

The US Embassy Courts CHUSS & CoCIS on internationalization of the curriculum.

The Embassy of the United States of America in Uganda is coordinating a study Abroad engagement entitled, “Establishing University Partnerships to attract more US Scholars and Students”.

The Study Abroad engagement which is sponsored by the US Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs will focus on holding institutional capacity of Ugandan Colleges and Universities to host more US students, interns, researchers and teachers.

The embassy hired the US consultant Prof. Wing-Kai, the Assistant Provost for Global Engagements and Senior International Officer at Bridge Water State University to conduct eight workshops at Makerere University colleges.

The embassy engaged Dr. Daniel Ddumba, a Lecturer from the department of Geography, Geo-Informatics and Climatic Sciences to facilitate the execution of this program.

In the morning of 10th August 2022, Prof. Wing-Kai, was in the College of Computing and Information Sciences (CoCIS) where he met the Principals, Deans, Heads of Departments, scholars and students to understand the process of global cooperation.

Prof. Wing-Kai said, the meeting was used as a channel to improve the activities for international collaborations.

“What I found is that this college has productive exchanges with Europe and United States but there some people are not aware of these collaborations and these collaborations can be improved by providing funding for Ugandan students to go to the West for short term opportunities. I hope that my visit can encourage the US government and American universities to start working with this college and to provide more opportunities for professors and students”, Prof. Wing-Kai.

Following the COVID-19 Pandemic and its impacts on all sectors, Prof. Wing-Kai stressed that this was the time for the college and partners to rethink their structure for improving international collaboration.

“We are going to talk to the principal whether there is going to be an international office and a coordinator to manage the collaborations with international entities and how to develop different strategies for prioritizing the partnerships so that they have clear goals and outcomes and try to make it sustainable for the future”, Prof. Wing- Kai pledged.

On the same day 10th August 2022 afternoon, Prof. Wing-Kai held a meeting with management, staff and students from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS). Prof. Wing - Kai described the meeting especially with students who formed the majority as interesting.

“Most of the audience are undergraduate and some graduate students. I hear about their experiences. I want to encourage them to think about having an international experience in future by trying to go abroad for short term and developing some international activities and to internationalize the curriculum on campus not just going abroad. It is easier to internationalise

through connecting with international community in Kampala and abroad here physical and virtually”, Prof. Wing- Kai said.

Prof. Wing-Kai implored the university management to increase the capacity for internationalization so that Makerere can improve the infrastructure and programs, and to tap into the United States experience in internationalization.

Some of the proposed initiatives by students include creating internship platforms and streamlining scholarship to cater for undergraduates, streamlining international coordination, facilitating online discussions between Western and African students and strengthening the office of the Dean of students to facilitate academic exchanges.

Other initiatives to strengthen collaboration suggested include organizing the US -Makerere special events such as competitions, workshop, annual exhibitions, camps, cultural performances that would provide opportunities to highlight international education as well as the American, European, Chinese etc culture on campus.

Other proposals were the need to form the US -Mak Alumni association, organizing short visits for students and staff to and from Africa to see how programs are run, joint research and, forming a community of practice to share ideas and to network.

Other proposed initiatives include promoting online education to expose students and staff to best structures and expertise, promoting virtual conferences, joint publications and more student engagement of students outside the classroom through debates and clubs.

Report by;
Jane Anyango
Principal Communication Officer, CHUSS and CoCIS