DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

Michael Witter, BSc III, MSc, PhD Wis – Head of Department

WORK OF THE DEPARTMENT

The Department of Economics had a fairly successful academic year in 2006/7 as indicated by the achievement of some of its objectives, and progress towards achieving most of the others.

The factors which accounted for the achievements were:

- Improved access to information from Student Records, Office of Graduate Studies and Research, the Bursary, Human Resources Department, Admissions and Exams Section as a result of better structural relations with these offices, and better personal relations with the respective staffs.

- The further improvement in the responsiveness, efficiency, and organization of the Office of the Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences.

- The enhanced effectiveness of the division of responsibilities for the management and administration of the Department’s affairs that kept the Department functioning despite the fact that three (3) permanent staff members were on leave for a total of just under one (1) year.

- With few exceptions, generally positive relations between the administrative and the academic staff. In addition, there was more cooperation from sections of the academic staff.

The principal constraints were:
- Insufficient senior staff in leadership roles. The Department has no professor and three of the six senior lecturers were on leave.

- There is concern among the permanent academic staff about the internationally uncompetitive emoluments they receive. The Department has repeatedly made the case that it is disadvantaged in the competition to attract new staff in the international market for economists.

- Insufficient classroom space

- The loss of Dr. Toshihiro Uchida in December 2006 to a research institute in his home country of Japan

The highlights of the academic year were:

Staff

The Department succeeded in hiring two new lecturers. The lecturers are:

- Dr. Maiju Perala, a Finnish national, with a PhD in Economics from the University of Notre Dame (2002), and who was most recently employed as Assistant Professor at National Sun Yat-sen University in Taiwan

- Dr. Patrice Whitely, a recent graduate of Michigan State University, and a graduate of the Department of Economics BSc and MSc programmes

Instruction

All first and second year courses have been formatted for online instruction on the OurVLE platform. It is estimated that 70% of these courses are now internet based, and the rest are internet supported, which is at a slightly lower level of development. The goal is to take all of the first and second year courses to the highest level, internet optimized, by August 1, 2008, and to do the same for third year courses by December 1, 2008.
The use of multimedia techniques for instruction was expanded both in the number of courses and the sophistication of the applications. This is a key element that distinguished the different levels of development of courses, with internet optimized being the stage where multimedia tools are used extensively.

The Department has conducted successful pilots in Online lectures and in proctored computer-based examinations. In 2007-8, both initiatives will be implemented on an operational scale.

Examinations

The Department has maintained its record of submitting all examination mark sheets on time and the staff has been commended accordingly. A pilot project on proctored computer based examinations was successfully conducted.

Curriculum Review

Both the undergraduate and the graduate curricula have been reviewed, following the recommendation of the Quality Assurance Review team of 2005. At both levels, plans were drafted for new courses and new programmes. In 2007-8, the Department expects to introduce new courses provided the additional academic staff members are engaged.

Graduate Programme

The international reputation of the graduate programme has continued to grow as indicated by the interest shown by USA and EU universities in recruiting MSc graduates for their doctoral programmes, as well as commendations for presentations made by students to international conferences.

Institutional Research

The Department has:

- initiated the updating of the review of the academic performance of students between 1990 and 2004 in all its courses with data for 2005.
- constructed a database of student assessments of courses and lecturers in the Department to facilitate continuous monitoring.
revised and upgraded the process of tracking and collating the published and non-published research of its permanent staff. A preliminary report for the years 1999-2005 has been drafted.

PAPERS PRESENTED

Abdulkadri, Abdullahi Dr


Alleyne, Dillon Dr


Figueroa, Mark Dr.

- “Gender Differentials in Educational Achievement in the Commonwealth Caribbean”, Commonwealth Education Stakeholders Forum, Cape Town, December 2006, pp. 11.
Folawewo, Abiodun Dr


Ghartey, Edward Dr.


Kiani, Khurshid Dr.

- “Predictability Non-Normality Stability and Volatility Persistence in European Stock Markets” International Conference on Macroeconomic Analysis and International Finance, Greece

Kirton, Claremont Mr.


- (with G. Mc Leod) “Remittances to CARICOM Countries: Policy Issues and Options.” 38th Annual Conference of the

Tennant, David Dr.

