



SUNYANI TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

SUNYANI

GENDER POLICY

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**SUNYANI TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY
PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE**

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Sunyani Technical University

Sunyani, Bono Region.

FOREWORD

The Sunyani Technical University in Sunyani, capital of the Bono region, is committed to promoting Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in a diverse and scholarly community in which people are valued, respected and treated equitably. A congenial academic environment is an essential part of academic and university life. The quest to achieve excellence in teaching and learning requires a working and living environment in which staff and students from a wide range of backgrounds irrespective of gender, class, ethnic, religious affiliation, will feel safe and secure from all forms of discrimination, intimidation and harassment. The University community must be provided with equal opportunities in all spheres of university life so that they can flourish as articulated in this Gender Policy. The University community therefore adopts a zero tolerance towards all forms of discrimination, gender-based violence and harassment.

This Gender Policy is inspired by the awe-inspiring demand to correct the imbalances in academia with regards to issues of equality amongst the sexes. It is therefore expected to serve as a vehicle for members of the University community to demonstrate their commitment to the global and national calls for gender equality and empowerment of women.

The University recognises the role that education can play in addressing issues of gender equality and equity in Ghana. Thus, integrating gender perspectives in higher institutions of learning including public Universities could greatly strengthen the impact of gender mainstreaming all aspects of national life. An institutional Gender Policy like this one formalizes the rights and responsibilities of all people.

Gender is a crosscutting issue and the implementation of a Gender Policy requires the commitment, participation and contribution of all staff members and students. The University's commitment to implementing the Gender Policy shall be demonstrated by mainstreaming gender in all academic programmes, work plans, research and publications, budgeting as well as in technical cooperation activities with other institutions.

I am poised that the Gender Policy will serve as a point of reference in all decision-making and implementation processes in the University.

Ing. Professor Kwadwo Adinkrah-Appiah

Vice-Chancellor

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sunyani Technical University in its commitment towards the attainment of Gender equality among all its community members has set out this Gender Policy as a framework in accordance with the national and international policies and statutes.

This is to mainstream gender in all levels of the University. It is evident that there has been marked gender gaps in all the major areas of the core functions of the university in terms of policy formulation which is gender insensitive with women representing less than 10%. In leadership and governance, that is, women's participation in decision-making, women constitute less than 5%. Students' enrolment, especially in Engineering programmes, has less than 12% women in both undergraduate and graduate programmes.

In staff recruitment, promotion and career development, women constitute less than 10% of academic staff and less than 20% of non-teaching staff. The University's Gender Policy seeks to build an equitable University environment devoid of discrimination in order to harness the full potentials of all staffs and students, regardless of sex or circumstance.

The main objective of this policy is to eliminate gender disparities in access to, control of and benefit from resources, leadership, governance and all that matters. The policy would also seek to advance equal rights for women and men in all dimensions of the University's work, institutionalize affirmative action in admissions, recruitment, appointment and promotion and ensure that nobody suffers negative consequences due to their gender or disability.

The rationale of this gender policy is to provide a blueprint for gender responsiveness as a pre-requisite for sustainable development, and a benchmark for institutional advancement. For an effective and efficient implementation of its objectives towards the attainment of gender equality, this Policy clearly sets out systematic strategies and procedures. These include affirmative action for recruitment and admission, gender balanced enrolment of students, engendering the curriculum, establishment of gender mainstreaming Unit as a sub-unit under the Quality Assurance and Planning Unit and provision of direct support to gender equality and women's empowerment programmes.

This Policy also provides preventive measures and tools for dealing with gender inequality, which includes education and awareness creation of the policy and monitoring and evaluation of its implementation.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Gender policy emanates from a profound consciousness of gender issues and the important dynamics of their role in the national development process. This process includes the creation of an inclusive modern society with a genuine concern for the low levels of educational attainment and socio-economic well-being of the vulnerable, especially women and persons with disability in Ghana. Gender, women and disability issues are an inalienable part of the fundamental human rights. Promoting gender equity between men and women is now globally accepted as a rapid development strategy for global impact and relevance through improving health and living standards as well as enhancing the efficiency of democratic governance and public investments. The attainment of gender equality (through equity strategies) is not seen as an end in itself, but as a prerequisite for the achievement of sustainable development, through gender mainstreaming.

