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Be good ambassadors

UPNG Vice Chancellor, Professor Albert Mellam has encouraged students to be good ambassadors for the University of Papua New Guinea to restore lost credibility.

While addressing new students, Prof Mellam said the University must win confidence of its stakeholder and the general public in its endeavour to achieve excellence in teaching, learning and research.

"The University is going through a very exciting period in its development ... and I would encourage you to be good ambassadors of the institution so that we can bring some credibility back to the university to restore the pride that this university once enjoyed," he urged students.

In order to achieve this, Prof Mellam said as the Chief Executive Officer, he would ensure that the basic principles of management are strengthened in terms of leadership at student and staff level. This is expected to produce tangible results in terms of high performance level by its graduates.



New students stand to sing the National Anthem in the Main Lecture Theatre



Professor Mellam

"And we must all work together on the path to recover and restore confidence back to this fine university," he said.

According to Prof Mellam, "You are some of the finest the country has produced to get to where you are. For you coming to UPNG marks an important mile-stone in your development

and education. We seek excellent output from our students while here on campus".

"We very much expect our students to meet academic standards. There is no place for low level performance at this university.

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THE VISION

Premier University dedicated to excellence and providing quality education, research and service to Papua New Guinea and the Pacific

Aim for higher academic merits: Prof Mellam

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"And I also want to stress that your lecturers expect nothing less than the benchmarks they have set for the respective courses and disciplines in which they teach," he said.

UPNG is a community made up of a diversity of people, socio-demographic profiles and academic discourse amongst other things.

This makes the university a complex and interesting environment for the development of fine and intellectually able students.

He told students that their stay here will be very short and appealed to them to use every opportunity to acquire as much as they can in the four years at UPNG.

"University is a bridge that you cross between your young adulthood to adulthood. I encourage you to maximise the use of people and resources in the university - use wisely and effectively to gain maximum value that will give you advantage," said Prof Mellam.

He urged students to focus on their studies and add value to their education so that when they leave, they not only receive a degree but a degree that is founded on quality academic result.

The employers (in public and private sector) are no longer looking for degrees anymore.

"They are looking for university degrees plus very good academic grades. So in the workforce you will be competing with many others who will graduate with you and those passing out from other institutions in PNG and the region," he said.

He challenged the news students to focus on their studies and learn as much as they can in order to achieve high academic grades taking into account that jobs are scarce in most cases and competition for jobs among graduates is very high.

Employers seek graduates with high academic grades than just degrees or diplomas because they expect their employees to stand out.

Geology students receive OTML scholarships



The four students with Prof Davies and OTML staff at the reception

Two more geology students from the Earth Sciences Strand were granted scholarships under the Ok Tedi Mining Limited's Postgraduate Development Program this week.

This brings to four, the number of UPNG students studying under the program this year.

Third year students, Doney Kuman and Joe Kapi were awarded the scholarships by the OTML Training and Development Team at a brief ceremony this week witnessed by Professor of Geology, Hugh Davies, staff and students.

Two fourth year students, Samuel Mori and Elliona Maso are already training under the program. OTML Training and Development manager, Eric Kuman, said the students will go on industrial training later in the year.

Mr Kuman said usually the OTML scholarships are offered to UPNG geology students and others from other institutions such as the

University of Technology and the Divine Word University.

And the company has plans to extend the scholarships to the Pacific Adventist University. He said OTML is proud to be associated with the University of Papua New Guinea.

"We would like to be partner with UPNG in training the human resources of the country and UPNG benefits from our scholarship scheme," he added.

Mr Kuman said employment opportunities are very high for students under the program. They go straight into the industry after graduating from the program. Students are usually on full pay while on industrial training. So far OTML has spent K180, 000 in training post-graduate students and over 50 had benefited from the program since 2006.

