

Carving an administrative model for uniosun: a needed reform

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Abstract

Objective: The aims and objective of University Education are well documented in the National Policy on Education and the vision and mission of Osun State University well spelt out in the Law establishing the University. The contributions of all stakeholders-the Academic and Non-Teaching Staff; Students, Parents and the community, to the pursuit of the aims and objectives of University education and the objective of setting up Osun State University would facilitate the realization of these aims and objective. The study examined the methods of reforming and modifying college administration in Osun State University for improved productivity.

Methods: The structure and the design of the university administration system have made assigning responsibilities an easy task. The task, if well carried out by all stakeholders , will pave the way for the realization of the educational goals and objectives in Osun State University. The study therefore discusses the methods to be employed by all the stakeholders in carrying out the tasks to make the system more efficient and effective in the discharge of responsibilities.

Conclusion: The pursuit of academic excellence may be more rewarding if the administrative structure is reformed and responsibilities redefined to enable all stakeholders take on their responsibilities for improved productivity in Osun State University. The pursuit of academic excellence is therefore the responsibility of all stakeholders in college administration.

Key words: Administration, college, reform

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Sculpture d'un modèle administratif pour uniosun: une réforme nécessaire

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Résumé

Objectif: Les buts et objectifs de l'éducation de l'Université sont bien documentés dans la Politique nationale de l'éducation et de la vision et la mission de l'Université d'Etat d'Osun bien énoncé dans la loi portant création de l'Université. Les contributions de toutes les parties prenantes du-universitaires et le personnel non enseignant, les étudiants, les parents et la communauté, à la poursuite des buts et objectifs de l'éducation de l'Université et de l'objectif de mise en place de l'Université d'Etat d'Osun faciliteraient la réalisation de ces buts et objectifs . L'étude a examiné les moyens de réformer et modifier administration du collège à l'université de l'Etat d'Osun pour améliorer la productivité.

Méthodes: La structure et la conception du système d'administration de l'université ont fait l'attribution de responsabilités une tâche facile. La tâche, si elle est bien menée par toutes les parties prenantes, va ouvrir la voie à la réalisation des objectifs éducatifs et des objectifs à l'Université d'Etat d'Osun. L'étude examine donc les méthodes à employer par tous les intervenants dans l'exécution des tâches pour rendre le système plus efficient et efficace dans l'exercice de responsabilités.

Conclusion: La poursuite de l'excellence académique peut être plus gratifiant si la structure administrative est réformé et responsabilités redéfini pour permettre à toutes les parties prenantes prennent leurs responsabilités pour améliorer la productivité dans l'Université d'Etat d'Osun. La poursuite de l'excellence académique est donc de la responsabilité de tous les intervenants dans l'administration de l'université.

Mots clés: l'administration, le collège, la réforme

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a life-long process that has interpretation in purpose, type and level.

What is Administration?

Administration is referred to as the process or the activities of a certain group of people operating to accomplish common goals.

The University

Higher Education, part of which the University belongs, is to be involved in teaching and research functions both of which 'have an important role to play in national development particularly in development of high level manpower (NPE 1981 p. 22).

The University has a unique feature that demands constant adjustments in terms of administrative mastery. The University is:

- a place of pure culture and learning;
- a training school for the professions;
- a bridge between theoretical learning and its practical application;
- the home of research; and
- a training ground for leaders.

A University is therefore established primarily for academic pursuits with the aim of attaining excellence in its field of endeavour.

College

A College is an arm or unit of studies that comprises of two or more Faculties, Research Centres and Research Institutes as established by the University Law.

A College is organized and designated for approved functions, whether teaching, research, administrative, technical or professional services as recognized by the Council.

A University/College Administrator

A University/College Administrator is that person who is statutorily and legally responsible for managing the affairs of a

University/College. A University Administrator is involved in policymaking and at the College level, ensure proper implementation of policy decisions of the University.

University/College Administration

University/College administration are carried out following the Law establishing the University, the rules, regulations, policies and procedures drawn by both the internal and external organs controlling the affairs of the University.

Simply put, university administration is the way in which universities are operated following due process.

Administrative Procedures and Policies

Administrative Procedures are a set or system of rules that govern the management of an organization. These procedures are meant to establish efficiency, consistency, responsibility and accountability.

Policies are written or unwritten statements that guide present and future thinking, initiatives, actions and decisions of managers. They are written when there are documents somewhere for reference purposes and are unwritten when they are made in form of pronouncements.