The Government of the Republic of Ghana in demonstrating its commitment towards the achievement of gender equality has made efforts including the enactment of legal frameworks, policies and programmes such as the 1992 Constitution, Disability Act, National Gender Policy, Affirmative Action Policy etc., and the established of institutions such as the Ministry of Gender and Social Protection.

One of the key development indicators of both the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which Ghana has also adopted, is the achievement of gender equality through the establishment of a culture of gender sensitive and equity principles in all institutions and structures of government, the private sector and communities.

Gender mainstreaming had been adopted globally as an accepted strategy towards the promotion of gender equality to enable nations and institution to effectively and efficiently attain the achievement of gender equality (UN, PfA, 1996). This makes gender issues more visible, taking into account the interest and diversity among women and men with the full utilisation of the human capabilities leading to well informed policy and governance for sustainable development.

The 1992 Constitution of Ghana clearly makes provision for gender balanced equal rights and opportunities for all citizens, irrespective of sex and gender. It frowns on all forms of discrimination. The National Gender Policy advocates gender mainstreaming in all spheres of national life. STU, as an institution of higher learning, plays a crucial role in addressing gender inequality and inequity at all levels of education in general.

Undoubtedly, gender equality is central to sustainable development where every member of society is treated with respect and dignity, affording them equal opportunity to realize their full potential.

Education is an empowering force capable of driving sustainable development and therefore, the University, as a leading higher education institution in Ghana, has a crucial role to play in contributing to the broader societal goal of gender equality.

This Gender Policy considers equality as a development goal. Hence the policy document assesses opportunities and challenges in the promotion of gender equality at STU and provides

strategies for addressing the challenges. This involves ensuring that gender equality is central in all activities including policy formulation, research, advocacy/dialogue, legislation, resource allocation, planning, programming and project implementation.

This policy reflects the University's commitment and responsibility to gender equality and diversity as stated in the University's Corporate Strategic Plan 2016-2025. It also draws inspiration from the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, the National Gender Policy, and supports the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women. The policy also reflects the ideals of the Sustainable Development Goal 5 and the African Union Gender Policy Commitments adopted in 2009 by all forum members as part of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA).

With this policy the STU is committed to fostering an inclusive culture which promotes equality and diversity in our quest to maintain a working, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all members of the University community adopts a zero tolerance towards all forms of discrimination, gender-based violence and harassment.

1.1 Background

The Sunyani Technical University (STU) is committed to maintaining a gender sensitive working and learning environment. It focuses on the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment in an academic environment where all students, academic, administrative and support staff, female and male, enjoy equal opportunities, human rights and non-discrimination in all spheres of university life. This commitment will be demonstrated by institutionalization of affirmative action in the University's governance; including student enrolment, staff recruitment and retention.

With Electrical and Electronic Engineering (EEE) as its niche area, STU is poised to becoming one of the leading institutions of higher learning in Africa that would be driving the needed technological advancements through Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

In 1967 when the institution was established, gender was not on the international or national agenda. The University was located in a highly patriarchal society, which like that of colonial Britain reflected social and cultural biases about gender roles. Even in contemporary times, although the University tends to be regarded and spoken of in gender-neutral terms, its operations have often been at best gender blind and at worst, gender insensitive. This is exhibited in the lopsided composition of the decision-making bodies, systemic inequities and importation of gendered stereotyped language and chauvinistic socio-cultural orientations and gender biased attitudes acquired through socialisation processes, into academic spaces that are supposed to be liberalizing and empowering all members of the University community.

There are marked gender gaps in many areas of the functions of the University as discussed below:

a. Policies and Policy Formulation

Generally, the University's policies and policy formulation processes have been gender blind. Apart from its discretionary affirmative action initiative and the less endowed

admissions policy, other policies of the University did not incorporate clear principles of gender equality and equity.

- b. **Leadership and Governance:** Women's participation in Decision-Making Gender gaps still persist in all decision-making organs of the University and at all levels of governance. Over the past decades, the university administration and governance had been either exclusively male or male dominated with regards to the University Council, principal and key officers as well as other Senior and Middle-Level Administrative Officers both teaching and non-teaching. There is a gross gender imbalance at its apex, that is, the University Council, where only one nominee out of the government representatives is stipulated to be a woman, representing only 5% out of the total of 19 members.

The University governance comprises the University Council and the Academic Board and for the past decade women have been underrepresented (less than 10%). Special meetings of the board have in attendance all Faculty examination officers all of whom are men.

