

# FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

## MONA

Year ending July 31, 2012



**Mark Figueroa, BA, MSc *UWI*, PhD *Manc* – Dean**

# Overview

The Faculty of Social Sciences began the academic year 2011/12 with its Annual Faculty Day under the theme “*The Strategic Plan and the Social Sciences: Getting Involved to Make It Better for 2012-2017*”. This year, the Faculty was addressed by the University Registrar with a presentation which focused on building employer-employee engagement for organizational and personal development. Some recommendations which came out of the Faculty Day were: to implement measures to address students’ idea of preparedness; the need to focus more on team building and integration; employing more efficient use of resources; the need to focus on the promotion of administrative, technical, senior administrative and professional staff, and the balance between teaching and research as it impacts on the evaluation and promotion of academic staff.

The year ended with substantial changes in the leadership of the Faculty. Mark Figueroa, who served as Dean for two terms (eight years), handed over the Deanship to Evan Duggan. In taking up office as Dean, Professor Duggan demitted office as Executive Director of the Mona School of Business after serving for four years. Additionally, two new Associate Deans were appointed. Aldrie Henry-Lee demitted office and proceeded on sabbatical leave. She was replaced by Noel Cowell who has taken over as Associate Dean with responsibility for Teaching and Learning. Similarly, upon the retirement of Rupert Lewis, David Tennant was appointed Associate Dean for Graduate Studies. Consequent on the merger of the Mona School of Business and the Department of Management Studies to form the Mona School of Business and Management there were also leadership changes. Paul Simmonds was

appointed as Executive Director and Densil Williams demitted office as Head of the Department of Management Studies and took up the position of Deputy Executive Director of the new School.

## **Awards and Achievements**

The MSc in Telecommunications Policy and Management (TPM) was ranked among the top 200 Master's Degree Programmes in the World in the Project Management and Engineering category by Eduniversal in France. This ranking was achieved from among over 12,000 such programmes evaluated globally in the business schools which were ranked in the top 1,000.

Tennecia Dacass a graduate student from the Department of Economics, was awarded first prize for best presenter in the Graduate Students' Paper Competition at the 2012 Southwestern Economics Association Conference held in San Diego, California in April 2012, for her research presentation on "Estimating the Natural Rate of Interest in Jamaica and Determinants of Crime: An Empirical Study". This achievement is all the more outstanding as the majority of the students involved are already in PhD programmes. Nickesha Spencer, also a UWI graduate who is now pursuing PhD studies at State University of New York, Binghamton was awarded second prize.

Mark Figueroa was named as the recipient of the 2012 Vice Chancellor Award in of the category of Service to the University. Principal's Research Day Awards in the best research publication category for articles, were received by:Claremont Kirton, David Tennant and Abdullahi Abdulkadri from the Department of Economics, for their article: "Modelling the Relative Effects of Financial Sector Functions on Economic Growth in a Developing Country Context Cointegration and Error Correction Method: The Importance of Well-Functioning Domestic Financial Sectors"; Clinton Hutton, from the Department of Government for his article: "Oh Rudie: Jamaican Popular Music and the Narrative of Urban Badness in the Making of Postcolonial Society" and David Tennant for his article "Why Do People Risk Exposure to Ponzi Schemes? Econometric Evidence from Jamaica". Dr Tennant also won the Most Outstanding Researcher Award. The Centre for Leadership and Governance was given

the award for the research project attracting the most research funds for the project “Strengthening Governance in Jamaica”. A team from the Centre also received the award for the research project with the greatest business economic development impact for the project “A National Strategy for Mainstreaming Youth Development in Jamaica”. Members of the team included: Gavin Daley, Sonia Gatchair, Anthony Harriott, Stephen Johnson, Shakira Maxwell, Kevon Rhiney, Lloyd Waller, and Shinique Walters. The Faculty continued in its effort to highlight excellence in teaching, and this year, Marina Ramkissoon was the recipient of the annual FSS teaching award.

### **FSS Cross Campus Conference**

The third Bi-Annual Cross Campus Conference of the Social Science Faculties was held at Mona from January 16-18, 2012, under the Theme: *The Strategic Plan and the Social Sciences: Making it Better for 2012 – 2017*. Overall, the Conference received a very positive rating from those who participated and seventy one percent (71%) of those who attended indicated that they left the Conference with a clear vision of the priorities of the Faculty of Social Sciences for the new Strategic Plan. It was agreed that in going forward, successful case studies of cross campus collaboration would be identified for best practices. One such example is the case of Anthropology students learning together by jointly completing a cross campus course assignment. A webpage at (<http://myspot.mona.uwi.edu/socsci/cross-campus-collaboration>) has been created on the Faculty’s website and case studies identified at the Conference uploaded.

