



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

BOARD OF COMMON UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

2013 ANNUAL REPORT

Following is the 2013 Annual Report for the Board of Common Undergraduate Courses:

1. Introduction

The Board of Common Undergraduate Courses (BCUC) is one of the University's multidisciplinary departments. The Board is a creature of the University Statutes. It offers critical courses that are taught to all undergraduate students across the board, regardless of the degree programme that a student is enrolled in and hence the name "**Common Undergraduate Courses**".

It is a statutory requirement that every undergraduate student in the University of Nairobi has to study and pass three Common Undergraduate Courses before graduation. There are ten courses which have been approved by the Senate at the time.

Two courses i.e. one from the Humanities and one from the Sciences are compulsory. Thus, Communication Skills; which is a course from the Humanities, and HIV&AIDS from the Sciences are compulsory. The third course is elective from the rest of the courses as prescribed. For uniformity and ease of management, selection of the third course is done by faculties, schools, institutes, or departments on behalf of their students. This means that students from a given faculty, school, institute, or department will take a particular course.

2. The Board

The composition of the Board is as follows:

- i. Director (Chair)
- ii. Four Senate representatives
- iii. One representative from each college
- iv. All course coordinators
- v. The University Librarian
- vi. The Registrar, Academic Affairs

3. Management and Administration

For the day-to-day management and administration of the Board of Common Undergraduate Courses, the Director is the head with staff under him. To ease pressure at the head-office, a satellite office was set up at the School of Public Health, College of Health Sciences, Kenyatta National Hospital Campus specifically to handle matters related to CCS 010: HIV&AIDS, and CCS 003: Human Health Common Undergraduate Courses.

4. Programmes offered

The board offers the following programmes under CCS code:

- 001: Communication Skills
- 002: Fundamentals of Development and their Applications in Kenya
- 003: Human Health
- 004: Law in Society
- 005: Environmental Science
- 006: Chemistry and Its Applications
- 007: Science and Technology in Development
- 008: Elements of Philosophy
- 009: Elements of Economics
- 010: HIV & AIDS

5. Updates

In the year 2013, BCUC actively participated in the exhibition organized by the Commission for University Education in Nairobi. Through the forum, BCUC was explained its mandate to the public and demonstrated the need for Common Undergraduate Courses.

6. Strategic issues

During the year 2013, the following persons served as course coordinators for different Common Undergraduate Courses administered by BCUC:

COORDINATOR	COURSE
Mrs. Mary A. Okebe	Communication Skills
Mr. John Njoka	Fundamentals of Development and their Applications in Kenya
Dr. Joseph N. Mutemi	Environmental Science
Dr. J.M. Wanjohi	Chemistry and Its Applications
Prof. Michael W. Okoth	Science and Technology in Development
Dr. J.B. Ndohvu	Elements of Philosophy
Dr. Kennedy Osoro	Elements of Economics
Dr. Kellen N. Kimani	HIV & AIDS

Course Coordinators are the link between students and the board, and also between students and faculties, schools, institutes, and departments.

7. Number of staff

In the Board's administration are the following currently:

- One Board's administrator- Assistant Registrar
- One Assistant Registrar in the Satellite office at the School of Public Health
- Two Secretaries, and
- One office messenger

8. Major Project completed during 2013

In the year 2013, the Board of Common Undergraduate Courses developed and activated its website <http://bcuc.uonbi.ac.ke/> The board also went live on facebook <http://facebook.com/> and its twitter handle is @bcuc_uon. All these happened in May 2013. Therefore the Board improved its digitalization.

9. Staff changes

The board lost its long serving member of staff through a promotion. Mrs. Jane Mugure Mugwe, the long serving secretary to the director got a promotion which facilitated her transfer from the board to the office of the Dean of Students in July 2013. The changes necessitated the movement of Mrs. Pauline Muriuki from office of the board's administrator to office of the director as secretary.

10. Recruitment

Following the transfer of Mrs. Jane Mugwe to office of Dean of students, the University has advertised for the position of Assistant Senior Secretary Grade 'D' as a replacement. Shortlisting has been done and there is hope that the board will soon get a new Assistant Senior Secretary to serve the director.

11. Challenges

BCUC has always experienced challenges trying to mark examination scripts and release results in time due to the large numbers of scripts that have to be marked considering that common courses are taken by all undergraduate students. However, since the year 2013 it would appear that student numbers has increased tremendously and they have complicated matters even more for BCUC.

It is now common to find that in one faculty or school, there are various groups of first years whose semester sessions commence at different times which is becoming a challenge for BCUC because it means that more lecturers are required to teach the many different classes at the same time. It has also meant that the number of scripts to mark in any one examination has almost doubled and thus requiring more time to mark and therefore delaying the release of examination results.

Because both the module I and II students sit the same examinations, it is a challenge finding a venue that can hold the huge numbers of students during examination time for common courses. Take the case of faculty of Arts for example and one starts to understand the challenges. During examination time, students from this faculty will fill Taifa Hall, fill the hall at the Library and spill over to other places. As a result, BCUC is expected to provide a large number of invigilators that are hard to come by.

These are just some of the challenges that BCUC faced in 2013 and which may increase with time as all indications point to the fact that student numbers will continue to rise.