



# THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES

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Our Reference

January 29, 2008

To: Chair, Academic Boards  
Heads of Departments  
President, Guild of Students

Fr: Secretary, BUS

Re: **A Policy for Academic Support for UWI Students involved in Co-curricula Competition**

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At the last meeting of the Board for Undergraduate Studies, the Board approved the policy to provide academic support for individuals, particularly student-athletes in co-curricula competition.

Attached hereto for wide circulation is the approved policy statement.

C. William Iton

cc: Chair, BUS

**The University of the West Indies**

**A Policy for Academic  
Support for UWI Students  
Involved in Co-curricula  
Competition**

**Office of the Board for Undergraduate  
Studies**

**December 23, 2007**

## **Introduction**

A critical element of UWI's 2007-2012 Strategic Plan is the development of a more holistic educational experience for students, leading to the production of more students who exhibit the characteristics of the "ideal 2012 graduate." A number of these characteristics, particularly those related to teamwork, leadership, communication skills, social and cultural responsiveness, innovation, ethics and life-long, motivated learning are effectively nurtured through various forms of co-curricula competition, for example, in sports, debating, chess, dance and music.

As a consequence, UWI's current strategic plan gives even more prominence than in the past to the promotion of student involvement in co-curricula activity.

At the same time, it has been recognised that UWI does not have an effective institution-wide policy with respect to academic support for individuals, particularly student-athletes, involved in co-curricula competition.

This policy statement seeks to fill this gap and has been prepared following a directive from the UWI Executive Management Committee and after consultation with the sports directors of the three residential campuses, the Deputy Principal, Mona, the Director of Student Services and Development, Mona, the Chair of the Committee of Deans and other individuals at UWI with expertise and interest in the interaction between co-curricula competitive activity and academic performance.

## **UWI's Philosophy on the Role of Co-curricula Competition within the Academy**

A starting point for examining the nature of the academic support provided to students involved in co-curricula competition is a determination of UWI's philosophy of the co-curricula competitor. UWI is the region's premier tertiary institution and intends to continue to guard its high academic standards jealously. In this regard, UWI is unambiguous that its co-curricula competitors are students whose co-curricula expertise contributes to their experience and development as a student.

UWI's approach to coaching co-curricula competitors will emphasise the primacy of the academy in the life of the co-curricula competitor and UWI will seek to ensure in its recruitment and training of coaches and co-curricula directors that there is consonance with its organisational mission.

UWI will seek to recruit, and increase scholarship assistance for, good students who excel as athletes, but the institution will not seek to recruit high performing athletes for whom academic study is tangential to their athletic pursuits; nor will it lower its admission standards to recruit high performing co-curricula competitors. Further, all UWI

co-curricula competitors will be required to adhere to standard rate of progress regulations. In a similar vein, UWI will seek to increase its involvement in co-curricula competition but its involvement will not adopt a “win at any cost” approach and will be ethical. The institution will expect and demand no less of any of its co-curricula competitors.

## **The Competitive Milieu of the UWI Co-curricula Competitor**

UWI co-curricula competitors compete primarily at five levels.

1. International (For University or Country)
2. Regionally (For University or Country)
3. National League (For University or Campus)
4. Inter-collegiate/Inter-Campus (For Campus)
5. Intra-Mural (For Hall of Residence or Faculty or other Campus sub-unit)

The special academic support mechanisms proposed in the following section are targeted primarily to students who compete in the first three categories, although individuals with legitimate concerns from the fourth category should also be allowed to avail themselves of the services recommended. In terms of the numbers of students involved, sports is the form of co-curricula activity likely to involve the most student beneficiaries of this policy.

## **Proposals for Academic Support**

UWI is intent on putting in place academic support mechanisms to ensure that while its students are competing at national, regional or international levels and, by so doing, adding breadth to their education and visibility and prominence to the University that they do not falter in their academic studies. It is in this context that the following proposals for support should be viewed. These four support mechanisms will be available to students who are registered in their departments at the beginning of each semester through information provided by the Sports Office, or other relevant office, on each Campus.

### **1. Flexible Assessment**

The time and travel commitments of co-curricula competitors, especially those competing in categories 1 to 3, may make it difficult for these students to hand in all course assignments at the time specified in course outlines. Lecturers of courses in which such students are enrolled are expected to work with these students to develop flexible assessment processes that seek to retain the validity of the assessment process while accommodating the travel and competition schedules of the student. While lecturers are expected to cooperate, the onus is on the student competitor and the relevant campus office, or officer, to provide the appropriate information in advance to the department and lecturer.

## **2. Flexible Tutorial Support**

Students competing in categories 1 to 3 shall be provided with the option of flexible tutorial support. Each campus should establish a special co-curricula competition fund from which tutors, including possibly graduate students, can be paid to provide special tutorial support for students who miss classes because of their competition schedule. Where tutorial arrangements are made in consultation with the schedules of student it is expected that they will honour their tutorial commitments. A central campus fund is proposed because the institutional benefits accrue largely to the Campus and University, rather than individual departments.

## **3. Alternate Final Examinations**

In the event that a student has an important competitive meet that clashes with a final examination, efforts will be made to schedule an alternate final examination. Where there are financial outlays associated with the scheduling of alternate examinations these should be defrayed through the Campus co-curricula competition fund.

## **4. Access to Summer School**

Students in categories 1 to 3 will be allowed to participate in summer school programmes, in those faculties which offer such programmes, in order to maintain progress with her or his academic cohort, at no cost to the student, in terms of tuition fees. The tuition costs will be defrayed through the Campus co-curricula competition fund.

December 2007