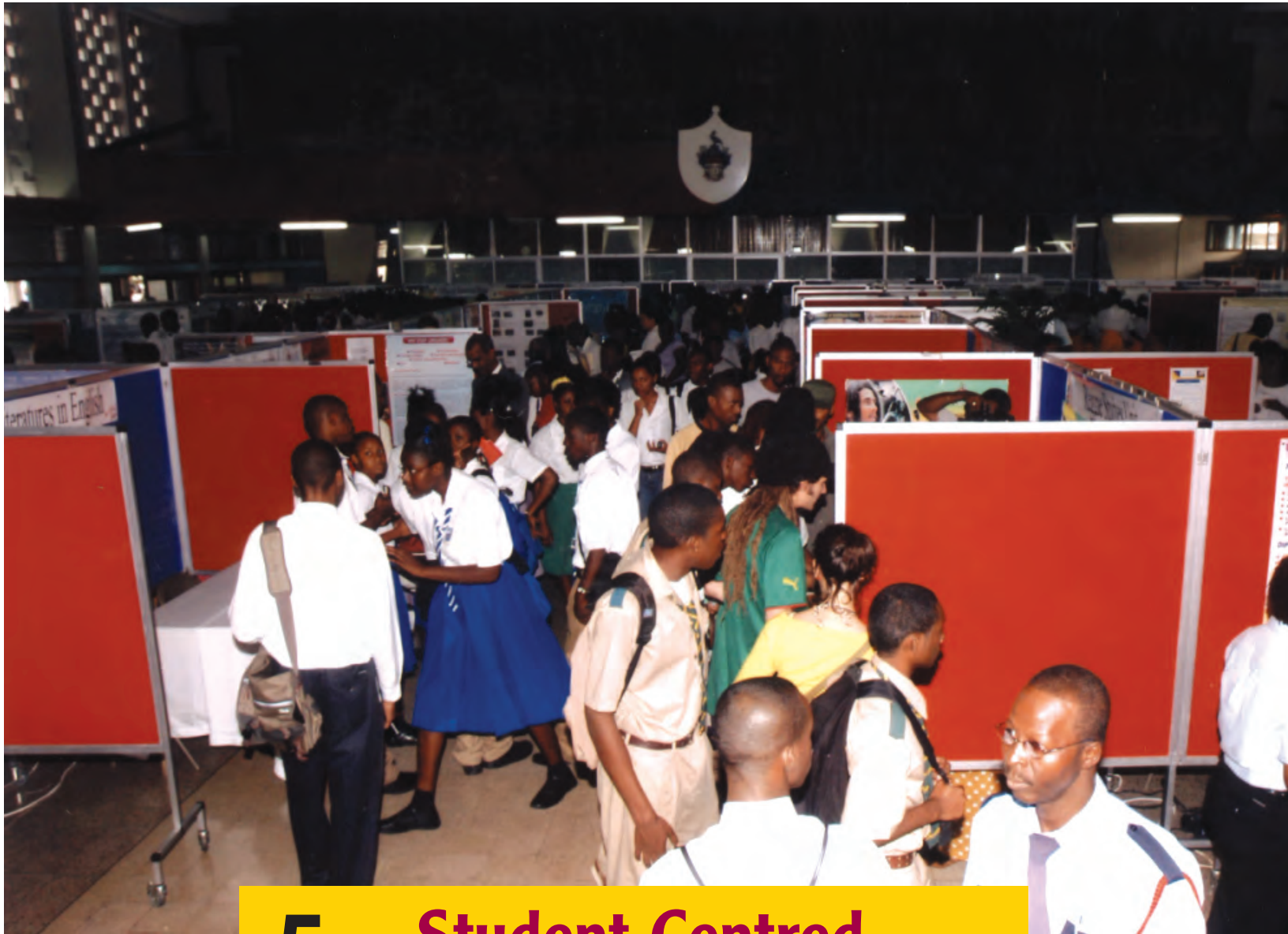




# Principal's Report 2006



## 5 Student Centred Initiatives



## Student Centred Initiatives

A number of initiatives to advance the Campus' student-centred orientation were developed during the academic year.

### Registration Improvements

The implementation of the Student Accounts Receivable module of the new Banner Student Administration System in August 2005 brought a number of efficiencies to student billings and accounts receivable and direct benefit to students. The system: allows the viewing of accounts on-line; calculation of billings on-line once courses were selected, thereby eliminating the need for the printing of student invoices by the Bursary; the automatic flow of Student Loan Bureau loan approvals to the students' records; and shortens the financial clearance process for students.

New payment options were introduced during 2004/2005 and by September 2005 students were making extensive use of them, thereby reducing queues and waiting time. These options included the use of collecting agencies such as Pay Master and Bill Express which have multiple outlets across Jamaica. E-Commerce was also introduced in December 2004. This facilitated on-line payment of tuition fees, transcript application fees and the like. All the options allowed for payments to be transferred electronically to the students' accounts. The Mona Campus was the first educational institution in Jamaica and the first UWI Campus to offer an electronic commerce facility. The greatest advantage of the registration improvements was that students were no longer required to come on the campus to submit payment vouchers (the use of which was discontinued) or to complete other aspects of their registration.

### A Revolving Student Loan Fund

A Revolving Student Loan Fund was introduced at the beginning of the 2004/2005 academic year on the basis

of a recommendation from the Guild of Students. It is administered through the Credit Union. The Administration continues to encourage students with financial difficulties to make use of this facility and through the Strategic Transformation Team, to lobby strongly for an enhanced and enlarged national income-contingent student loan scheme.