The pattern remains the same with regards the leadership positions such as Deans/Directors and Heads of both academic and non-academic units. The University's Gender Policy shall be the vital tool for the integration of gender into its management structures, programmes and functions. This Policy provides the framework to guide the gender mainstreaming process, the regulations for the integration and enforcement, as well as the actors to track the progress of implementation and ensure compliance.

- c. **Students Recruitment and Enrolment**

Human capital development is a necessary tool towards economic growth and development and thus gender equality in education is one of the key strategies for women empowerment, with its trickledown effect on family and society in general.

Gender gaps in higher education exist because more male students are offered admission. The enrolment trends have shown that on average women constituted less than 35% of the total student population for both tertiary and non-tertiary programmes. However, in Engineering and TVET disciplines, the enrolment trend has been more appalling with figures in the region of 10%.

- d. **Staff Recruitment, Promotion and Career Development**

Gender imbalances are evident within the employment structures of the University. A gendered disaggregated data of both full time academic and non-teaching staff shows that there are more men than women, with women constituting less than 20% of academic staff and about 30% of non-teaching staff.

It is evident that there exist an under representation of women at the student and staff levels. There is relatively lower level of productivity in research among female faculty, lower level of understanding of gender equity/equality among members of the university community, sexual harassment among staff and students, inadequate support for women to combine their personal and professional lives as career women within the 21st century.

This Gender Policy seeks to address such gender imbalances in the areas of students' admissions and enrolment, recruitment, promotion and career advancement through affirmative action and engendering its policies, processes and programmes in all areas and at all levels through gender mainstreaming. The University shall strive to use a

proactive recruitment policy with several policy instruments to achieve a balanced gender distribution.

e. **Mainstreaming the Gender Unit**

There is the need for the University to have a Gender Mainstreaming Unit probably under the University's Quality Assurance and Planning Unit (QAPU) in order to ably assess the implications for women and men in the University's planned actions, including legislation, policies and programmes implementation at all levels. An engendered QAPU would ensure gender mainstreaming in the University's planning, budgeting and implementation processes and enhance the visibility of its engendered committees.

The Gender policy seeks to empower QAPU to mainstream gender in the University's plans, budgets and Monitoring and Evaluation tools for greater impact towards gender equality and mutual accountability.

f. **Prevention of Gender Based Violence and Harassment**

Within every community, the rights, dignity and integrity of individuals must be respected, as such any form of harassment and/or sexist behaviours should be considered as violations of human dignity. Even though the university by convention had adopted a zero-tolerance policy on gender-based violence and harassment, there have been no clear policy framework or guidelines that seek to protect staff, students and visitors against this menace. The University also strives to guarantee safety to all who visit its campuses in their various capacities to ensure they are treated with dignity and respect. Discrimination and harassment are strictly prohibited.

To demonstrate its commitment to providing a safe environment for all and prohibiting all forms of discrimination and harassment, this Gender Policy sets out regulations to ensure protection against all forms of discrimination, gender-based violence and harassment. On the contrary, friendly and relaxed personal interaction, also between women and men, is and should be a normal part of everyday life at the University.

1.2 Objectives of the Gender Policy

The main objective of the Gender Policy is to build an equitable University environment devoid of discrimination in order to harnesses the full potentials of all staff and students, regardless of sex or circumstance.

It will furthermore promote the enjoyment of fundamental human rights by all in order to enhance the health, social, economic and political well-being of all members of the University community for the maximization and optimization of the full potentials of all for the institutional development of the University.

The specific policy objectives are as follows:

- i. To ensure that staff, students and other stakeholders learn, work and live in an environment of mutual respect, free from discrimination, harassment, intimidation, retaliation and humiliation, thereby enhancing the dignity of both genders.

- ii. To ensure the university becomes sensitive to gender issues and committed to addressing gender imbalances in enrolment of students and staff employment
- iii. To ensure the involvement of the minority gender at any point in time in University decision making process as a way of carrying everybody along and ensuring that decisions are collectively owned and defended.
- iv. To ensure women and men are valued equally in all dimensions of the University's work and provide equitable opportunities for development.
- v. To ensure that all research, training, teaching and learning and development activities in the university are gender sensitive and aimed at bringing out the best in both men and women.
- vi. To develop affirmative action strategies in order to improve the quality of education for women based on recognition that action is required at all levels of the education system to advance women's development and achieve gender equality and equity.
- vii. To ensure that nobody suffers from any negative consequences due to their gender identity or disability.
- viii. To ensure more women get into Engineering, TVET and other Science and Technology-based programmes run by the University and also in the University's employment.

