

Workshop for Deans of Students and University Counsellors
Student Support Services in Higher Education
Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania



18th –21st December, 2018
Concept Paper

A. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Student Support Services (SSS) are unique services that are available to students while in school to support them academically, physically, emotionally, psychologically, financially, socially and help them maximise their potentials.

These services which are provided through direct consultation with staff and families, and through collaborative efforts with communities are critical to the success rates of every student, most especially in universities that enrol large numbers of students from heterogeneous backgrounds. Research clearly demonstrates that basic support services such as tutoring, and counselling are some of the most effective tools available to ensure student success, particularly for first-generation students and other traditionally underserved students.

Student Support Services assist students in addressing areas of academic deficiency and provide necessary resources to maximize their intellectual, psycho-social and emotional development while in school. These services include, but are not limited to, academic tutorial programs, faculty and peer mentoring programs, academic and career counselling, and social and personal adjustment initiatives. In most cases, Student Support Services are basically designed to facilitate students' transition into university campuses, promote retention, and lead to graduation. These services are most effective when they are tailored to match the campus culture, address the needs of the typical student on the campus and create better integration among students. The goal in these efforts is to better serve student needs and to create a more supportive campus environment, thereby increasing student satisfaction, retention, and graduation rates.

Generally, most universities in Africa have not come to terms with the relevance of these services. The success rate of students does not only lie in the strength of the academic staff but the quality of services available to students to maximize their potentials and make good use of the opportunities while in school.

As the continent strives to build, rehabilitate, preserve educational infrastructure and develop policies that ensure a permanent, healthy and conducive learning environment in all sub-sectors and for all, so as to expand access to quality education" (SO2: CESA 2015-2025), it is important for education managers to restructure higher education institutions to focus on students, and provide services that will enable them find their individual academic paths in a more flexible educational environment. Again, taking clues from the multi-diverse and multi-cultural backgrounds of students and academics in African universities today, student support services must be made a priority to meet these new challenges.

According to Audin and Davy (2003), many aspects of student life, on an academic, social or cultural level, become more difficult to understand and manage with a population that finds itself in a state of continual growth and diversification. To this effect, the creation of efficient student services that are focused on its necessities, to provide the required support for academic activity and stimulate personal, social, cultural and cognitive development, is needed.

The role of these student services is influenced by the beliefs and values of the employed staff, by the way which the policies are elaborated, by the content of curriculum and services, and by the degree of knowledge regarding the development of the students and the way in which the environment outlines their behaviour. Supporting and enhancing the student experiences (academic, social, welfare and support) from first contact through to becoming alumni is critical to success in higher education today for both the student and the institution. As African universities continue to serve more students from traditionally underserved populations, there is the need to ensure their success by providing quality support services that enhance their education.

In a survey conducted by the Association of African Universities on student support services during the 2018 Leadership and Capacity Building Workshop for Student Leaders in Africa, the student leaders highlighted 15 key support and basic services students need to make life comfortable on campus. These are:

1. Academic mentoring and tutorials.
2. Good internet service for academic and research purposes.
3. Very well stocked library with modern and relevant books in all disciplines.
4. Access to reading rooms and functional class sizes.
5. Adequate and standard student accommodation facilities.
6. Technological methods of teaching.
7. Recreational Centres.
8. Well-resourced Career and Counselling Unit/Services.
9. Well-coordinated industrial attachments.
10. Good security and Financial support.
11. Good transport and shuttle services.

12. Good medical and health facilities.
13. Proper Channels of Communication.
14. Student academic mobility and exchange programmes.
15. Affordable/price-regulated market and shopping centres.

The Workshop for University Counsellors, Psychologists and Deans of Students on Student Support Services in Higher Education is therefore, timely to convene all stakeholders such as university administrators in charge of student services such as Deans of Student Affairs, Hall Masters and Wardens, School Psychologists and Counsellors, Chief Security Officers in African higher education to keep abreast of the current trends of student support services to improve delivery of higher education.