Osun State University

Osun State University (UNIOSUN) was established by a Law of the Osun State House of Assembly in December, 2006 as a multi-campus, conventional University operating a collegiate system. The Law establishing Osun State University stipulates the vision, mission and objectives of setting up the university which has been implemented since the inception of the institution. Administrative activities are guided by the Law establishing the University.

Policies and procedures in Osun State University are dictated by the Governing Council, the Senate and other Committees

which may be statutory or advisory, set up for a purpose. The distinctive parts of the institution are charged with specific functions and responsibilities.

The University as an academic community operates traditionally on the basis that the Academic and Non-teaching Staff as a whole as well as Students participate in the implementation of policies and decision making processes through committee system. Continuity of the policies and procedures guiding the operations of all stakeholders within the system are enshrined in the University Law, Statutes and Regulations.

Administrative Tasks in a Collegiate System

Tasks that may be carried out in various roles within a College include:

- working on Committees including Academic Boards and task groups;
- administering the 'student life cycle' from registration or admission to graduation or leaving;
- coordinating examination and assessment processes;
- maintaining high levels of quality assurance, including course evaluation and course approval procedures;
- assisting with recruitment and public or alumni relations;
- generating revenue for the College;
- providing administrative support to an academic team of lecturers, tutors or teachers;
- drafting and interpreting regulations and dealing with queries and complaints procedures;
- using information systems and preparing reports and statistics for internal and external use;
- contributing to policy and planning;
- managing budgets and ensuring financial systems are followed;
- liaising with other administrative

staff, academic colleagues and students;

- liaising with partner institutions, other institutions, external agencies, government departments and prospective students; and
- organizing and facilitating a variety of educational or social activities.

College Administration in Osun state University

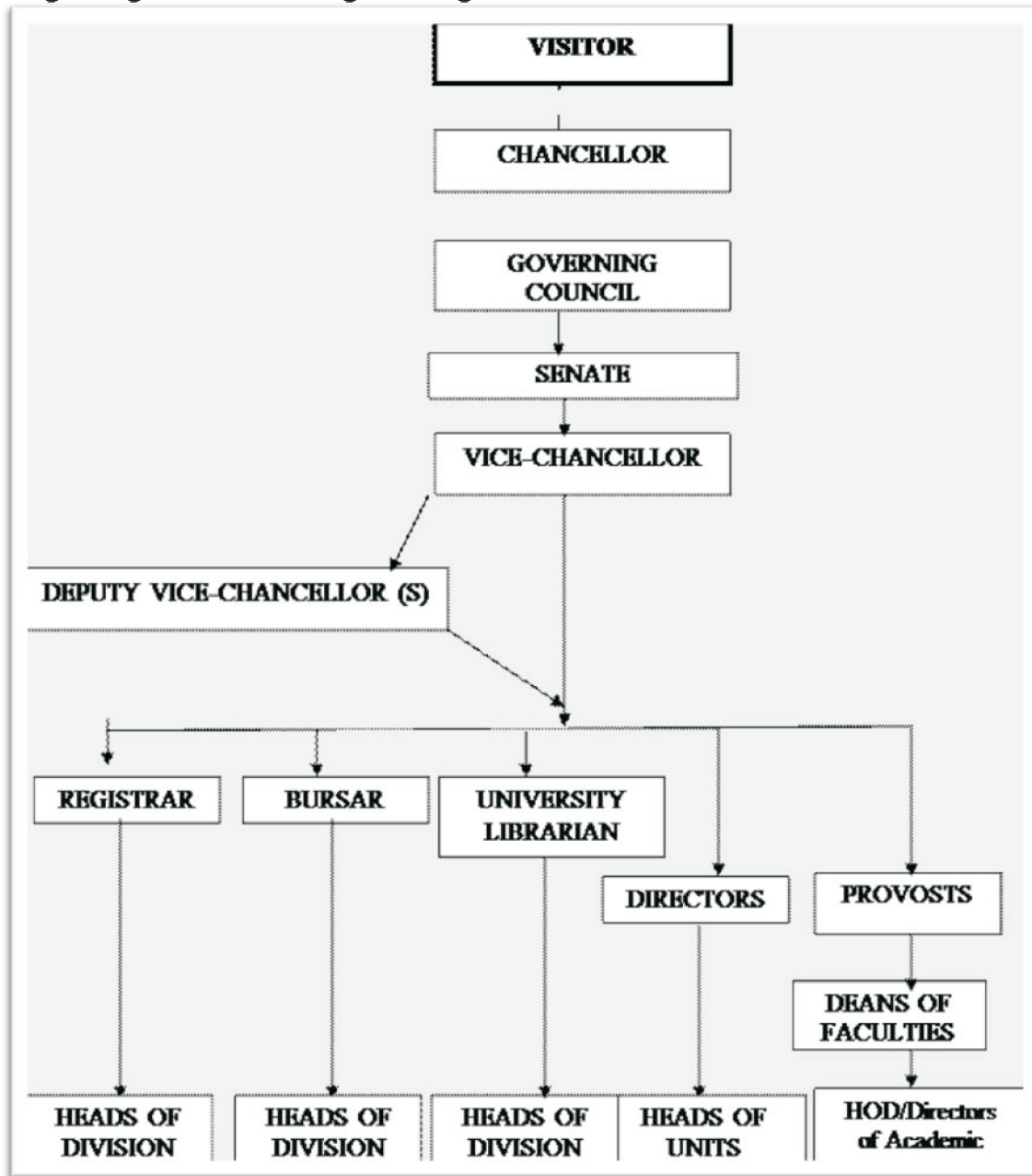
Osun state University operates a collegiate system with each of the campuses designated to offer specialized programmes and headed by a Provost. The Colleges are further subdivided into Faculties with each Faculty having a Dean as its head. Faculties are further sub-divided into various Departments and each is