1.3 Definition of Operational terms

- i. Affirmative Action refers to a policy or programme of taking steps to increase the representation of certain designated groups in all areas of life in institutions. It seeks to address discrimination or bias through active measures.
- ii. Curriculum refers to the content of an Education and Training Programme.
- iii. Engender: The process of ensuring that planning and programming is appreciative of and takes into account gender differences and concerns.
- iv. Gender: Gender is not 'sex' (biological), but a socio-cultural construct (i.e., socially acquired notions of masculinity and femininity by which men and women are identified) that deals with the relationship that exist between men and women and which governs their roles and responsibilities, allocation and distribution of societies resources, power and decision-making processes in society. It is a term used to identify social, cultural and psychological features that identify one as a man, woman, boy or girl. It is the shaping of thinking, attitude and values of women, men, girls and boys. Gender is dynamic and varies across culture, society and time (Oakley, 1984; Momsen, 2004).
- v. Gender discrimination: Refers to unequal treatment of individuals or groups of people on the basis of their gender that results in reduced access to/or control of resources and opportunities.
- vi. Gender Equality: Refers to the equal treatment of men and women, boys and girls so that they can enjoy the benefits of development including equal access to and control of opportunities and resources. Gender equality does not mean that men and women become the same, but that their opportunities and life chances are equal. In other words, gender equality is the absence of discrimination which is based on a person's sex, in opportunities, allocation of resources and benefits, human rights, and in access to services such as education

- vii. Gender Equity: Refers to the practices of fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits, access to and control of resources, responsibilities, power and opportunities.
- viii. Gender Mainstreaming: The consistent integration of gender concerns into the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies, plans, programmes and projects at all levels.
- ix. Gender-based violence: A cause and consequences of gender inequities. It includes a range of violent acts mainly committed by males against females, within the context of women and girls subordinate status in society, and often serves to retain this unequal balance (Human Rights Watch, 1996).
- x. Gender Parity: A numerical concept referring to equal number of girls and women, boys and men relative to their respective numbers in the population.
- xi. Gender Responsiveness: Refers to Action take to correct Gender Imbalances
- xii. Gender stereotypes: The uncritical beliefs and judgments about a person because of his/her gender but which is often not true.
- xiii. Harassment: Any behaviour that is unwelcome and affects the dignity of those subjected to it. For the purposes of this Policy, the University will use and apply the definition of Harassment as being ‘Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of:
 - a. Violating a person’s dignity; or
 - b. Creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.
- xiv. Sexual Harassment: Includes but not limited to unwelcome sexually determined behaviour (direct or implied) such as physical contact and advances, unwelcome communication or invitation, demand or requests for sexual favours, sexually cultural remarks, showing pornography, creating a hostile work environment and any other sexually determined behaviour or unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature.

1.4 Rationale

Education is a fundamental tool that enables a society to achieve socioeconomic development. It is now a well-established fact that gender equality is central to sustainable development where every member of the society is treated with respect and dignity, affording them equal opportunity to realize their full potential.

The educational sector and all other sectors are recognized as relevant context in which gender injustice can take place if not checked. A participatory and inclusive approach aimed at confronting common challenges is a better way of achieving gender mainstreaming. It has been attested that enhancing gender equality especially in the educational sector will help to ensure rapid achievement of the society’s development.

STU recognizes the need to consider the interest of both genders in all its programmes. This can only be achieved through a framework that outlines strategies and guidelines for gender initiatives within the University. The policy on gender will aim at guiding the institution towards ensuring a safe working and learning environment which is free from all forms of discrimination for staff, non-staff and students.

This policy has been designed based on the following specific rationales.

1.4.1 Blueprint for Gender-Responsiveness

This Gender Policy signals the position of the University on gender issues in the execution of its core mandate. The policy provides guidelines for adjudicating and responding to gender issues as they arise in the institution. The policy signals STU's commitment to taking positive steps in gender planning for the institution's sustenance, the promotion of gender justice, the management and prevention of gender violence, discrimination and injustice. The policy commits the University to making human and financial resources available to support the quest for gender justice.

1.4.2 Human Rights

The attainment of equity and gender equality is regarded as absolutely essential from a human rights perspective. STU takes into account the rights of all its members, irrespective of gender. Accordingly, the STU Gender Policy will confirm and institutionalize the rights, responsibilities and duties of all members of the University community.

