

Minutes CMC1/2022-2023 (cont'd)

**WEST AFRICAN CENTRE FOR CELL BIOLOGY OF INFECTIOUS PATHOGENS
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 14TH JULY, 2023 AT 9:00A.M. IN THE BOARD ROOM**

Present

Prof. Gordon Awandare	-	Director, WACCBIP (Chairman)
Prof. Dorothy Yeboah-Manu	-	Director, Noguchi Memorial Institute of Medical Research
Prof. Lydia Mosi	-	Deputy Director (Administration)
Dr. Peter Quashie	-	Deputy Director (Research)
Prof. David Dodoo-Arhin	-	Appointed by the Vice-Chancellor
Prof. Neils Ben Quashie	-	Representative, College of Health Sciences
Prof. Kwadwo Koram	-	Member, Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research
Rev. Prof. W.S.K Gbewonyo	-	Mentorship Coordinator
Dr. Yaw Bediako	-	Head of Advancement
Dr. Lucas Amenga-Etego	-	Representative of Research Fellows
Dr. Theresa Manful Gwira	-	Head of Research Training
Dr. Anastasia R. Aikins	-	Coordinator of Graduate Admissions and Examinations
Dr. Yaw Aniweh	-	Head of Technology
Dr. Yaw Bediako	-	Head of Advancement
Mr. Christopher Abana	-	Representative of Postgraduate Student
Ms. Henrietta Ashiabor	-	Assistant Registrar/Secretary

Absent/*Apologies:

Prof. Osbourne Quaye	-	Head, Department of Biochemistry, Cell and Molecular Biology
*Mr. Francis K. Boachie	-	Chief Information Technology Officer, UGCS (Apologies)
Prof. Anderson Mon	-	Appointed by the Provost, College of Basic and Applied Sciences (CBAS)

In Attendance

Ms. Sika Menka	-	Grants Manager
Ms. Emefa Adzadu	-	Senior Accounts Officer
Mr. Andrew Nantogmah	-	Communications Manager
Mr. Michael Abogro	-	Procurement Manager
Mr. Stefan Danquah	-	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
Mr. Theophilus Dugah	-	ICT Officer
Mr. Francis Dzabeng	-	Data Manager
Ms. Marian Nanor	-	Accounts Officer
Mr. Alfred Kazaaresam	-	ICT Technician
Mr. Eric Afful	-	Laboratory Technician
Mr. Felix Kyei	-	Senior Administrative Assistant
Ms. Kyerewaa A. Boateng	-	Public Engagement Officer

1.0 Opening

The Chairman opened the meeting at 10:00a.m., and invited all members to congratulate the Deputy Director for Administration, Professor Lydia Mosi on her promotion to the professorial grade.

The Chairman then introduced the Agenda which was a continuation of the previous meeting held on 13th April, 2023.

2.0 Preparations towards the 7th Annual Research Conference

2.1 Scientific Committee

Dr. Quashie reported on work done by the Scientific Committee as follows:

A large number of Abstracts were submitted, in addition to poster presentations. The Committee settled on Ninety (90) Posters and Twenty-six (26) Oral presentations after screening.

- Keynote speakers: Dr. Ngozi Erundu, Professors Kelly Chibale and Thumbi Ndungu.
- Panel discussants: Dr. Ngozi Erundu, Dr. Abraham Oduro and Mr Gameli Adzaho.
- Guest of Honour: Dr. Mimi Darko, Chief Executive Officer, Food and Drugs Authority

2.2 Logistics Committee

Prof. Mosi reported that feedback received from evaluating the previous year's conference, guided the Committee in its planning, so as to improve upon delivery.

Below are some of the highlights of arrangements:

- i. Booths will be provided outside for exhibitions.
- ii. Canopies will be erected on the left side of the car park of the BCMB building for lunch, instead of on the balcony.
- iii. Only 100 copies of the conference brochure will be printed. QR codes will be posted at vantage points, and uploaded on the WACCBIP Website to access the conference programme.
- iv. Only accredited Media houses will be allowed to cover the Conference.
- v. Name Tags of different colours would be used to separate the various categories of participants.
- vi. A Brief would be read at the DELTAS and 10th Anniversary Launches.
- vii. The procurement of souvenirs and conference materials were ongoing.
All the other usual activities were outlined with timelines given.