headed by a Head of Department. The major responsibilities assigned to the University-teaching and research are performed mainly by the academic staff with Non-Teaching staff carrying out support services.

College Administration in Osun State University can be looked at from two dimensions: the external and the internal dimensions. The external dimension is the control by the federal government through the National Universities Commission (NUC), a body charged with the coordination of university management in the country.

On the other hand, the internal management of Osun State University is represented by a simple organogram as shown next page:

Organogram Showing College Administration in Osun State University



Authorities in the University Management

Council

The Council has an overall responsibility for the policies and operations of the University as well as general control and supervision of university property.

Senate

Senate is the highest academic policy-making in the University charged with the organization and control of teaching and research.

The Vice-Chancellor

The Vice-Chancellor is the Chief Executive-the administrative and academic Head of the University. The Provosts of Colleges, Deans of Faculties and Heads of Departments are all responsible to the Vice-Chancellor.

Registrar

The Registrar is the Chief Administrative Officer of the University and Secretary to Council, Senate, Congregation and Convocation. He is responsible to the Vice-Chancellor for the day-to day administration in the University.

The Bursar

The Bursar is the Chief Finance Officer of the University and assists the Vice-Chancellor on all financial matters which include the preparation of periodic income and expenditure and payment of staff salaries and expenditure.

The University Librarian

The University Librarian is responsible to the Vice-Chancellor for the Provision of Library Services in the University and its constituent Colleges and Departments

Stakeholders in College Administration

Stakeholders in College Administration co-ordinate the day-to-day activities of their respective units in pursuit of excellence in the

teaching of students, conduct of research and community service.

The Provost

The Provost/ Head of a College is a person of Professorial rank appointed by the Vice - Chancellor of a University and is responsible to the Vice – Chancellor for the day to day administration of the College. The Provost supervises and co-ordinates the day-to-day activities of the College on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor.

Dean of Faculty

The Dean of a Faculty is a person of Professorial rank appointed by the Vice - Chancellor of a University and is responsible to the Vice – Chancellor through the Provost of his College, for the day to day administration of the College. The Dean provides administrative and academic leadership in the faculty and acts as intermediary between the departments in the faculty and the college.

Head of Department

The Head of a department is a person of Professorial rank appointed by the Vice - Chancellor of a University. The Head of Department is responsible to the Vice – Chancellor through the Dean and in a collegiate system, through the Provost, for the day to day administration of the department. The major role of the Head of Department is to guide and supervise teaching and research and to co-ordinate the activities of the Staff and Students in the Department.

Academic Planning Unit

Academic Planning Unit is charged with the responsibility of maintenance of academic standards in the University.

The major role played by the unit in College Administration is to co-ordinate and streamline the academic policies and activities of the University from the

departmental level through the faculty and the college to the university.

College Committees

The use of Committees in most Universities is incorporated in the University Statutes, where specific functions of the university staff are documented.

In the management of Colleges in UNIOSUN, committees play very important roles in the decision making process. Committees are set up to look into issues and problems associated with each sub-unit, that are relevant to the realization of the University set goals and objectives.

Examples of College Committees are:

- o College Academic Board
- o College Board of Studies
- o College Board of Examiners
- o College Health Research Ethics Committee
- o College Selection Committee
- o College Review Panel
- o Any other Ad-Hoc Committee as may be constituted by the College.

