

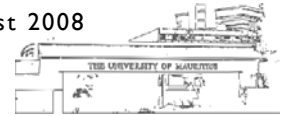
NEWSLETTER



University of Mauritius

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Message from Vice-Chancellor



Dear Colleagues, Students, Alumni and Friends of the University,

The development of our country rests upon a knowledgeable and qualified workforce. The three pillars of Higher Education consist of skills development, research and innovation. With any one of these missing, the economic productivity of the nation suffers, so does the GDP.

In this context of great development, opening up access to Higher Education

must be seen as providing the opportunity to all to learn. Needless to say, democratic access must, in its essence, mean access to high quality Tertiary Education.

At our University, increasing student intake is but one avenue to explore; so is the widening of our range of programmes of studies according to national priority fields.

A new structure and way of delivery will also be set up alongside the conventional full-time programmes. Where this is practical, a number of part-time modules will run in common with some full-time ones at times equally convenient to working and/or mature students.

The interaction of our conventional target student population with this new group will **encourage university-business links**, and inculcate an **entrepreneurial spirit** on the one hand, and the **rigour of academe** on the other hand.

The application of tuition-fees to these part-time/flexi-students remains inevitable, and will contribute towards relieving to a small extent our financial dependence on Government funding. Such fees remain at a **very moderate** level, in line with the spirit of a public charitable educational institution. Furthermore, the Needy Students Fund will be significantly increased for the benefit of those students who require financial assistance. Fortunately, more and more private companies are, as part of their corporate social responsibility, proposing scholarships to help needy students. The UoM wishes to thank them most heartily.

Friends, exciting times lie ahead of us. We must rise to the occasion and grasp the opportunity to make the change for the betterment of our nation.

I hope that you will find this issue of the UoM Newsletter challenging to the mind! Cheers, until the next issue!

Prof I Fagoonee, Vice-Chancellor

MIBS Open days



'All concepts typically undergo three phases: in phase 1, the concept is confronted with Resistance; phase 2 is a period of Criticism; followed by phase 3 which is the Acceptance of the concept.'

Quote from Hon. D Gokhool, Minister of Education & HR at the official Opening of the MIBS Open days 2008.

The MIBS Open Days were held on 9 and 10 July 2008 at the Octave Wiehe Auditorium. The event aimed at facilitating registration for new students for the academic year 2008-2009, as well as creating an increased awareness about the MIBS programmes of studies in general. Currently six undergraduate and five post graduate programmes are on offer and are due to start in September 2008.

Media attention was stepped up in the days leading to the event, and the official opening by Hon. D Gokhool, Minister of Education & Human Resources was covered in prime time MBC news bulletins, as well as several other radio stations and newspapers. Over the two days, potential candidates visited the numerous information booths and interacted with the programme directors and resource persons. Approximately 170 online applications were received.

<http://www.uom.ac.mu/MIBS/>

Vice-Chancellor's Office

Activities of the Pro VC's Office for Research Consultancy & Innovation



The **University of Mauritius Innovation Week 2008** was organised by the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research, Consultancy & Innovation) from 5 to 7 June 2008 and the theme was "**Empowering the Mauritian Minds**". The objective of the Innovation Week 2008 was to promote science, technology and innovation nationally through its outreach activities. A number of programmes related to Innovation targeted students of primary, secondary and tertiary levels and the public at large.

This event followed the Research Week and Intellectual Property (IP) Week organised by the University in 2007 and complements and reinforces existing national activities. The **Orange Kaleidoscope e-Quiz Competition** organised on 5 June 2008, in collaboration with Orange was a hallmark of the Innovation Week which involved the participation of over 220 students from secondary schools (Form V and VI), both public and private.

The Innovation Week included such activities as exhibitions, demonstrations, hands-on clinics, video projections, talks, InnovUMN (creativity, critical thinking and enrichment programmes), guided tours, Intellectual Property, workshops, and an innovative sketch by University medical students.

