

Central Management holds consultative meeting with CHUSS staff

The Central Management team of Makerere University led by the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe, has held a consultative meeting with members of staff in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS). The meeting held today, 19th February, 2018 in the University Main Hall was aimed at enabling the University Management to map out strategies for improving the work environment in the College through rebranding, academic reforms, administrative and financial restructuring as well as human resources development.

In his remarks, the Vice Chancellor briefed staff on various developments in the University before responding to concerns from various Units of the College.

The developments include introduction of a new University management system aimed at improving and having more inclusive decision making. The new management system comprises of the Central Management Committee, the Top Management involving the Central Management Committee members and Principals and the Management Consultative Forum consisting of all members of the Central Management Committee, Top Management, the Chief Security Officer, three representatives from MUASA, two representatives from MASA, two from NUEI and representatives from the student guild. “We have introduced these layers of Management to have more inclusive decision making and to minimize challenges arising from lack of information,” the Vice Chancellor informed staff.

Other developments as outlined by the Vice Chancellor include the revival of monthly press briefings, zero tolerance to sexual harassment, introduction of the Central Marking System, decentralization of issuance of transcripts to Colleges, strengthening web presence as a way of improving the University ranking, improving infrastructure starting with toilets in halls of residence and academic units, public outreach programmes, staff development programmes, strengthening student mentorship at College level, restructuring of programmes, establishment of research grant units at College level, development of the new University Strategic Plan, introduction of staff appraisal at College level, new information management system to ease processing of results and improving branding of the University.

With regard to branding the University, the Vice Chancellor noted that the most important form of branding is the relationship between staff and students as well as other stakeholders. “The relationship with our students and other stakeholders is extremely important for improving our image. It is therefore important that we treat well our students and other stakeholders,” he said.

Commenting on the persistent complaints about sexual harassment at the University, Prof. Nawangwe said Management was not going to tolerate “such forms of indiscipline”. “We shall expeditiously take action against all those involved,” he noted.

In a bid to improve the University rankings, the Vice Chancellor urged all staff to have their profiles published on the University websites. He noted that Universities in South Africa rank highly because they publicize whatever they do.

Explaining issues raised in the Visitation Committee report specifically regarding the transfer of some undergraduate programmes to Nsamizi and Kyambogo University and concentrating on graduate programmes, Prof. Nawangwe said the recommendations were not about to be implemented. “We shall strongly contest some of these recommendations. “The quality of graduate students is extremely important for transforming the University and country at large. We therefore need to train our own undergraduate students that can then transition into our graduate students,” he said. He noted that Makerere cannot afford to compromise its heritage by letting off its undergraduate programmes specifically in the Humanities and Social Sciences. “CHUSS is very important college with rich heritage. Many prominent people like Ngugi Wathiong studied at CHUSS and this is very important for our heritage.”

Responding to staff concerns regarding the poor infrastructure, lack of teaching space, delayed procurement of teaching facilities, recruitment policy, lack of motivation to academic administrators, delayed payment of allowances, noise pollution and delayed and nonpayment of external examiners, the Vice Chancellor said Management was working to improve the working conditions. He specifically said the new recruitment policy would require all new entrants to be subjected to interviews at College level to ensure quality. Regarding remuneration, he said staff would be paid allowances depending on the workload.

The Vice Chancellor congratulated CHUSS upon winning the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and appealed to the College management to put it to good use.

The Principal of CHUSS, Prof. Edward K. Kirumira, thanked the Vice Chancellor for support the College in winning the grant. He called on the Central Management to add on to the existing funding to further strengthen teaching and learning as well as research and innovation in the College.

He appealed to Central Management to consider investing more in young academics, noting that most Units were at the risk of closing because majority of staff in some units are almost retiring.

See Vice Chancellor’s full report below