### Enhancing Students' Social / Foundation Skills

There is considerable concern regarding the basic skills that students bring with them to the University. The areas of quantitative, language and social skills have all been singled out for attention. To address the issue of social skills deficiencies, the Campus approved a pilot programme, designed by the Strategic Transformation Team (STT), to provide a transformative experience for first year students. It aims at improving the attitudes and broadening the social and foundation learning skills of incoming students. It is hoped that its success will allow it to attract substantial funding to facilitate roll-out to the entire first-year student population in the near future.

In response to proposals regarding language requirements from the Board for Undergraduate Studies, the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences agreed to undertake a curriculum review in 2005-2006 with a view to identifying how deficiencies in expression and the use of language might be addressed. The Department of Management Studies partnered with Toastmasters to promote a departmental club to improve students' public speaking. In addition, a pilot programme was also developed styled "The DOMS Business Advantage" which is designed to present to graduating students the full range of life and personal skills that they will need to function effectively within the workplace. It is hoped that a larger group of students will have an opportunity to



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## Student Centred Initiatives

participate in programmes such as these in the future.

The Faculty of Humanities and Education continued to use the English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT) to identify potential matriculants who have deficiencies in writing English and to offer them a remedial writing course.

### Student Leaders' Development Seminar

Finance and General Purposes Committee (F&GPC) Mona, agreed to the implementation of a one-week training seminar for Student Leaders. This, too, was a pilot activity which, if deemed successful, would inform the development of an Institute for Student Leaders. This institute would seek to recruit potential Caribbean leaders and nurture their development.

The Programme provided an opportunity for Caribbean tertiary and higher education student leaders to cultivate an academic approach to leadership through: exposure to contemporary leadership theories; development of skills in effective communication; conducting meetings, team building activities, conflict resolution and personal development exercises. While enhancing the participants' leadership potential, the seminar also

broadened their cultural and civic awareness through residence life activities, opportunities for cultural expressions and exposure to selected aspects of Caribbean culture. Applicants were selected from current elected or nominated student leaders who were recommended by their institutions.

### Caribbean Internship Project

A number of students traveled throughout the region during the summer of 2005 to participate in the Caribbean Internship Project (CIP). This is a partnership established between the Centre for Population, Community and Social Change, an outreach thrust of the Department of Sociology, Psychology and Social Work at Mona and the Caribbean Support Initiative (CSI). The participating countries included Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica. The students represented the disciplines of Social Work, Education, Sociology, Psychology, Law and Media. The interns were required to apply the skills learnt in their academic programmes to the various CSI projects in the participating islands.



Student Leaders Development Seminars participants with Dr Thelora Reynolds, Director of Student Services, Mona Campus (seated 4th from left)





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### Resource Centre for Students with Disabilities

The Finance and General Purposes Committee, (F&GPC) Mona approved the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus and the Lions Club of Kingston, Mona for the construction and equipping of a Resource Centre for specially challenged students attending the Campus. Under the terms of the agreement, the Lions Club will provide funding for a two storey building for use as a multifaceted resource centre for students with disabilities who require special services and facilities. The building will be constructed on lands adjoining the Office for Special Student Services.

### Career Symposium

The Placement and Career Services' Career Symposium with its theme *The CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME): Implications for Integration* was held in February, 2005. The Career Exposition was a major feature of Career Awareness Month, the theme of which was *The CARICOM Single and Economy (CSME): Am I Job-Ready?* The Symposium sought to bring together Human Resource practitioners, including prospective employers, faculty, administration and students and was sponsored by the accounting firm Ernst and Young. The information proved to be very timely and relevant as it served to disseminate information on the movement of labour and the requirements for UWI graduates to be employed or do business in other CARICOM countries.



Mr G E A Falloon, Campus Registrar, addressing the audience at the Official Opening of the Career Expo 2005



Career Expo 2005



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## Student Centred Initiatives

### Annual World of Work Seminars

Placement and Career Services in collaboration with Capital and Credit Merchant Bank, Victoria Mutual Wealth Management and the National Export-Import Bank of Jamaica Limited conducted the tenth in the series of World of Work Seminars. These seminars were held on seven (7) consecutive Thursdays, from October 14 – November 25, 2004.

The Seminars aimed at assisting students (particularly those in the final year) to develop skills and competencies needed to complement their academic training and make them competitive for the dynamic world of work. Attendance ranged from seventy-seven (77) to one hundred and forty-nine (149) students weekly over the seven-week period and a total of eight hundred and thirty-two (832) students participated.

### Leadership and Mentorship Programmes

The flagship programmes – the *UWI Quality Leadership Programme* and the *UWI Mentorship Programme* remain

very popular with students and continued to be delivered from the Office of the Director of Student Services. During the 2004/2005 academic year 263 students, 65% of whom were commuting students and 11% males, participated in the UWI Quality Leadership Programme. Components of the programme include the Nature of Leadership, Budgeting, Proposal Writing, Personal Development, Time Management, Conducting Meetings, Process Management, Public Speaking, Dining Etiquette and Business Etiquette. Twenty-five (25) students registered for the course as a co-curricular credit.

Each year, participants in the programme implement ten (10) community projects which create the opportunity for students to put into practice the workshop presentations on Proposal Writing, Budgeting, Group Dynamics and Process Management. The projects were funded through private sector sponsorships, fund raising activities put on by the student groups, and Campus contributions.



Mr Joseph Pereira, Deputy Principal, addressing participants at the closing ceremony of the UWI Quality Leadership Programme