A video on the Innovation Week may be viewed at: [http:// www.mediacomstudio.com](http://www.mediacomstudio.com)

Pro Vice-Chancellor RCI's office

Fund-raising for your university – a worthy cause

The costs of higher education worldwide have been rising and will continue on upward trends that are substantially beyond the funding capacity of governments and taxpayers. Public universities throughout the world are facing the dilemma of steeply rising costs, pressures for increasing access to higher education, faculty brain drain, lack of resources and inadequate infrastructure. A major part of the solution to enhancing universities' revenues, and thus enhancing their financial viability and contributions to sustainable national development, is to exploit the untapped potential of fund-raising. Raising levels of voluntary giving and building up endowments is one means of giving universities an independent source of funds to advance the level of excellence of the institution.

Historically, numerous universities and other HEIs were established through significant philanthropic support. In the USA, there is a strong presence of a *culture of asking and donation* by public universities starting as early as the 1970s and 1980s. UK Universities are following suit, since donations can make a significant difference for HEIs striving for excellence and quality education.

Key success factors for effective fundraising rest upon the support and commitment of the institution's leadership as well as the staff members and students. In fact, raising funds should be the concern of **each and every staff member and student**. University alumni are also important stakeholders that are crucial for successful fundraising ventures. A good alumni database must be developed to build close and enduring relationships with graduates in the business community.

Voluntary giving to universities is a worthy, legitimate, and noble cause. There are real opportunities to increase the income of universities and such returns can be achieved by developing and sustaining a culture of human relationship between the individuals within a University and potential donors.

Prof I Fagoonee, Vice-Chancellor

New Dean for FSSH

Professor Sanjeev Kumar Sobhee has been appointed new Dean of FSSH in July 2008. After joining UOM in 1996, he submitted his PhD (supported by TEC) on Macroeconomic Policy in 1998 and was a visiting scholar of the University of St Andrews, Scotland. He was promoted to Senior Lecturer in 1999, to Associate Professor in 2003 and Professor in 2008. He has taught on both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and has been the Programme Coordinator of the MSc Applied Economics for over 5 years. He recently introduced and taught the Harvard Business School module 'Microeconomics of Competitiveness' taught by renowned Prof. Michael Porter, now incepted on several postgraduate courses.

Projects under the UOM Trust

The UOM Trust has initiated several projects in line with its objects. A number of those projects are already under way and the returns are expected to be visible shortly. Several more are in the pipeline. The Trust shall play a pivotal role in assisting the University's financing strategy in the long run.

Projects under the aegis of the UOM Trust are developed to rationalise the use of resources belonging to the Trust as well as those provided by UoM and Trust partners, to provide optimal benefits to the University. All faculties are, or shall be, involved, either directly or indirectly, in the UOM Trust projects.

Current projects

- MIBS – the stakeholders are the UOM Trust & the MEF. FLM academic staff are involved in all programmes pertaining to the Finance and Management fields, whereas Computer Science & Engineering Department (FoE) academic staff shall service the IT programmes scheduled to run shortly. FLM academics are also involved in the setting up of the Centre for Organised Markets (COM), a joint initiative with Financial Technologies (India) Ltd.
- The UOM Trust recently entered into an MoU with the Association of Offshore Management Companies (AOMC) with the HRDC, to provide capacity building in the offshore financial sector, and strengthen collaborations.
- The VCILT with the CSE Department are involved in a project to deliver a tailor-made programme for a Postgraduate Diploma in Software Engineering for Accenture (Mauritius) Ltd.
- Senate and Council of UoM have also already approved a project for a School of Medicine with involvement of FoS academics and financing from an overseas partner.

In the pipeline

- Senate has approved the mounting of a short tailor-made in-house training programme to be serviced by the FoA (re. 'New Extension Approaches') at the request of the Farmers Service Corporation for its members.
- The UOM Trust is considering two other MoUs. The first one is with the Centre for Parliamentary Studies for setting up a Centre for Governance and Public Sector Excellence. This will allow for the capacity building of FSSH, and delivery of programmes by the latter. The second MoU concerns the Mauritius Export Association (MEXA) in the logistics sector, with involvement of the CPDL.
- It is also proposed to set up a Centre for Industrial Research & Innovation (CIRI) which shall tap into the strong research capabilities and resources cutting across all Faculties with firm links with government and Industry.

With the initial activities in 2007-2008 of MIBS alone, the UOM Trust has generated over Rs 2.5 million.

