



Covenant University Newsflash

A weekly update of News and Events in Covenant University December 7-11, 2015

English Language Students Advised to take Advantage of New Media



Guest Speaker, Faculty, Staff, and Students of Department of Languages in group photograph

Students of English Language, Covenant University have been advised to take advantage of Social Media and not wait till they graduate before earning money online.

The Managing Director and Editor-in-Chief, NewsreelDaily.com, Pastor Seyi Fasugba gave the advice penultimate Tuesday while speaking on “21st Century Graduate of English Language in the Mass

Media Industry” at a Town and Gown Interaction organised by the Department of Languages and General Studies of the University.

Pastor Fasugba noted that with their background in English Language, the students are ‘hot cakes’ in the New Media age which is the ICT and Information age. “You are the one to provide the content.

Without the content, the computer and other gadgets are nothing. Opportunities are there for you to grab, and your background in English Language makes you hot cakes,” he said.

The Guest Speaker, who had spent over two decades in the print media before launching an online news portal also advised the students to build their capacity by taking media related

professional courses, such as the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR), Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria (APCON), among others which would give them advantage in the media.

The Dean, College of Leadership Development Studies, Professor Charles Ogbulogo, in his remarks said one of the objectives of the interaction was to give the students the opportunity to interact with the professionals in the field who have made success of their career.

Also, the former Dean, School of Postgraduate Studies, Professor Christopher Awonuga, enjoined the students not to allow intimidation or regret on the choice of the course of study. He said they should know what is good for them and depend on God for direction.

Other participants at the seminar include the Head of Department (HOD), Languages and General Studies, Dr. Samuel Owoeye, the immediate past HOD, Professor Innocent Chiluba, faculty, staff, postgraduate and undergraduate students of the department.

Covenant University hosts MIGDEVRI Workshop, Pledges Collaboration

Covenant University has expressed its willingness to collaborate with researchers across Africa on migration and mobility issues affecting the continent.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor Taiwo Abioye, made this known on Monday, November 23, 2015 at a 4-day workshop on “Migration, Mobility and Development in Africa” hosted by the University.

Professor Abioye, who represented the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Charles Ayo, at the programme, stated that Africa is faced with so many mobility and developmental issues resulting from natural disaster and security challenges among others.

“This workshop is very apt at this time when Africa is faced with so many mobility challenges. As a university established to restore the dignity of the black man, it will be our pleasure to collaborate further with the organisers of MIGDEVRI (Migration, Development and Regional Integration) on these issues,” she stated.

She also expressed hope that more

fruitful ideas would be generated from the workshop as she welcomed the participants to the peaceful ambience of the University.

The West African Coordinator of the programme, Dr. Elieth Eyebiyi, in his remarks noted that the programme aimed to set up scientific and professional discussions among West African French-speaking and English-speaking countries on the links between migration, mobility and development; placing emphasis on original empirical research.

“The MIGDEVRI Workshops aim to establish meaningful exchanges between research, practitioners and public officials around migration and sub-regional mobility within the ECOWAS community. It focuses on South-South mobility that is largely neglected by scientific research to date,” he explained.

In her welcome remarks, the National Coordinator of the programme who is also a senior faculty at Covenant University, Dr. Oluyemi Fayomi noted



Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Taiwo Abioye (2nd L) with other Officials of MIGDEVRI on the high table

that Covenant University was the first institution to host the workshop among the English-speaking countries.

She informed the participants that the University, which has a vision to raise a new generation of leaders, was poised to be one of the leading world-class universities by the year 2022, tagged ‘Vision 10:2022, 1 of 10 in 10’.

The Workshop is open to Ph.D students and young researchers or lecturers who obtained their Ph.D not earlier than six years.

CU Explores University of Stellenbosch's Student Development Strategies



Officials of Stellenbosch and Covenant University in a group photograph

Raising the next generation of leaders, as Covenant University (CU) passionately seeks to do, require a clear strategy to maximise the students' learning experience while within the University's walls. In an effort to expand this strategy, the University management nominated Director of International Office & Linkages, Dr Omotayo Osibanjo and Sub Dean of Student Affairs, Mrs Victoria Adeoye to understudy the systems and strategies for developing the students and ensuring their academic success as deployed at the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa.

The University of Stellenbosch is a student-centred university, enrolling students from a variety of backgrounds. It recognises the deficiencies in the schooling system and the increasing demands placed on graduates by employers. With this in mind, they have adopted an approach to education that addresses these challenges; placing student success at the heart of all they do, from the academic, social, emotional and financial aspects of learning. This has resulted in the adoption of an innovative and holistic approach to learning which has led to the University of Stellenbosch boasting the highest undergraduate pass rate in South Africa. In addition, the University was ranked by the Times Education's World University Rankings as between 251-275 in the world and 3rd in Africa in 2015, making it an excellent institution from which CU can glean.