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MISSION STATEMENT

To deliver excellent education and research results for nation building and global advancement towards an innovative and empowered society

Mellam aims to steer UPNG away from debt-burden

The University of Papua New Guinea is debt-burdened but the new and 11th Vice Chancellor Professor Albert Mellam is confident of turning this situation around.

Prof Mellam said while being appointed as the institution's chief executive officer, he also inherited a huge debt of K66.5 million, and an organisation that struggling to find its footing in delivering quality teaching and achieving high results in research outputs.

He said this debt places UPNG in an extremely difficult position in operating, and delivering its mandate of the provision of higher education and service to the community.

Good and high quality education comes with a cost, a price. Around the region the creation of knowledge-based societies have taken centre stage in development. This is the vehicle upon which societies will transform themselves.

"There are two things you can do in the case of UPNG ... you do nothing about it or do something about it. And I plan to do something about it," Prof Mellam told staff and students at a student organised church service to open the 2013 academic year yesterday.

Collectively, he said that staff and students can work together to turn the university around.

The challenge is on everyone from the administration, academic divisions and the service divisions. And this is anchored on one critical disposition; 'attitude' to work for staff and total commitment to studies for students. He suggested that one of the things that should happen at



Staff and students at the church service hear the sad news

the University is to improve productivity by performing effectively our roles and responsibilities. This will reduce our cost of doing business.

This will effectively ensure a reduction various expenditure costs that have accumulated and have rendered the University in the position it has now found itself in.

He was referring to a range of issues including for example the abuse of University properties and slackness in the work place amongst staff.

Prof Mellam said being involved in the private sector, he has witness first-hand the work ethos of this sector and he intends to move towards a corporate approach to managing the University so that results orientated where

this matters most in quality training of our students, and excellence in academic pursuit in teaching and research.

"The little things that we do will turn the University around ... we must therefore change our attitudes and leave behind today the culture of complacency and slackness that have found their place in our professional lives over the years," he said adding, "we are very ineffective in terms of service delivery to our students", the essence of why this great institution is created in the first place.

He told staff that matters that should be dealt with in a day or in a few minutes should not take forever to deal with except only on difficult or extreme circumstances.

The students should not be

sent on a 'goose chase' to address issues that confront them.

He said, "I was the founding Dean of the School of Business Administration for the last 10 years at UPNG, and I know the plight of students very well and I know what I am talking about. I know the work culture of this place better, and this will be transformed is we all work together", he said.

He requested collective efforts of staff in changing their attitudes towards their jobs and also encouraged students to strive hard and excel in their studies.

They should not only gain a university degree or diploma when they complete their studies but also achieve high academic grades.

PICTORIAL - ARRIVAL AND ORIENTATION



PICTORIAL - ARRIVAL AND ORIENTATION



'Zero tolerance' on alcohol abuse: Vice Chancellor warns

There will be zero tolerance of the use and abuse of alcohol at the University of Papua New Guinea.

UPNG Vice Chancellor Professor Albert Mellam issued this warning to new students recently. The warning also applies to continuing students.

He said that like all organisations, the University also have certain expectations of its students and staff – expectations on how individuals conduct themselves.

The Student Charter and Staff Code of



Professor Mellam

Conduct lay basic principles on how an individual should manage his or her life and conduct themselves while being at the university.

According to Prof

Mellam, the basic purpose of rules and regulations is to ensure harmony and goodwill in communities and UPNG is no exception. "UPNG is quite serious about enforcing rules and regulations that encourages goodwill in terms of the way we conduct and interact with each other.

"One of the rules is prohibition of consumption of alcohol and during my tenure as the Vice Chancellor there will be zero tolerance in the use and abuse of alcohol," said Prof Mellam.

He told students that their stay at UPNG is very short and discipline is the way forward to achieving their goal for quality education and a degree.

"From experience you could be the dux of your school ... but you are among the duxes and there are a lot of students who are equally intelligent or may be brighter than you therefore competition will be fierce.

"It is not about the body of knowledge you have but it is about how

you can discipline yourself to achieve a university education," he added.

