

Report on Visit by UWI Delegation to the University of Puerto Rico

18-19 December 2008

Following the successful completion of UWI campus visits by senior representatives of the UPR in November and December 2008, Vice Chancellor E. Nigel Harris authorized a UWI return visit to UPR, Dec 18-19. Delegation members comprised:

Prof. Wayne Hunte (PVC Research, Team leader)

Prof Clem Sankat (PVC & Principal, St Augustine)

Prof Archibald McDonald (Dean, Medical Sciences, Mona)

Prof Sean Carrington (Dean, Pure and Applied Sciences, Cave Hill)

Dr David Rampersad, Director, Business Development Office, St Augustine

Annette Insanally, Coordinator, Latin American-Caribbean Centre at Mona

Coordination of the activities during the Team's visit on the UPR side was done through the Office of the President, in particular Mrs Sara Irizarry, assisted by Dr José Luis Cruz Rivera.

The following is a report on the visit:

Thursday 18 December, 2008

The UWI team visited the Faculties of Law, Sciences and Humanities on the Rio Piedras Campus.

Law School

In addition to the singular and extensive collection of Spanish and U.S. Law reference materials, the team was impressed by the inclusion of hands-on training in the curriculum whereby students would meet with clients in a designated meeting room at the school to discuss cases and apply theoretical solutions learnt.

Science Faculty and Materials Characterisation Centre (MCC)

The Science tour included a visit to a Neurobiology Research laboratory and a state-of-the-art confocal microscope facility. The MCC is an independent not-for-profit but self-supporting corporation affiliated to the University of Puerto Rico. It offers specialized analyses and the corresponding technical and scientific expertise, on a fee basis, to clients in industry, government and academia.

The team felt that the Business Development Offices at the UWI should look at this operational modality.

Faculty of Humanities

There was mutual interest in increasing student exchange numbers. The UWI has sent students from time to time to the Humacao Campus (there is currently one Cave Hill student there) but no UPR student has come recently to the UWI. The need for a feasible fee structure outside of an exchange modality was discussed. It was suggested that UNICA include this matter in its deliberations, given its interest in encouraging increased student mobility among regional institutions.

UPR Herbarium

Dr Rampersad reported on a brief side visit to the Herbarium where there are 45,000 specimens, mainly from Puerto Rico, with some holdings from the Dominican Republic and Haiti as well as about 1,000 from St. Lucia. Yasmin Comeau, the Curator at St. Augustine will be asked to contact Dr. Ackerman, the UPR Curator, to establish links with a view to seeking funding for joint projects. It was agreed too that the John D. and Catherine T. McArthur Foundation could be a source for a project involving the Greater and Lesser Antilles.¹

Friday 19 December, 2008

Meeting of UPR Chancellors and Deans

The UWI Delegation's visit had been arranged to coincide with a meeting of UPR Chancellors and Deans chaired by UPR President Dr Antonio Garcia Padilla. The UWI PVC for Research, the St. Augustine Principal and the Dean, Faculty of Medical Sciences, Mona made brief presentations on the UWI; potential collaboration identified during UPR visits to the UWI; and an update on the Medical Sciences at the UWI. These presentations were well-received.

An important intervention came from the Head of the UPR School of Business reporting that Heads of the UWI Business Schools were being invited to attend a meeting in San Juan in February 2009 to discuss, inter alia, the accreditation of business schools in the region. The identification of multilateral funding to facilitate the design and implementation of joint programmes would also be high on that meeting's agenda.

Visit to the Medical Sciences Campus

UPR has significant strengths in neuroscience, HIV/AIDS, dentistry, public health, oncology, cardiac and metabolic diabetes conditions and health services. There is a Trauma Centre and a Burn Unit for children.

The UWI team expressed interest in training modalities utilized in some instances and areas of potential collaboration were noted.

¹ The Cave Hill Herbarium may also be involved in this project. Ms. Comeau will be asked to discuss with Prof. Carrington.

Wrap-up Meeting

Both sides met to review potential areas of collaboration and to agree on projects to be implemented in the short term.

The following is a summary of areas and designated focal points:

- *Disaster and Risk Reduction and Management*

- UWI has been invited to a meeting in February 2009 in Mayaguez to map available scientific information with a view to establishing a data base for disaster and risk reduction and management. UWI offered to contribute data in the field from an existing data base at Mona. UWI will partner with UPR for project funding.

UWI parties will include the Seismic Research Unit, the Disaster Risk Management Centre and the Faculty of Engineering. CARIMAC (UWI) and UPR counterpart will cover the Communications component.