The College Secretary

The College Secretary assists the Provost to oversee the administrative duties and functions within the College. The College Secretary also advise the Provost and other Stakeholders in the College on administrative matters since he is the repository of information. The College Secretary represents the Registrar in the College and is therefore the Secretary to all College Committees. He ensures that all decisions taken at meetings are implemented and supervises the activities of other Registry Staff such as the Confidential Secretaries, the Clerical Officers and the Office Assistants in the College.

The College Account Officer

The College Account Officer is in charge of disbursement of funds allocated to the College by the University and advise Staff members on financial matters. The College Accounts Officer

represents the Bursar in the College and is in charge of preparation and processing of the financial statements in the College.

College Library Officer

The College Library Officer represents the University Librarian in the College. He is the custodian of the library books and journals procured by the College and his major role is collection and organization of relevant materials and provision of open access to library resources.

College Security Officer

The College Security Officer is in charge of security matters in the College. His duty is to ensure security of lives and properties in the College.

Technical Officer

The Technical officer takes charge of maintenance of physical infrastructures including movable and immovable assets in the College.

The College Sports Officer

The College Sports Officer is in charge of co-ordination of sports and recreation activities to all Staff and Students in the College.

The strength of a successful College Administration

The strength of a successful college administration lies in the discharge of duties and responsibilities as spelt out in the Law, policies and procedures of the University. It lies in the efficiency of College Administrators in the performance of the under-listed tasks:

- I. Committee System of Administration
As a democratic establishment and in view of the university's noble and extensive responsibilities, decisions on governance must reflect the opinion of a cross-section of the staff if such decisions are to be accepted. A

decentralized and all-participative management approach through committee system must be adopted in order to maximally achieve the objectives of the organization.

However, a major challenge to committee system of governance in Nigerian universities is the issue of delay in decision making process. To improve the effectiveness of the committee system there must be improved definition of functions, scope of, membership and degree of authority; frequency of committee meetings; and mode, time, place and length of meetings.

ii. Appointment and Selection in a Collegiate System

It is important to promote a culture of merit and fairness in the appointment and selection of officers within the College. Colleges should continuously scout for and recruit the best talents. Appropriate academic leadership which refers to leadership at all relevant department levels of a University by the most qualified members of that University community is also essential. In addition, trained personnel should be appointed to man areas where he is most competent.

iii. Procedural Autonomy

This refers to the power of the College to determine the means by which its goals and programmes will be pursued. These include:

- freedom to select staff and students;
- freedom to determine curriculum contents and degree standards;
- the setting of the condition of study; and
- freedom to conduct teaching and research.

iv. Academic Freedom

Academic Staff must have academic freedom. This has been designed to protect Lecturers within the College from the hazards that tend to prevent him from meeting his obligations in the pursuit of truth. These include: the right without constriction by prescribed doctrine; freedom in carrying out research and disseminating and publishing the results thereof; freedom to express their opinion about the institution or system in which they work; freedom from institutional censorship and freedom of teaching and discussion; freedom to participate in professional or representative academic bodies; and right to fulfill their functions without discrimination of any kind and without fear of repression by the state or any other source.

However, academic freedom does not mean absence from duty without permission.

v. Self- Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability

Self- assessment, evaluation and accountability would lead to an increased

quality production of students. College Administrators should put things right quickly and effectively when mistakes are made. This may include reviewing any decision found to be incorrect; and reviewing and amending policies and procedures found to be ineffective, unworkable or unfair, giving appropriate notice before changing the rules.

vi. Quality Education and Quality Assurance

Quality education has become one of the central issues accorded priority in the recent educational reforms going on worldwide, and quality assurance has become one of the mechanisms used in