### **Preparation for the SALISES Fifty-Fifty Conference**

For SALISES, 2011 was a year of intensified outreach, engagement, research and preparation for the Fifty-Fifty Conference with some twenty one events to include guest lectures, seminars, presentation at conferences and symposia, all of which added greater depth and dynamism to the Campus’ outreach, national, regional and international engagement efforts. These events came out of the research clusters which were formed previously and which, for the most part were either multidisciplinary

across departments and faculties, and/or across Campuses and Universities. In particular, a seminar critically reviewing the PIOJ's "Growth Inducement Strategy" was done jointly with the Department of Economics. All of these were in preparation for the August 20-24, 2012, Fifty-Fifty Conference under the theme "Critical Reflections in a Time of Uncertainty".

The Social Work Unit in the Department of Sociology Psychology and Social Work celebrated its 50th anniversary with a full week of activities which included participation by visitors from the University of Connecticut. Some of the activities include presentations to social work classes; field visits to a number of agencies and communities and in particular a visit to the UWI Township Project in August Town which has resulted in the University of Connecticut's interest in exploring the possibility of establishing a similar project in Hartford and using the local project as an option for a graduate practicum.

## **New Programmes**

A new SALISES MSc in Development Studies aimed at producing high-level interdisciplinary personnel who will play leading roles in transforming the national, regional public and private sectors was taken through the approval process. The first cohort is to be admitted in 2013-14 academic year. In an effort not to replicate the remit and work of the Departments of Government, Economics and Sociology, Psychology and Social Work, this new MSc will replace the previous MSc programmes in Governance and Public Policy, Social Policy and Economic Development Policy. The programme, multidisciplinary in scope, seeks to fill a gap in the range of graduate offerings at the tertiary level which is dominated by disciplinary-based degrees. The programme is designed to produce the ideal graduate as described in the UWI Strategic Plan as it focuses on leadership with an interdisciplinary training and addresses the needs of Caribbean societies for technical governance in the policy-making and policy-implementation processes, with the flexibility to coordinate persons with specific disciplines. The new programme will also promote broad interdisciplinary knowledge, with specific skills in research planning and execution.

The Mona School of Business in conjunction with the Department of Mathematics designed and has received approval for a new graduate programme, MSc Enterprise Risk Management (ERM). The MSc ERM aims to address the demand in the financial services and other industries for modern risk management skills. The objective of the programme is to produce graduates with skills in risk techniques and practices who also understand the business contexts and are able to address and solve complex risk issue. This programme addresses unmet educational needs and increases the potential for future research of relevance to both academia and practitioners. It is hoped that the introduction of the MSc ERM will increase the university's profile and relevance to the country and the region. Additionally, the Diploma and MSc in Sports Business Management, designed by the MSB were approved and the first cohort of students is expected to be admitted in the academic year 2013-14.

During the academic year a merger of the Department of Management Studies and the Mona School of Business was undertaken to form the Mona School of Business and Management. Bringing the combined resources, reputation and reach of these two entities is projected to place the new School in an unassailable position with respect to other institutions involved in business and management operation in the communities served by the Campus.

## **Fostering Better Student Experience and Development**

SALISES utilized resources from available administrative posts to fund graduate research students who are at the thesis writing stage, and have by this means supported three students. The Department of Economics piloted a weekly discussion forum for students, designed to be informal and relaxed, where they looked at contemporary topics. These have included "Funding Tertiary Education"; "The Role of the IMF in Jamaica"; "The Role of the Government in Promoting Renewable Energy"; and "The Benefits and Costs of Marriage as the Basis for a Perspective on the Family Structure in Jamaica".

In a similar vein, the Department of Government hosted a series of guest lectures for the benefit of students which included lectures from senior officials from the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF),

the Ministry of Finance and a visiting researcher from the US on African American genealogy. International Relations students participated in a panel discussion entitled “The Relevance of the Commonwealth to Jamaica and the rest of the Caribbean” at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, while Public Sector Management students attended the budget debates in Parliament. Political Science students collaborated with CVM TV to provide commentary during the coverage of the general election held December 29, 2011, and again with other students and CVM by taking part in a televised forum on April 17, 2012 on critically analysing the first 100 days of the new administration which came to power following the election in December 2011.