One particular aspect of the study visit to the University of Stellenbosch which Dr Osibanjo found most impressive was its Centre for Student Counselling & Development, which he described as being rather robust. The centre comprises of four different units; the Unit for Academic Counselling and Development, the Unit for Graduated Career Services, the Disability Unit and the 24 hour Crisis Service/Unit for Psychotherapeutic and Support Services. Each of the centres is actively involved in caring for students while enrolled at the University, and equipping them for their future.

One of the key ways in which the University of Stellenbosch seeks to maximise its students' potential and ensure their academic success is not compromised is through Learning Receptiveness Profiles (LRP). The LRP is a test of 100 questions designed to ascertain the student's unique neurological wiring so that they have an understanding of how God has designed them and how they can best learn. It informs students of their

learning style, the types of exercises they should do and the diet that would benefit them.

"Some students learn when they sit down while others need to move around," Dr Osibanjo shared. The outcome of the LRP also serves the purpose of informing lecturers on how their students learn so that they can design their lectures to cater for the students' learning needs.

This also reveals the need for the physical learning environment to support students' learning. Dr Osibanjo shared how the University of Stellenbosch have made their classrooms flexible in their set up, with ergonomically designed office chairs that contain a shelf to store students' belongings. "It allows students who always want to move and learn, to concentrate. They want to avoid students sleeping in class because the classroom is a very expensive place to sleep," he remarked.

Dr Osibanjo reflected on the current set up of classrooms at CU. He said if we are going to adopt a more flexible approach, there is going to have to be a drastic change; although, it will need to happen gradually. If we choose to go that way, it will be a good thing," he remarked. "I haven't seen this anywhere. We will be the only university in Nigeria to go this way," Dr Osibanjo concluded.

The library at the University of Stellenbosch is designed with a similar mindset to support and optimise the learning of the students. Dr Osibanjo's initial impression of the library was that it resembled an open market. "I was shocked at the number of people I saw. There was a section where you could only borrow the books for one hour and as soon as you drop it off, another person picks it up, if that gives you any idea of the traffic!"

He also observed that the library was constructed in such a way that students requiring a quiet environment to work could go to a very quiet section. He reported that the tables were large, allowing the students to open two or three

books at the same time.

Dr Osibanjo shared that the University has 30,000 students enrolled out of which 30% are resident on campus. The 70% who are not are provided with "Hubs". "If you live off campus and you come for lectures and you can't make it back home to your community, the University provides a room for you to crash for the night and a locker. If you can't afford food, there is a place where you can get free food because they believe that food is a key factor for learning," he recounted. Some students are ashamed of being identified as being poor. Consequently, they are reluctant to access this facility which is also why the University built it in a centre far away from public view. Unfortunately, many students are still uncomfortable with this, but the University still provides free food as they believe it enables students to concentrate on their studies.

The University of Stellenbosch has a robust unit for disabled students. While at the University, Dr Osibanjo saw four blind students who were aided by guide dogs. He was astonished how the students were able to find their way around the student centre and buy things through the leading of their personal guide dog.

He remarked that at present, CU doesn't have the facilities to accommodate disabled students, particularly those with disabilities affecting their limbs. "Since we are aspiring to be one of the ten in ten, we will need to factor this in so we are not discriminating against disability. Students who want to learn but can't see, also need braille (so they can read)," he commented. "If the University really wants to move forward in this area, they will need to look into it and invest money as it will require staff that are specially trained."

Dr Osibanjo drew some comparisons between the University of Stellenbosch's mentoring programme and the mentoring at CU. "In CU, we have loco parentis, where lecturers look out for the students and play the role of parents. They have that as well, only 300 level students and above are able to be mentors to other students." He shared that the older mentors are able to take on up to 10 students and that it is a great way to develop their sense of responsibility and to reduce the amount of monitoring that lecturers have to do.

One of the remarkable things that stand out about the University of Stellenbosch is the way in which they embrace and make provision for students from such a vast array of backgrounds and experience. It is clearly evident that through fierce intentionality, they are breaking down social, racial and cultural barriers and subsequently seeking to reduce the hurdle of disadvantage. Their success clearly speaks for itself. As CU aspires to be one of ten in ten, there are many mindsets and practises demonstrated by the University of Stellenbosch which CU could adopt in order to benefit the students and mould them to be successful leaders within their sphere and beyond.