Focal points:

UPR - Dr Fernando Gilbes, Hemispheric Centre, Mayaguez Campus

UWI - PVC Research, Prof Wayne Hunte

- *Law courses and Seminars*

- Delivery of specialized Law courses (Construction Law, Environment Law) through the UWI Open Campus involving Faculty of Law and Department of Civil Engineering.
- Seminar in Construction Law to be coordinated by the UPR School of Law, Mayaguez Campus before the end of the second semester, 2009.

Focal Points:

UPR – Dr. Roberto Aponte (Mayaguez Campus) will oversee coordination.

UWI – Professor Simeon McIntosh, Faculty of Law, Cave Hill

Professors Lewis and Suite, Faculty of Engineering, St Augustine

- *Research in Renewable Energy*

A workshop will be held in March 2009 at the Mayaguez Campus. It was agreed that Industry representatives should be involved in this workshop.

Focal points:

UWI – Prof. Leo Moseley

UPR – Dr Ana Guadalupe Quiñones to report on this

○ *Medical Sciences*

- UWI to invite UPR team to its Medical Conference March 25-28, 2009 at Mona. This forum will be used to advance discussions on other projects.
- UWI will send a cross-campus team to UPR in the first quarter of 2009 to meet UPR colleagues to discuss collaboration in epileptic surgery and neuroscience research.²
- In response to the request of Dean McDonald, UPR to assist in the identification of a radiologist through the Institute of Neurobiology.
- UWI to share experience with UPR in the production of its Medical Journal.
- UWI visits to UPR for observation of registries to be arranged. Also joint research in sickle cell to be explored.
- It was agreed that there could be strong collaboration in Dentistry. Dr. Gonzalez (UPR) and Professor Murti (UWI), in consultation with the Dean, Medical Sciences at Mona, will determine specific areas.

Focal points:

UWI – Prof. Archibald McDonald, Dean of Medical Sciences at Mona

UPR – Chancellor, Medical Sciences Dr Jose Carlo

○ *Chemistry and Biological Diversity*

It was agreed that it was desirable to initiate collaboration through the preparation of a joint proposal for which the UPR will take the lead.

Meanwhile, UPR to research NSF Grant for Symposium on Chemistry, Biodiversity and Natural products.

Focal Points:

UPR – Prof. Brad Weiner

UWI – Joint team to be determined

○ *Research Funding*

It was agreed that since both universities could benefit from each other's experiences and contacts, a Working Group targeting grant management and building capacity for grant funding should be established. The Business Development Offices (UWI) and the School

² Professor McRae from St. Augustine will attend.

of Business (UPR) would be represented in this group. Director of Marketing (UWI) Dawn Marie De Four would inform staff of the initiative and keep them abreast of developments in this field.

Focal Points:

UWI – Prof. Wayne Hunte, PVC Research

UPR – Dr. Emma Fernández - Repollet, Vice President for Technology

- *Biotechnology and Agriculture*

A visit by UWI team to the Mayaguez Campus to field stations and tissue culture facilities to be arranged.

It was also agreed that a Working Group would be formed to formulate studies and projects with a focus on Food Science.

Focal Points:

UWI – Prof. Clem Sankat, Principal, St Augustine

UPR – Dr. Hector Santiago, Assistant Director for Agricultural Experimental Stations

- *HIV/AIDS Research*

Important collaboration anticipated in this area. A Working Group to be established in this area by the two universities.

Focal Points:

UWI – Prof Brendan Bain; Dr Peter Figueroa (to be briefed by Dean McDonald)

UPR – Dr Guillermo Bernal, Institute for Psychological Research

- *Communications*

Following the UPR visit to Mona, specific action was proposed by the Acting Head of CARIMAC:

- Internships with both *Diálogo*, the School of Public Communication's (ECP) newspaper, and *Radio Universidad* (WRTU), its radio station.
- Collaboration in post-graduate research, particularly in the proposed areas of disaster communication and health communication that are of common relevance to the Caribbean. Collaboration could involve exchanges of both students and staff once the relevant programmes and courses are examined to determine their compatibility.
- CARIMAC and ECP to explore exchange of external examiners for graduate research and to jointly explore ways to maximize opportunities for media-conferences sponsorship.

- Arrangements for CARIMAC representative to visit the ECP in the near future.

Focal points:

UWI – CARIMAC, Mona

UPR– TBC (Dr Silvia Alvarez will consult with the School of Communication for their response).

- *Student and Staff Mobility*

It was agreed that priority areas of interest should be identified by the two universities and that arrangements be formulated to facilitate exchanges and joint project development. Exchange modalities would include internships; teaching assistantships, co-supervision of theses, co-training of technical staff.

- *Information – sharing*

It was agreed that institutions would share invitations to conference, workshops, and seminars.

Focal points:

UWI – Director, Marketing

UPR – to be determined

December 31, 2008