- (with Folawelo, Abiodun.) “Macroeconomic and Market Determinants of Banking Sector Interest Rate Spreads: Empirical Evidence from Low and Middle Income Countries” 8th Annual SALISES Conference, March 2007, Trinidad and Tobago, 38 pages


Witter, Michael Dr.

- “Perspectives on Poverty in Jamaica”, PIOJ-NPREP-UNDP Conference, October 2006


- “Socio-Economic Trends in the Caricom Caribbean”, Conference of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in the America, Santo Domingo


PUBLICATIONS

Refereed Journal

Abdulkadri, Abdullahi Dr


* (with S. Pinnock and P.F. Tennant). "Public Perception of Genetic Engineering and the Choice to Purchase Genetically

Alleyne, Dillon Dr
* Can Seasonal Unit-Root Testing Improve Forecasting Accuracy of Tourist Arrivals! Tourism Economics, 12 (1): 45-64.

Folawewo, Abiodun O.

Freckleton, Marie Dr
* (with Nikoloaas Karagiannis) “The Relevance of Strategic Intervention Today: The Case of CARICOM Countries”, Regional Development Studies vol. 10 2006 pp. 41-58

Kiani, Khurshid Dr.


Kirton, Claremont


Tennant, David Dr.


Non-refereed

Figueroa, Mark Dr


Kirton, Claremont Mr

Chapters in Books
Folawewo, Abiodun Dr.


Refereed Monograph
Ghartey, Edward E.


Published Conference Proceedings
Ghartey, Edward E.


* “The Mid 1990s Peso Crisis in Mexico: A Re-examination.” International Conference on Policy Modeling Proceedings,
Technical Reports

Claremont Kirton

* Promoting economic links between the Integration Schemes of Latin America and the Caribbean: A CARICOM perspective on selected issues. Report prepared for UNECLAC. November. 79 pp.


Abdulkadri, A.


PUBLIC SERVICE

Abdulkadri, Abdullahi Dr

– Editorial Board Member, Journal of Arts, Science and Technology
– Judge, Undergraduate Students Paper Competition, Southwestern Economics Association
— External Examiner, Council of Community Colleges of Jamaica

**Figueroa, Mark Dr**
— Member, Board of Directors: Jamaica Environmental Trust

**Tennant, David Dr.**
— Member, Board of Commissioners, Financial Services Commission

**Freckleton, Marie Dr**
— Board Member and Chairman, Finance sub-committee, Jamaica Bauxite Trading Company and Jamaica Bauxite Mining

**Ghartey, Edward Dr.**
— Associate Editor, Frontiers in Finance and Economics
— Editorial Board Member, Opus One Journal of Undergraduate Studies
— Advisory Board Member, North American Economic and Finance Association
— Member, Bye-Laws Reform Committee, African Finance and Economics Association
— Member, Bye-Laws Reform Committee, International Society for Intercommunication of New Ideas (ISINI).

**Kiani, Khurshid**
— Consulting Editor, Business Review
— Reviewer, Applied Economics; Social and Economic Studies; American Journal of Political Economy

**Kirton, Claremont Mr.**
— Chairman, Jamaica Stock Exchange Competition Committee
— Member, Board of Directors, Jamaica Deposit Insurance Corporation
— Member, CARICOM Competition Commission Task Force

**Witter, Michael Dr.**
— Chairman, Board of RADA
– Member, Board of Directors, the Agricultural Support Services Fund
– Member, Monitoring Committee, MOU between the GOJ and Unions representing Public Sector workers
– Member, Steering Committee for Regulatory Impact Assessment
– Member, Board of Governors, Caricom Caribbean Climate Change Centre
– Chairman, Poverty Task Force, National Plan of Jamaica, PIOJ

**Prizes Awarded:**

Claremont Kirton and Arlene Bailey. 2007. The Principal's Research Award for the Research Project with the Greatest Business/Economic/Development Impact, Faculty of Social Sciences for Establishment and Development of a Regional Agricultural Policy Network in the Caribbean.

Figueroa, Mark Dr: Received a Mona research fellowship for 2007-2008 to assist with the project "The Prospects for Gender and Leadership in Jamaica and the Caribbean"