

UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

REVISION HISTORY

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Signature of the Registrar :



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UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY (DRAFT)

1. Introduction

This policy is intended to have a positive impact upon the teaching and learning process in the University of Venda. It is deliberately concise and focuses upon those elements which will make the biggest difference to the quality of teaching and learning in the University. Schools and Departments may develop their own policies in line with this document.

2. Purpose of the Policy

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the manner in which teaching and learning are carried out at the University of Venda supports the vision and mission statement of the University. The key to a successful teaching and learning policy is the extent to which it has a positive impact upon the learning process. All learners are entitled to experience minimum expectations in the University which are based upon three inter-connected principles:

- All learners should be treated with respect
- Learners need to be engaged for learning to take place
- The development of teaching and learning should be a collaborative enterprise

2.2 All lecturers should be treated with respect

2.3 One of the outcomes of the teaching and learning policy is the delivery of graduates who fit the profile of the graduate of University of Venda

3. Regulatory Framework

The following documents form the regulatory framework of this policy:

3.1 The Higher Education Act 101 of 1997;

3.2 The Higher Education Quality Committee.(2004). *Criteria for Programme Accreditation*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education;

3.3 The Higher Education Quality Committee.(2004). *Criteria for Institutional Audits*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education; and

3.4 The Higher Education Quality Committee.(2004). *Improving Teaching & Learning Resource*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education.

4. Links to Other Policies

The policy is linked to the following policies of the University:

4.1 The University Strategic Plan (2009 -2013);

4.2 The Assessment Policy;

4.3 The Monitoring and Evaluation of Teaching & Learning Policy (Draft); and

4.4 The Policy on Skills Programmes.

5. Scope

The policy applies to the following stakeholders of the University of Venda:

5.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic;

5.2 Deans of Schools;

5.3 Heads of Departments;

5.4 Programme Coordinators;

5.5 All members of academic staff; and

5.6 Students.

6. Policy Changes

Changes to this policy should be authorized by Council after having consulted,

6.1 The School Boards and

6.2 Senate Members.

7. Definitions of Terms

7.1 Learning – This refers to the activities and responsibilities of students in the attainment of specific and critical cross-field outcomes.

7.2 Teaching – This refers to appropriate facilitation practices for a particular learners and disciplines, for the promotion of learning towards the attainment of specific and critical cross-field outcomes.

7.3 Teaching and Learning – Teaching and Learning are part of a system involving curriculum development, assessment, and academic staff and student development.

8. Policy Statement

8.1 General Statement (Teaching and Learning)

8.1.1 The lecturer, as a facilitator is responsible for the implementation of the University's approach to teaching and learning within his/her teaching activities.

8.1.2 The primary responsibility for the learning process lies with the student who must ensure that he/she is familiar with the University's approach to teaching and learning, and is informed of the learning opportunities that have been created and the availability of relevant academic support initiatives.

8.1.3 The University aims to create an environment which is conducive to teaching and learning.

8.1.4 The University is responsible for the acknowledgement and reward of effective teaching, ensuring that students and lecturers are familiar with the implications of the chosen approach to teaching and learning and making available sufficient, suitable resources in support of teaching and learning.

8.2 Student Experience

The University of Venda,

8.2.1 Aims to recruit and retain able students from a wide variety of backgrounds.

8.2.2 Strives to expand the opportunities for a diverse range of students to learn successfully at the University and seeks to identify and remove unnecessary barriers to learning.

8.2.3 Aims to take a student-centred approach to teaching and learning. This encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning, becoming increasingly independent learners (both alone and in groups), and encourages academic staff to take responsibility for supporting and enabling that learning.

8.2.4 Aims to teach students to become highly competent learners, so that they leave the University of Venda equipped to undertake life-long learning and personal development.

8.2.5 Aims to develop students as critical thinkers who able to think analytically and reflectively about their particular areas of study; their ability to act in the world and their understanding of themselves.

8.3 Academic Staff Experience

The University of Venda aims to:

8.3.1 Inform teaching with research, scholarship, expertise and enthusiasm.

- 8.3.2 Recruit, retain, motivate, support and reward teaching staff who are skilled at facilitating student learning.
- 8.3.3 Provide academic staff with high quality, relevant training and development opportunities in research, scholarly skills, both during their probationary period and subsequently.
- 8.3.4 Encourage all academic staff members to obtain recognition for their professional expertise as teachers, and to support all relevant newer staff in obtaining recognized teaching qualifications in Higher Education.
- 8.3.5 Reward and recognize through a fair and transparent mechanism high quality teaching in its decisions about probation and promotion.

8.4 Innovation and Development

The University of Venda,

- 8.4.1 Regards curriculum development and the critical appraisal of both curricular content and delivery as a core aspect of the teaching role.
- 8.4.2 Regards teaching and learning as informed by research.
- 8.4.3 Aims to develop excellent working relationships with the professional bodies responsible for the enhancement of teaching and learning and to exploit developmental funding opportunities provided.
- 8.4.4 Aims to exploit new technologies to improve teaching and learning.

8.5 Promotion of Quality Teaching

The University of Venda aims to,

- 8.5.1 Demonstrate its ongoing commitment to excellence in teaching and learning through robust evaluation and monitoring mechanisms, which include student feedback, internal programme and annual departmental reviews.
- 8.5.2 Promote and develop teaching skills of academic staff.
- 8.5.3 Keep the evaluation and monitoring mechanisms under review and enhance their impact and the effectiveness of the ways in which stakeholder's opinions are heard and responded to.
- 8.5.4 Support Departments/Schools in developing improved mechanisms for Peer Observation of Teaching.
- 8.5.5 Develop considerably over the period of this policy, its skills in researching its own teaching and learning practices and their effectiveness.

9. Approval

This policy must be approved by:

9.1 The School Boards;

9.2 The Quality Assurance & Promotion Board;

9.3 Senate Members and

9.4 The University Council.

10. Implementation

10.1. Who is responsible?

10.1.1 Responsibility for this policy lies with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic who presents an annual teaching report to Senate on the state of teaching and learning at the University. The existing evaluation and monitoring processes provide for the evaluation of all teaching at the University.

10.1.2 Deans and Heads of Departments should provide all Programme Co-ordinators with copies of this policy and oversee implementation.

10.1.3 This policy should be discussed in School/Departmental Boards for the purpose of implementation and adaptation to the specific discipline and/or profession.

10.2 Communication

10.2.1 Policy roll-out;

10.2.2 Intranet/Quality Management Systems (QMS);

10.2.3 Nendila and

10.2.4 Policy File.

10.3 Sign-off acknowledgement

10.3.1 The Registrar's office is responsible for the signing off of this policy on behalf of Council.

10.4 Policy review

10.4.1 The formal review of this policy may be initiated by the Quality Assurance & Promotion Board, School Boards, Senate or Council.

10.4.2 The policy will be reviewed every five (5) years.

11 References

The Higher Education Quality Committee.(2004). *Improving Teaching & Learning Resource*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education.

The University of Stellenbosch (September 2006), *Learning and Teaching Policy*. Centre for Learning and Teaching.

http://www.excel.org.uk/content/index.php/main/weblogs/don_s_blog/learning_and_teaching_policy_in_three_pages. (September 2007).