Vice-Chancellor's Office

Creative Showcase 2008 - 'Above the Edge'



Final year students of BSc (Hons) Textile and Fashion Design programme, from the Textile Technology Department showcased their portfolios at the Creative Showcase 2008, Annual Exhibition held from 9 to 13 June 2008 in the Paul Octave Wiehe Auditorium.

The show was characterised by technological innovation with work by students featuring many disciplines and skills including high-end designer creations. The exhibits explored a number of themes

including innovation, creativity, diversity and tradition. It looked at contemporary topics such as sustainability, new technology and the revival of craft traditions. The students displayed their textiles, and also their research and technique portfolios - where they had drawn their individual inspirations from, and how they had examined the elements and interpreted them into their own work. From concept to finished materials, each step was thoroughly mastered.

As every year, this event provided a chance for all the Textile and Fashion Design students to forefront their creativity and designs of original art. It was a good opportunity to get an external response to their work. The audience included parents, schools students, teachers, and professionals in the textile sector. This exhibition was a great insight into the budding fashion talents of our students.

*Mrs A Vaidya Soocheta
Textile Technology Department*

Sketch by Medical Science Students

In the context of the Innovation Week, the BSc (Hons) Medical Science Year I students presented a sketch as an innovative way of learning and teaching in the Module 'Medicine In Society'. It was produced with the technical guidance of Mr Ashish Beesoondial, holder of a Masters in Drama Studies and Lecturer in English at the MIE.



The sketch entitled "Zéness, cotte to pé aller?" focussed on teenage pregnancy. It addressed medical issues of drug-addiction and unprotected sex as well as social problems such as family conflicts, peer pressure and the taboo on the use of condoms. The aim was to raise awareness among the young on the need for the prevention of unwanted pregnancy and HIV-AIDS transmission.

The audience, which consisted of students from various colleges, welcomed and applauded the role players. The External Examiner, Prof. A. Boylston from Leeds University, expressed his appreciation of the students' performance.

It is hoped that the sketch which has been recorded by the MCA, could be used as a health educational tool and also that inter-institutional support will continue to exist between the three tertiary institutions.

Dr M.F. Lan Cheong Wah - Department of Medicine

Conference: Sanskrit & Human Values Sanskrit as a language unfolds the whole world of culture paving the way for peaceful co-existence and cooperation, love and peace among all human beings

In line with the University's mission to promote cultural, community service activities and civic engagement amongst students, a conference on 'The Contribution of Sanskrit Language to the Development of Human Values' was held on 16 April 2008 on campus. It was organised by the PR's Office in collaboration with the Indian Philosophy Association. There was a houseful attendance at the conference and authorities in Sanskrit Literature and Human Values brought invaluable contribution.



Prof. M Narasimhachary

The Chairman of Council, Prof. Soodursun Jugessur gave an overview of the evolution of sanskrit language and focussed on the common African origin of mankind. The chief guest, the eminent Prof. M Narasimhachary, Visiting Fellow, University of Madras, described Sanskrit language as the great legacy of ancient seers of India for humanity.

He stated that Sanskrit plays a key role in the transmission of human values like truthfulness, sincerity, friendship, cooperation and respect, human dignity, respect for women, which alone will ensure inner peace.

Mrs A D Nivault, Public Relations Officer

Une Licence en Pharmacie

La BPharm est offerte pour la première fois en août 2008. Cette formation en pharmacie met l'accent sur les facteurs qui déterminent la toxicité et l'efficacité de produits pharmaceutiques. Sont ainsi pris en considération: la constitution génétique du malade (pharmacogénétique) et le rôle du pharmacien dans la société en tant que professionnel et conseiller.

Interface entre le grand public, les médecins et les entreprises pharmaceutiques, le pharmacien joue un rôle pivot dans le système de surveillance dans la période post-lancement des nouveaux médicaments. Ce qui permet de vérifier les effets sur une population élargie et à long terme suite à la commercialisation de ces produits. Cet aspect 'surveillance post-marketing', partie intégrante de la pharmacovigilance, est une des innovations du cursus qui sera désormais offert sur le campus.

