Remarks Launch of School of Governance and Public Policy

February 25, 2020

Protocol, Good morning and welcome
This morning is very special for a variety of reasons. After a year of planning, two departments of the Faculty of Social Sciences have collaborated to fulfill the Campus’s goal of launching the School of Governance and Public Policy at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus. I want to thank Dr Wendy Grenade, Head of the Department of Government, Sociology, Social Work and Psychology, and Dr Dion Greenidge, Head of Department of Management Studies, and their Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Professor Justin Robinson. Their cooperation has enabled The UWI, Cave Hill Campus to honor a commitment given to the Governments of Barbados and the Caribbean, and Caribbean citizens to offer a highly specialised training programme to facilitate human resource development affecting the public sector, para-statal and civil society organisations, all involved in delivering various public goods.

At the Cave Hill Campus, we have recognised that the post Independent public service structure in the Caribbean is radically
different from its’ colonial bureaucratic origins. We must plan for and manage its evolution. In Barbados that sector is fifty-three years old, in the Eastern Caribbean, it is forty plus years. Historically, entry level public workers received on-the-job training by experienced, senior civil servants and other forms of personnel training. Many of those persons have long retired, the governmental sector has expanded rapidly, many para-statal institutions now exist, and all are more deeply involved in many aspects of government administration that did not previously exist. For example, there are varying rates of absorption and use of ICT technology. Some divisions of the public sector use information technology, while others remain paper driven with less than optimal administrative processes.

At the University we know that to advance the optimal functioning of government and para-statal organisations, we need to review and appreciate the critical importance of the legislative, administrative, regulatory, and public policy processes of twenty first century governance procedures and where necessary, government operations. The Cave Hill Campus recognises that effective
governance and policy implementation are critical to sustainable economic growth, building harmonious societies and promoting social cohesion.

The Cave Hill Campus’ School of Governance and Public Policy will offer highly specialised training to Barbadian and Eastern Caribbean civil servants, para-statal personnel, and workers in civil society organisations. We welcome personnel from the private sector who seek a deeper understanding of public sector processes. My colleagues will present the areas of study. The Campus expects these to include Civics, Government Administration, Budgeting, Grant Funding and Interactions with Regional and International Institutions, Government Project Management, Building Absorptive Capacity, Implementation, Preparation of Technical Reports, Post Crisis Disaster Management, Protocol and Diplomacy in the Public Service, Auditing and Cost Controls in the Public Sector, Procurements, and the Role of Government Services in National Development.

Training will be offered in modules at three levels, entry level for new members, middle management, and senior leadership
(Directors, CEOs and Permanent Secretaries). Let me make it clear, the School is not a physical structure but speaks to a programming division under the leadership of the Department of Government, Sociology, Social Work and Psychology and aligned with the Centre for Professional Development and Life Long Learning. While these are the two principal bodies with responsibility on the Campus, the Campus fully expects colleagues such as Dr Henderson Carter, Head of the Department of History and Philosophy, Faculty of Humanities and Education and lecturers in Administrative Law, Faculty of Law to collaborate. I would like Dr Carter to design a course examining the historical evolution of the Caribbean public sector and its relevance to national development. We cannot seek to improve public sector performance without an examination of the legislative framework in which these services are delivered, and whether or not our legislative architecture facilitates or constrains the work of delivering improved services and other public goods. I am therefore saying to my Social Science colleagues I have every confidence you will develop specialized curricula for the School drawing on the overlapping disciplinary fields of management,
history and philosophy, public administration, law, political science and government. In the 21st century we have to offer interdisciplinary programmes that abandon balkanized, rigid disciplinary boundaries.

The Campus intends to utilize the expertise of its faculty and the rich resource of retired senior public servants both national and regional to vastly improve the functioning of government agencies, boards and institutions. For example, I welcome the offering of high level seminars utilizing the proven expertise of retired senior public servants on topics such as, “Managing a Ministry during a change of administration”. What are the lessons to be learnt? The pitfalls to be avoided for this occurrence? The School will enable participants to retool, contextualise the relevance of the functions they undertake, but more critically, facilitate governments in realising their objective of delivering their development goals.

This launch represents is a mapping of 21st century public sector leadership and service requirements. The UWI has the capacity to improve public sector leadership, strengthen management capability and enrich research skills, all towards enhancing the
crafting and delivery of public policy. The overarching purpose of
the SGPP is to build resilience and innovation within Caribbean
public sectors. This is imperative to revitalize Caribbean
development. I emphasize three of the School’s several objectives:

1. Develop specialized learning opportunities for participants to
   refresh their skills and enhance their overall competence
2. Expose participants to Caribbean and global best practices
   and new trends in public sector administration
3. Strengthen collaborations between the UWI and the policy
   worlds

The launch of the School of Governance and Public Policy reinforces
the significance of The UWI to the ongoing development of this
region. It supports the provision of smart services required for the
21st century.

**Eudine Barritteau**