B. OBJECTIVES

The Workshop for University Counsellors, Psychologists and Deans of Students on Student Support Services in Higher Education seeks to equip participants with the comprehensive and current trends of student support services relevant to the psycho-social and academic development of students in higher education

The specific objectives of the training include:

- ❖ Review existing support services for students in African universities that respond to the psychological, social, academic and emotional wellbeing of students.
- ❖ Discover new modes of service delivery to ensure effectiveness of student support services to meet the needs of students in African universities.
- ❖ Harmonize best practices and develop a framework for Student Support Services in African universities.
- ❖ Sharpen knowledge and skills of participants on quality delivery of Student Support Services through workshop activities.

C. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

It is expected that at the end of the workshop:

- ❖ Participants would develop a holistic framework which benchmarks universal standards on student support services relevant to the needs of students in African universities.
- ❖ Participants would have broadened their knowledge and skills needed to provide quality and relevant support services for students in African Universities.

D. WORKSHOP MODULES

The workshop modules will include:

1. Scope of student affairs and functions in higher education.
2. Strategic student management: Basic principles, values and ethics.
3. Professional preparation and ongoing professional development of student affairs and services staff.
4. Resource mobilisation for strategic student support services.
5. Professional services and programmes delivered for enhancement of student learning and success.

E. GROUP PRESENTATIONS: Student Needs Assessments and Programming

- ❖ Academic Needs and Development of students.
- ❖ Physical Needs and Development of students.
- ❖ Emotional Needs and Development of students.
- ❖ Psychological Needs and Development of students.
- ❖ Financial Needs and Development of students.
- ❖ Social Needs and Development of students.

F. DATE AND VENUE

The training will be held from **Tuesday, 18th December to Friday, 21st December, 2018** at the **Holiday Inn Hotel, Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania**.

G. WORKING LANGUAGE

The working language of the workshop is English.

H. CONFERENCE ORGANISING COMMITTEE

The AAU has set up a three-member Organising Committee whose membership comprises the following:

| Name | Institution | Contact |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Kwesi Acquah Sam | Association of African Universities | kasam@aau.org +233243298464 |
| Schenineda Kwaku Ankomah | Association of African Universities | skankomah@aau.org +233 200783270 |
| Irene Dufie Addai | Association of African Universities | idaddai@aau.org +233 241698991 |

I. REGISTRATION

Register for this workshop via <https://www.research.net/r/SSS-Workshop>

Workshop for Deans of Students and University Counsellors: Student Support Services in Higher Education, Holiday Inn Hotel, Dar Es Salaam- Tanzania 18th -21st December, 2018: Association of African Universities (AAU)

For assistance, kindly contact Mr. Kwesi Acquah Sam via kasam@aau.org

J. WORKSHOP FEE

AAU Member Universities are required to pay a participation fee of **US\$ 600** and **US\$ 700** for Non-Members. The workshop fee covers the workshop documents, group lunch and tea/coffee breaks as well as a copy of workshop proceedings.

K. WORKSHOP DOCUMENTS

Workshop documents will be shared in soft copy prior to the event, with paid up participants only. It is therefore important that all participants endeavour to carry along their laptops for their own use as there will be no hard copies available.

L. COST OF TRAVEL, ACCOMMODATION AND MEALS

Participants are responsible for their travel to and from Arusha, Tanzania. Group lunches and tea/coffee breaks for the workshop will be covered by the registration fee.

M. ACCOMMODATION

Participants will be accommodated at the **Holiday Inn Hotel, Dar Es Salaam-Tanzania**. The cost of accommodation will be borne by participants.

N. EXCURSION

A list of excursion sites would be availed to participants who would have to indicate which one(s) they would wish to visit so that the necessary arrangements can be finalised. These excursions come at a cost to be borne by participants.

Training Moderator
Kwesi Acquah Sam
Association of African Universities- 2018

Thank You