*Dr S P Seetulsingh-Goorah, Assoc. Prof.,
Health Sciences*

La Semaine Logistique

The University of Mauritius (UoM) and the Mauritius Export Association (MEXA) organised jointly the 'Semaine de la Logistique' from the 26 to 30 May 2008. The objective of the event was to sensitise stakeholders, professionals, academia and the public on the importance of logistics as a core competitive factor in productivity enhancement and on the need for appropriate training to meet the training gaps in this emerging sector. A delegation from Université du Havre and SOGET were also present to share their experience with Mauritian stakeholders.



Main events of the 'Semaine de la Logistique' included ratification of a Memorandum of Understanding between the two universities, a workshop on key issues in international logistics, a live programme on MBC on training and careers in logistics, exhibitions and talks for students/job seekers and the launch of a Logistics Award.

The Human Resource Development Council, another major partner in this 'Logistics Adventure' is in the process of carrying out a training needs analysis. Training programmes mounted will be based on the report submitted.

Mrs R.D. Rampersad, CPDL

A Multimedia Studio for Communication



The Communication Studies Unit at FSSH is now equipped with a multimedia facility for training of Communication and Journalism students. The studio, baptised Mediacom Studio, has been set up thanks to a \$27,000 funding obtained from a UNESCO agency, the IPDC (International Programme for the Development of Communication). It comprises 4 workstations (with Apple computers, digital camcorders and audio recorders) as well as a high capacity local network and large screen LCD TV display.

This set-up enhances internal capacity for training in electronic journalism and allows for wider dissemination of student output on a dedicated weblog at <http://www.mediacomstudio.com/>

Mrs C. Chan-Meetoo, Communication Studies Unit - FSSH

University Farm on the Innovation Week 2008

As part of the Innovation Week held from the 4 to 6 July 2008, the Faculty of Agriculture was involved at different levels (poster presentation, video presentation, quiz sessions) including sales of products from the University Farm. These produce, not commonly found in retail outlets in Mauritius, included duck eggs, roselle jam (including diabetic jam), roselle juice, honey combs, oyster mushroom, and various fresh vegetables.



The processing of the roselle calyces was done in an innovative way with a simple tool invented by the farm staff to remove the roselle seedpod rapidly and efficiently. A video on roselle production and research undertaken was presented. It was mounted by the VCILT with the Department of Agricultural Production and Systems. The major highlights of this video presentation were: tissue culture of roselle, propagation of roselle by cuttings, a quick method for once-over calyx harvesting, and an exposé on the insect pests affecting the roselle plants.

Visitors also had the opportunity to taste freshly prepared jam and roselle juice, which were favourably rated. As a number of persons expressed their interest to visit the farm, an open day is being envisaged in the near future.

Mr K. Boodhoo, Faculty of Agriculture

Séminaire sur les diasporas indiennes

Le 23 juin 2008, l'Université de Maurice en collaboration avec l'Ambassade de France a organisé un séminaire sur les diasporas indiennes.

Catherine Servan-Schreiber, chercheur au Centre d'Etudes de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud (Celas), a retracé la genèse de la revue hommes & migrations consacrée à l'histoire des migrants indiens en France.

Les sources abondent dont les archives portuaires, récits de voyage de Rabindranath Tagore ou iconographies. Or, toutes ne sont pas inventoriées. C'est un champ de recherche encore en friche. Du point de vue de la conférencière, les sources disponibles et articles de presse ont permis de suivre dans une perspective chronologique l'implantation des communautés d'origine indienne à Paris et en banlieue. Cette diaspora englobe les tamouls Sri lankais, les khojas ismaéliens originaires de Madagascar, les Sikhs de Pendjab, les Pakistanais et les Indo-Mauriciens qui ont pour particularité d'avoir construit "une nouvelle patrie" connue comme le "Little India."

Catherine Servan-Schreiber confirme que la population d'origine indienne en France comme "destination migratoire privilégiée" acquiert à présent une lisibilité et un intérêt grandissant à travers des schémas d'intégration nouveaux.

Assoc. Prof. S. Boolell, FSSH

UOM Newsletter Team:

C Chan-Meetoo (FSSH)
R F Hossenbux (PRO)
G Narrainen (VCILT)
A D Nivault (PRO)
D Ujodha (UOMPRESS)