A team of students from the Mona School of Business participated in the Annual Opportunity Funding Corporation Venture Challenge held in Atlanta. They placed fifth out of twenty two (22) colleges and universities mainly based in the USA. Additionally, nine students from the Department of Government participated in the Harvard University Model United Nations General Assembly.

## **Teaching and Learning**

The Faculty of Social Sciences introduced a Philosophy on Teaching which seeks to promote the creation of an environment that fosters self-reflective teaching and learning in which its staff members are committed to linking teaching with research, participating in the scholarship of teaching, and adopting innovative methods that meet the full range of learning needs of a diverse student body.

The Department of Management Studies embarked on a curriculum review which will result in greater flexibility for management students by shifting from “specials” and “options” to offering majors and minors. With this initiative, management students will be better able to combine their interest in management with an interest in other Social Science disciplines as well as those from outside of the Faculty. It is hoped that this will result in a more rounded student who will have more choices available when moving on to graduate education and in the world of work.

## **Strengthening the University's Body of Research and Its Reputation as a Centre of Academic Excellence**

Rupert Lewis and Hopeton Dunn, were guest editors of a special issue of the *Critical Arts* Volume 25 No. 4 (Dec. 2011). *Critical Arts* is a journal of south-north cultural and media studies and is published by Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group and the University of South Africa Press. The issue was devoted to: "Communicating Pan-Africanism: Caribbean leadership and global impact". The volume was dedicated to former Vice Chancellor Ralston 'Rex' Nettleford and former Dean Alston Barrington 'Barry' Chevannes.

The Centre for Tourism and Policy Research (CTPR) in responding to a request from the River Rafting Association (RRA), embarked on a study of the Martha Brae River. The study confirmed that crocodiles were present in the river but not in the rafting location and has recommended that further investigations be carried out with the assistance of a marine biologist. This finding was particularly important as the presence of crocodiles would have implications for rafting, community safety and security, rural livelihoods and the expansion of tourism in the parish of Trelawny.

In another study the CTPR, conducted a national survey to determine public perceptions and satisfaction with the delivery of tertiary education by the university and to assess to what extent the institution has had an impact on the wider society. The study identified the strengths and weaknesses of the institution and pointed to ways in which the University can improve in the discharge of its mandate.

The Mona School of Business in collaboration with Solutions for Society, another University Think Tank, completed path-breaking research and a benchmarking study of the Mobile Financial Services. The study yielded information about the size and characteristics of Jamaica's un-banked and under-banked population and the economic opportunities associated with such services.

Research conducted by individual staff members continues to impact national and regional policy making by engaging in a wide cross section of critical issues facing the Caribbean. These were reflected in conference



presentations, academic publications and technical reports. This year, the research explored matters in areas including: administrative leadership and competences; the arts; bauxite in Suriname; Caribbean economic integration; Caribbean politics and the future; CARICOM; children and child rights; citizenship and social inclusion; climate change; constraints and pathways to rural resilience; copyright; crime and violence and their effect on the economy; discrimination; drugs; e-participation in Jamaica; eating and development disorders. Economic growth; education; energy; entrepreneurship; finance; gender; growth inducement strategies; Haiti; HIV and AIDS; housing in Jamaica; Jamaican popular music; juvenile delinquency; mentoring; mobile commerce in Jamaica; monetary policies; nationality and sovereignty; public sector reform; revolution in Grenada; tax reform; tourism; small and family owned businesses; transportation; viability of small island states; youth-adult partnerships. The table below provides a comparison of the number of publications reported by the departments and other units over the last three academic years.

The Faculty of Social Sciences has sought to ensure that staff members are aware of the 2012-2017 Strategic Plan and has played a central role in assisting the Campus as it seeks to prepare the outlines of an Operational Plan for 2012-2014. The Faculty has taken the lead in areas of employee-engagement and has undertaken significant initiatives in areas such as teaching and learning, with the implementation of a Philosophy of Teaching for the Faculty, and in research, with the creating research clusters through SALISES Fifty-Fifty initiative and by appointing an Associate Dean of Research so as to focus on increasing high quality outputs. The Faculty continues its drive to improve quality and administrative efficiency in all areas such as client care services to both graduates and undergraduates. The environment remains very challenging but a range of innovative initiatives have been taken as the Faculty constantly seeks to enhance the quality and impact of its work.