
The exchange for the faculty/staff between the University of the Western Cape (UWC) and the University of Missouri (MU) is of great value both personally and academically. The purpose of this visit was to determine the feasibility of the development of a course work interdisciplinary PhD at both institutions.

ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT:

Currently both the department of physiotherapy at UWC and the SHP at MU is in the process of investigating and developing the possible curriculum content that would be applicable for both institutions as well as the areas that could jointly be engaged in. Following discussions during this visit with the team leader investigating the PhD programme at MU, Dr K Hagglund, it was decided that we could work together on this process.

The following tasks needed to be done at UWC to facilitate the process:

1. Identifying a small task team at UWC to push the process and it was suggested that Prof Frantz and Struthers form part of this committee
2. A feasibility study needs to be done at UWC to investigate the need for an interdisciplinary course work PhD in the economy, among students and the university staff/faculty.
3. Include more departments as key stakeholders
4. The PhD programme could operate as one of the core courses of the Faculty of Community and Health Sciences
5. A proposal to be submitted to the FCHS for discussion and approval and later the UWC.

The continuous link between UWC and MU for this project would include:

1. Joint development of core courses that would be of interest to both institutions
2. Joint development of elective courses that could be discipline specific
3. Identify key research interests in order to jointly apply for funding that would allow for PhD scholarships and student exchanges between the 2 institutions
A possible example of the curriculum would be:

Degree: Doctor of Philosophy in health and rehabilitation sciences

Entrance requirement: A masters degree in a related field

Length: 4 years minimum

Health and Rehabilitation Sciences Core Curriculum (Year 1)

Rehabilitation Theories
Theories of health promotion and disease prevention
Rehabilitation services in health care systems (AFRICA vs USA)

Health and Rehabilitation Sciences Electives (Year 1)

Pathophysiology and Impairment
Functional Limitations and Participation
Health Services

Research Core (Year 2)

Research design and statistics
Research ethics
Techniques for effective grant writing
Writing for publication
Proposal writing

Dissertation in Health and Rehabilitation Sciences (Year 3 and 4)
FUTURE ENDEAVOURS:

This exchange has also lead to the development of a joint proposal between the departments of physiotherapy at UWC and MU. This proposal has been submitted to the Dean of SHP at MU and will be submitted to the Dean of FCHS at UWC. The aims and objectives of the proposal is described below.

UWC-MU Collaboration Project: Internationalization of core physiotherapy curriculum between the University of the Western Cape and Missouri University

Purpose:

To design, implement and evaluate a core curriculum in physiotherapy education that fosters global competencies cross culturally in both UWC, South Africa and UM, USA faculty and students.

Goals/Objectives:

Education and curriculum development

1. To develop appropriate culturally sensitive problem based learning cases around the core curriculum in physiotherapy.
2. To develop web based assignments relating to pathology, assessment and intervention of common conditions in both countries to encourage communication and discussion between MU and UWC students.
3. To develop and evidence based practice model/approach at UWC guided by current practice at MU

Student development

1. To explore mechanisms to formalise didactic and clinical education between MU and UWC through clinical exchanges
2. To explore collaboration and curriculum interaction through e-learning

Staff/Faculty development

1. To encourage staff development as it relates to web site development and research
2. To encourage mentorship programmes for faculty with regards to research, e-learning and grant writing
3. To encourage the development of PhD faculty and PhD co-supervision of students
4. To collaborate on joint grant writing proposals
5. To assist staff/faculty in taking an idea and write it into a grant
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

During my visit I had the time to:

1. Write a grant proposal and submit it for funding to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation with assistance and advise from Dr Marion Minor (MU) and Dr R Brownson (SLU).
2. Write 2 articles to the point of completion and submit to a “critical reader”
3. Obtain access to internet journals that currently is not available at UWC
4. Attend and present at an international conference
5. Assist masters students in finding articles relevant to their thesis that would be difficult to find in South Africa

I would also like to thank Dr Oliver and his wife, Ms Jill Oser and Dr Minor who have enriched my life in a special way. I would really like to thank them for their hospitality and the manner in which they would reach out to me far and beyond the call of duty. Dr Oliver and his faculty are true ambassadors for their schools motto: to teach, to serve, to discover.

I would also like to thank Prof Persens and Ms Debbie Lamson without who this trip would not have been possible. Their dedication and commitment to making this trip a success is really valued and appreciated.

Once again, thank you for a wonderful programme

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