Prof Mellam explained that there are some students who do poorly in secondary schools but they flourish when they come to UPNG. They discipline themselves to achieve their goals. Students were urged to read and understand the UPNG Student Charter that will guide how they behave while on campus.

Students urged to take lead in academic pursuits

Good career prospects should be the aim for new students after they complete four years of studies at UPNG.

The was the message delivered by Acting Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs), Professor Pulapa Subba Rao at the first day of a week-long orientation program for new students at the University of Papua New Guinea that commenced yesterday.

Think of a career and getting a job after finishing your university studies ... your life at university will take care of the rest of your life," he added.

He told the students to learn as much as possible by interacting openly with teaching staff both in class and outside.

"This of a job and a career during your time here ... all other things come later," Prof Subba Rao told new students, adding, "problems come and go but do not deviate from your goal".

He also encouraged students to take lead in academic activities by leading classmates in situations they are unable to deal with or in lectures they may be unable to understand.

Commencing yesterday, the new students will be given tour of university facilities and an overview of academic and non-academic establishments that operate within UPNG making the study environment conducive to teaching and learning.

Acting Director of Physical Facilities Management, James Robins also encouraged students to respect property. He said fixing damaged property cost the University money that could facilitate for other developments.

He said UPNG is going through a phase of development in terms of construction of buildings and facilities. More construction work is expected with the development of the



Mr Robins

2015 Games Village at UPNG. These developments will benefit UPNG in the long-term.

He said the 2015 South Pacific

Games will attract a lot of visitors to the country and UPNG's image must appeal to overseas visitors.

Library prepare for students

The Michael Somare Library has partially accomplished a massive refurbishment campaign aimed at making the library environment conducive to learning and enable students to achieve academic excellence.

The exercise that took place over the holiday period resulted in removing of 2,600 old and damaged books from the shelves and replacing them with 2,000 new titles.

This is one of the projects in the plan to update, upgrade, diversify and develop the information resource of the library to effectively satisfy the information needs of students, academics and researchers.

The University Librarian Semmy Ojuka said the weeding and refurbishment projects were specifically aimed at addressing the needs of the students.

The books taken off the shelves were either out-dated and damaged or not frequently borrowed by users. Mrs Ojuka said the library management understands the requirements of students and is therefore taking remedial action based on user demands received at the service counters.

The librarian also acquired resources in consultation with the academics. In addition there is constant networking with publishers and suppliers through online searches.

The plan to upgrade, refurbish and improve services to the library will be accomplished in stages and the first phase was implemented over the 2012 holiday period.

Mrs Ojuka said that there has been a large gap in the stockholdings created over the last 10–15 years. This was due to a mismatch arising from increasing student enrolment, and increases in prices of books while there was



Staff in new uniforms at the presentation of the Customer Service certificates

diminishing or stagnant library budget.

However, the Librarian is determined to make a U-turn and initiate progress as a result of receiving a grant of K2 million from the Office of the Prime Minister, Peter O'Neil in 2012.

The library appreciates the initiative of the 2012 SRC and the generous gesture by the Prime Minister. It is an ongoing project and more books will be purchased and made accessible in 2013.

Academic staff are encouraged to closely work with the library to ensure they recommend very relevant and up-to-date books for their students.

The library now has access to over 2000 journals online through the internet. Some E-books (titles) can also be accessed electronically.

Library tours were conducted for all new students to enable them to familiarise with library services.

They were informed that more tours can be arranged for groups of 10 or more on request during the semester. Mrs Ojuka paid tribute to

Senior Executive Officers of the University, the Deputy Librarian and all library staff for being proactive, having the team spirit and contributing to the team effort needed to

also conducted a basic customer service skills course for staff in January 2013.

This was to prepare them to best serve and empower the students with information and



Staff of the Reader Services Section are usually the frontliners

achieve the positive changes in the library.

The library management in consultation with the Staff Development Training Unit

knowledge required towards their respective professional qualifications.