Issues of concern to be addressed:

- i. The duration of Opening Ceremony due to the DELTAS II and 10th Anniversary Launch.

- ii. A larger venue would be required due to the high number of registered participants.
- iii. Expectations of some participants to be provided with Travel grant for the conference. The Chairman mentioned that it should be made clear that no travel grants would be available for the Conference, except for the collaborators.
- iv. The actual figures for registered participants could not be ascertained because some participants could not complete the registration process.

2.2.1 Decisions

The following decisions were made:

- i. In future, the Registration form should be tested for feedback before it is rolled out.
- ii. All undergraduate students should be excluded from the list of participants.
- iii. Fruits would be served during the morning and afternoon breaks.
- iv. Abstracts should be categorized into thematic areas and reviewed by a Sub-Committee.
- v. Thematic areas that are oversubscribed should be divided, and the least subscribed areas combined.
- vi. An Abstract should be reviewed by at least 3 people.
- vii. Secretarial/Administrative staff should not be allowed to collate results for the selection of abstracts.
- viii. The award prices for Posters should be reduced since the students were not ready to give the oral presentations.
- ix. Platinum sponsorship cost should be pegged at Five hundred thousand Ghana Cedis

2.2.2 DELTAS and 10th Anniversary Programme Launch

For the launch of the two (2) events, the Vice-Chancellor, Alphonse Neba and the Chairman for the 10th Anniversary Committee will give a brief remark followed by the formal launch and group photographs. A short video would be shown on the DELTAS II project.

There will be a media interview and press release after the DELTAS Launch, with an inception meeting on the last day of the Conference. (Friday, 28th July, 2023)

The option of charging registration fees came up for discussion, and it was suggested that information on registered participants should be analysed and categorized according to collaborators, students and those who just registered without presenting any paper. If the number of participants in the third category are substantial, then the option of payment can be considered in future.

It was noted that the Conference was part of the Centre's mandate for capacity building, and the cost of which was already covered by funding partners.

2.3 Report on 10th Anniversary Celebrations

Rev. Prof. W.S.K. Gbewonyo, reported on the plan of activities for the 10th Anniversary celebrations. Two Sub-Committees (Publicity and Public Engagement, and Finance and Fundraising) were formed at the initial meeting.

Dr. Dominic Amuzu and Mr. Chris Abana were co-opted to represent the Alumni and postgraduate students.

Prof. Mosi, a member of the three-member team formed to propose a Theme and Slogan briefed the meeting on their work.

Proposed themes were:

- i. A decade of advancing impactful capacity building and scientific expertise for nation building.
- ii. A decade of building world-class scientific capacity for national development.

Suggestions were made to include keywords such as: *Health, Africa, Innovation* in the theme. The logo and anniversary cloth designs were displayed for comments and suggestions. Both the Logo and Cloth designs were to be outdoored at the Opening Ceremony of the Research Conference.

2.4 Proposals by Advisory Board

The Secretary reported that suggestions by the Advisory Board for the external review of the Strategic Plans as well as the Implementation Workshops of the Plan could not be done because the team members were unavailable.

The Chairman mentioned that he had had discussions with the Advisory Board Chair on the reconstitution of the Advisory Board. Two Co-chairs were proposed in place of one chairperson, preferably a male and a female who is an African.

For purposes of continuity an existing member would be retained. Prof. Kirk Dietsche was therefore nominated to serve on the reconstituted Board, which was accepted.

Members were called upon to identify prospective members who would serve on the Advisory Board for consideration.

3.0 Specialization of Faculty at Professorial Rank

The College Appointments Board requested a maximum of four (4) thematic areas/disciplines from each unit to be assigned to faculty promoted to the professorial ranks for approval and consideration.

