered to be unacceptable. They should help with the promotion of equity and discard discriminate on the grounds of gender.

All Students

Students have a role to play in making the University an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. All students should work towards the promotion of gender equity and not discriminate on grounds of gender. Incidence relating to gender should be reported to the Gender Coordinator, any of the members of the Gender Committee, member of staff or Head.

12.0 **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Gender Unit shall monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of the Policy and report to the Registrar on an annual basis.

For the effective implementation of the policy, the University will give the policy a two-year implementation period for both staff and students. During this period the Gender Unit will conduct an annual assessment to monitor and evaluate progress made. The findings will be presented during Annual General Meetings. A comprehensive evaluation will be conducted at the end of the two years.

REFERENCES

1. A Draft Policy Discussion document for the City of Cape Town (2001), *Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality*, South Africa
2. Kornegay D. E., (1999), *South Africa's National Policy Framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality*. Office on the Status of Women, South Africa. 3. Lancaster University, (2006), *Gender Equality Policy.*

Gender Analysis Concepts

Gender

It is the cultural set of characteristics that identify the social behavior of women and men and the relationship between them. Gender therefore refers not simply to women or men, but to relations between them and the way it is socially constructed. Because it is a relational term, gender must include women and men. Like concepts of class, race and ethnicity, gender is an analytical tool for understanding social processes.

Gender Equity

It is the process of being fair to women and men. To ensure fairness, measures must often be available to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from otherwise operating on a level playing field. Equity leads to equality.

Gender Equality

It means that women and men enjoy the same status. It means women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and potential to contribute to national, political, economic, social and cultural development and to benefit from the results, equal valuing of similarities and differences between women and men and the varying roles that they play.

Gender Issues

Gender Issues arise when the relations between women and men, their roles, privileges, status and positions are identified and analysed. Gender issues arise where inequalities' and inequities are shown to exist between people purely on the bases of their being female or male. The fact that gender and gender differences are socially constructed is itself a primary issue to deal with.

Gender Mainstreaming

This refers to a process that is goal oriented. It recognizes that most institutions consciously and unconsciously serve the interest of men and encourages institutions to adopt a gender perspective in transforming themselves. It promotes the full participation of women in decision-making so that women's needs move from the margins to the centre of development planning and resource allocation.

Empowerment

Empowerment is about people, both men and women. It is a collective undertaking, involving both individual change and collective action. Women's empowerment means developing their ability to collectively and individually take control of their own lives, identify their own lives, identify their needs, set their own agendas and demand support from their communities and the state to see that their interests are responded to.