Benefit from changes in higher education

Director General of the Office of Higher Education (OHE), Professor David Kavanamur has told new students that they were privileged to be selected to pursue university studies at the time when changes are instituted to make universities' education quality and demanding.

And they will be the first lot of students to benefit from these anticipated changes when universities including the University of Papua New Guinea start implementing these changes.

Prof Kavanamur said at the orientation of new students that OHE is developing a new National Higher Education Plan (NHEP 3) with set goals for governance, particularly to improvement in governance and resource management and innovation, requiring universities to better manage resources.

The government sees research and development as significant and would pump more money in promoting



Professor Kavanamur

research and development in universities and research institutes that may hopefully lead to commercialisation process of the research opportunities of the country. Universities are required to become more innovative in the phase of declining government expenditure considering the fact that higher education is a high cost business.

Prof Kavanamur also said all universities are now required

to go through a process of quality audits.

"We assess the status of quality (of programs) internally and then invite external auditors to conduct audits," he said adding, "so you have come at a time quality is very important and this is a bonus for you".

He said the Government expects more from the higher education sector and OHE is moving in the direction of policy development because the sector is growing.

PNG has six universities and other institutions of higher learning, and institution run by the private sector. There are 29 credited institutions that the OHE cater for through the Commission of Higher Education.

"That is not enough because population is growing, therefore we are moving in the direction of policy development in-line with a number of the government's high level development plans – Vision 2050, Development

Strategic Plan 2030, Medium Term Development Plan 2015," he said.

Prof Kavanamur also highlighted that the Development Strategic Plan 2030 calls for 265,000 cumulative graduates from the tertiary sector.

"We are actually on track because by 2015 we would graduate accumulative number of about 52, 000 graduates – which is about 8, 000 graduates per year," added.

Among other things, OHE is also looking at employment policies. The government in the past did not care where the graduates went after leaving the institutions.

The idea now is to determine the growth sectors that can absorb the trained workforce and align scholarships accordingly.

This will essentially reduce the scenario of mass production of graduates that do not easily find jobs.

Vice Chancellor: Scientific research is vital

Scientific research will play a vital role in giving humanity the body of knowledge to understand the fundamental shift that is taking place in the environment at this time.

This falls in-line with the government's vision to understand the shifting environmental changes and plan a growth strategy to ensure a better healthy society by 2050, says Vice Chancellor, Professor Albert Mellam.

He was speaking at the opening of the joint Marine Science seminar of UPNG and JAMTEC, a Japanese Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology recently.

Prof Mellam said, the world is experiencing a fundamental change not only in terms of

movement of people across boundaries and trade but also changes in physical environment that affect life.

Taking this into consideration, Prof Mellam said that research conducted by the two organisations through collaboration will play a very pivotal role in giving humanity the body of knowledge to understand the fundamental shift that is taking place in the environment.

"The PNG Government also has a very important agenda – recently it has adopted the vision to guide the nation in terms of its growth strategy and development.

"Underpinning this is our vision to be smart, wise and a healthy society by 2050. This

demonstrates that we want to create a society of highly trained and skilled people that can contribute to nation-building and at the same time create a knowledge-based society through research," he added.

It is through this platform that organisations like JAMSTEC will collaborate with UPNG to explore, enquire and investigate to understand the unknown. He commended the School of Natural and Physical Sciences for being proactive in research and urged staff to encourage, cultivate research and disseminate information through publications. The conference plays a vital role in terms of strengthening the research agenda between our

two institutions (UPNG-JAMSTEC) in marine and earth sciences.

He encouraged the School to continue to strengthen and foster relationships with other collaborating institutions.

"We have a competitive edge in that there aren't many places in the world you can easily access to conduct research in attempting to understand what is happening in the world," he added.

Executive Dean, Professor Frank Griffin said the school is committed to research and has been searching for money through collaborations to do quality research "because we believe this enhances academic ability to teach better."