Dr. Quashie was invited to present the proposed thematic areas for Management to decide on which areas of specialization the Centre could adopt. The deliberations concluded on the following four (4) thematic areas:

- i. Molecular Cell Biology
- ii. Immunology
- iii. Molecular Virology
- iv. Molecular Genomics

4.0 PRESENTATION OF REPORTS (Continuation)

4.1 Logistics and Procurement

The Procurement Manager reported as follows:

- i. All planned activities and set targets have been achieved.
- ii. Renovation works in selected laboratories have been completed.
- iii. Contracts for all single source items have been awarded to approved suppliers.
- iv. Contract for a Procurement software has been awarded and the Service Provider was working with UGCS to do the installation.
- v. Two Smart TVs had been installed in selected Lecture halls of the BCMB Department.
- vi. A Framework agreement has been signed with local suppliers.
The Chairman directed that the same should be done for other suppliers for items that cannot be acquired locally.
- vii. Basement Catering Services was selected for a Framework agreement to provide catering facilities. However, the meeting noted that the University had already entered into such agreements with some Catering facilities on campus and therefore the arrangement should be cancelled.

Challenges

The initial approval for Biobase Make Company Limited to supply Class2 Biosafety cabinets and -80°C freezers has been reassigned to MPharma. However, the wrong amount was quoted by the Public Procurement Authority. The documents have been resubmitted to them for correction.

The Procurement Manager also indicated that the Central Review Tender Committee at the Ministry of Finance had queried the evaluation report for the Smart classroom project at Korle Bu. Responses to the queries have been submitted awaiting the decision of the Tender Committee.

4.2 Data Management and Scientific Computing and Biostatistics

The Unit facilitated the Bioinformatics workshop and participated in workshops that used qualitative databases. It also provided routine data analysis support to research projects, and students. The Centre's HPC server is now opened to the UG community, which meant that more data would be gathered. A database has been created for the Hearing Impairment project.

A Data Management Policy for the Centre has been drafted which included a data sharing agreement template. Researchers and collaborators would be required to fill the form, based on terms and conditions indicated before datasets are shared.

The policy must include provisions that will indemnify the Centre against any legal issues arising from photographs taken at events and used for other purposes. On the other hand, persons captured in photographs must be made aware that the photos would be in use by the Centre if necessary.

The Data Management Policy was to be tabled before the next Management Committee for approval.

4.3 Communications and Public Engagement

The Unit held a retreat to develop a Workplan and assign roles for the year. The Website has been updated with stories of latest events. It also posted contents on the various social media platforms of workshops, outreaches and visits resulting in an increase in the social media followership.

Data collected for the Public Engagement on the Genetics of Hearing Impairment, COVID-19 and PUBGEM Projects was being proofread, transcribed, coded and analysed.

4.4 Technology

The Head of Technology gave an update on the state of equipment in the laboratories. The Quant Studio3 and Luminex machines still had not been fixed.

The Unit successfully held the WAMBIAN Workshop, which was supported by the US Embassy and a former staff of the British High Commission.

The Chairman announced that discussions were ongoing with the Gates foundation and JSK for training opportunities in the areas of Malaria, TB, Bioinformatics and Microscopy. The Head of Technology was asked to do a presentation on the activities of WACCBIP at an upcoming Grants meeting.

The IT Officer indicated that the operating system for the flow cytometer and the gel imager had become obsolete and needed an upgrade. However, the equipment software will have to be reinstalled after the system update, which required the acquisition of new licenses. The suppliers were therefore to be contacted for the renewal of the license.

Dr. Aniweh reported that the memory of the machines was filled with data by students and there was the need to free up storage space. It was decided that email notices should be sent to all students to copy their work from the machines for the system would be cleared.


4.5 Strategic Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

The Monitoring and Evaluation Officer informed the meeting that the submission of Progress Reports on graduate students by supervisors was not forthcoming.

He was asked to provide details of the Course evaluation report to management at the next meeting, and also send the results of Course evaluation to the individual lecturers.

5.0 Closing

Dr. Peter Quashie moved for the close of meeting, seconded by Prof. Lydia Mosi. The meeting ended at 2:05p.m.



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Professor Gordon Awandare
Chairman



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Henrietta Ashiabor (Ms.)
Secretary