- achieving it.
Quality assurance is meeting or conforming to general accepted standards.
Colleges should therefore strive to conform with the standard set by the agencies responsible for quality assurance in Universities. In Nigeria, the agencies and bodies that are responsible for quality assurance are:
- National Universities Commission;
 - Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB);
 - Professional Bodies;
 - Proprietors and the Universities
- vii. Team Building
Individuals make up an organization but the goals of an organization cannot be achieved by individuals working alone, no matter how knowledgeable, skillful and positive the individual may be. For a College to achieve its goals and objectives, individuals must come together as a group and work as a team. Together Everybody Achieves Much.
- viii. Administration of Student Support Services
College Administrators must ensure that students are treated fairly and justly, and without discrimination. Students should be allowed to participate in school governance. College Administrators should operate open-door policies and create leadership opportunities through Students Council Representative.
Colleges should establish fledging counseling and chaplaincy centres in all the Colleges and the Counselor should work closely with the Faculty Advisors in order to provide the Students with positive learning experience.
Management should also invest in student- oriented programmes, Clubs, organizations and training programmes. In addition, Colleges and Universities should invest heavily in the development of their students' entrepreneurial skills.
With the operation of the off campus system of accommodation, grass root interaction should be encouraged. Staff-Student Colloquium should be held once in a semester and regular meetings should be held with parents to provide a feedback.
Colleges should focus on 'developing the whole man: spiritually, mentally and physically. However, the rules and the penalties for offences like students engaging in examination malpractice should be displayed in strategic places within the College and not only in the College Handbook.
- ix. e-Administration
It is also very important to develop and strengthen computer-based Management Information Systems in the University and within the College. The main benefits of implementing ICT initiatives include:
- Increased volume of work per unit time and better quality of work
 - Higher productivity and increased speed of output
 - Reduced level of fatigue and lower costs of operation
 - Redesigning the teaching techniques and package could make the positive difference and make teaching more meaningful and effective.
- x. Information Management
College Administrators should ensure proper Information management by identifying current and future information needs; identifying information sources; collecting relevant information and storing the information. Others include facilitating existing methods of using information and identifying new ways of using it. However, one must ensure

- that information is communicated to those who need it, but not to those who are not entitled.
- xi. Communication
 Communication is an indispensable tool for effective administration. Effective Communication through appropriate channels will ensure a transparent, uninhibited and efficient communication system among all stakeholders within the College and the university as a whole. Information is essential for harmony, growth and understanding. In the event of scanty or no information, rumor mongering exists. Rumor has the tendency of breeding suspicion, doubts, fears and trepidation which, if not properly checked, might lead into violence. It is therefore important for a College to establish a vibrant Media and Public Affairs Unit as well as Information and Communication Technology Unit to constantly manage information.
- xii. Change Initiation and Management
 College Administrators should initiate change and seek continuous improvement
 "... same old stuff, same old approach, same old methodology, old stuff cannot produce new technology..to effectively lead in today's environment, the leader must not only manage change but also direct it'- Sola Akinrinade (2010)
- xiii. Time Management
 College Administrators must ensure proper use of available time for the accomplishment of set tasks. Time is a limited, non-renewable resource.
- xiv. Finance and Fiscal Management
 College Administrators must prepare budget and estimates for the financial year; solicit for endowments, gifts, research funds and ensure efficient use of the resources.
- xv. Staff Welfare Programmes
 Adequate provision should be made for staff welfare Programmes, Continuing Education and Conference Attendance. College Administrators must ensure that there are various incentives for staff. Regular meetings should be held for all staff in the College to address pertinent issues that will move the College forward..There should be opportunity for mentoring, staff development and advancement; organization of training programmes and opportunities for collaboration and technology transfer.
- xvi. Publications and Publicity
 College Administrators should engage in publicity and public relations. Colleges should publish Journals, yearbooks and College News Letter.
- xvii. Provision of Security Services
 College Administrators must provide adequate security to secure the lives and properties of the College. The Security Officers must be equipped to facilitate the efficient discharge of his duties. Peace and order should also be maintained among Staff and Students.
- xviii. Provision and Maintenance of Physical Structure; Teaching and Learning Equipment
 The university should earmark some percentage of recurrent budget to service all facilities and equipment, knowing fully well that it is far more expensive to repair than to maintain. There is need for a serious expansion of physical facilities and equipment to meet the increasing student population. The environment should be conducive with regular power supply.
- xix. Provision of well-equipped College

Library

Colleges must provide up-to-date libraries access with modern teaching, research and information resources.

xx. Town and Gown Relations

Colleges should play important roles in enhancing the labour market opportunities of their graduates. Students should also be encouraged to promote community interaction while Colleges engage in collaboration; Extensions and Consulting Services. In addition, College Administrators should promote good relations among the various categories of people who make up the University community.

CONCLUSION

The pursuit of academic excellence may be more rewarding if the administrative structure is redesigned and responsibilities redefined to enable all stakeholders participate fully in the administration of Colleges, Faculties and Departments. The most important thing is for all stakeholders to get it right.

According to Roger Harwood (1984). Get it right and the result will be most satisfying. Get it wrong and your organisation might not survive.

The survival of the College and the University as an organization depends on your role as stakeholder. "Simply do your best..... Do your best to understand the processes. So you don't run into trouble while rendering honest service..... if in doubt...ASK"-Sola Akinrinade (2010).

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