1.4.3 Prerequisite for Sustainable Development

It is now a well-established fact that gender equality is central to sustainable development where every member of the society is treated with respect and dignity, affording them equal opportunity to realize their full potential. Education is an empowering force to support sustainable development and therefore, STU, as a leading higher education institution in Ghana, has a crucial role to play in contributing to the broader societal goal of gender equality. This can only be achieved by the University investing in eliminating all the social and structural impediments that stand in the way of women's full participation in higher education.

1.4.4 Standard for Institutional Advancement

Gender equality has become one of the most important areas by which the quality and effectiveness of an academic institution is judged. This Gender Policy provides an institutional framework within which actions on gender can be taken at all levels. It further provides a framework that enables the University and all its stakeholders to undertake initiatives that are mutually beneficial and lead to the promotion of gender justice and equity.

1.4.5 Benchmark for Institutional Advancement

Gender equality has become one of the most important areas by which the quality and effectiveness of an academic institution is judged. A Gender Policy provides an institutional framework within which actions on gender can be taken at all levels. It further provides a framework that enables the University and all its stakeholders to undertake initiatives that are mutually beneficial and lead to the promotion of gender justice and equity. An effective Gender Policy is supported by detailed rules and regulations to guide the institutions towards more effective equity and equality strategies.

1.4.6 Key to Problem Solving

The integration of gender in programme planning and implementation is seen as an integral part to solving many institutional and societal problems. For example, tackling poverty has remained a big challenge in Ghana because of not paying serious attention to the gender dimensions underlying the scourge. Gender mainstreaming in development interventions,

especially in research and innovations ensures that poverty is addressed with a gender perspective for the benefit of males and females in society.

2.0 Priority Areas of Action

This Gender Policy focuses on four priority areas of action: human resource management, leadership and governance, creation of gender mainstreaming unit and combating gender-based violence and harassment.

2.1 Human Resource Management

1. The University shall not deny a person of either gender admission to study any programme of their choice or employment in the University.
2. All students shall enjoy equal rights, opportunities and privileges and have access to information and resources to facilitate their university life.
3. A qualified employee of either gender shall be subject to the same terms and conditions of employment and the same compensation, privileges, benefits, fringe benefits, incentives or allowances as any qualified employee.
4. The University will facilitate access to medical facilities for all staff and students.
5. The University will endeavour to reserve 30% of all positions in employment for either gender, provided they have the requisite qualification.
6. The University will endeavour to enhance gender balance in recruitment, training and development of its staff to various positions in the University.
7. The University will endeavour to ensure that the work environment is gender responsive.

2.2 Students' Enrolment

The University shall attain gender balance in student admissions especially in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) courses by affirmative action.

2.2.1 Strategies

1. The University shall adopt an "Operation Women in Engineering, TVET, Science and Technology Development Plan", to bridge the gender gap by recruitment, enrolment and retention of women in STEM and TVET oriented programmes and professions.
2. Implement affirmative action (20% discount on admission/school fees) for qualified females being admitted into STU's Engineering programmes as from the 2023/2024 academic year to enable more females to access Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics courses.
3. Provide access to brilliant but needy students, especially females.
4. Establish and appoint specialized gender desk officers/advisors in each faculty who will facilitate and ensure that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities-policy development, research, advocacy/dialogue, legislation, resource allocation and planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects at the faculty level. The Desk advisors will work in conjunction with the Gender Mainstreaming Unit.
5. Organize training programmes and discussion fora on gender issues for all members of the University community.
6. Design and implement female mentorship programmes and scholarship schemes for both undergraduate and graduates.
7. Recognize and award successful female students to motivate females in the faculty and enhance role modelling.

8. Develop mechanisms for hiring more female academic staff who can serve as role models for female students.

2.3 Staff Recruitment, Training, Scholarship and Promotion

The University shall put in place gender-responsive staff recruitment, training, scholarship and promotion measures.

2.3.1 Strategies

1. Ensure that the University has gender-responsive staff recruitment, training, scholarship, promotion and recognition guidelines and procedures for both academic and administrative female staff members.
2. Consider career gaps for women in maternity leave and women/men with multiple responsibilities.

2.4 Leadership and Governance

The University shall adopt proactive measures to increase the leadership, guidance and participation of women in decision-making through recruitment, promotion and retention in order to eliminate the existing gender imbalances within the systems, structures and all core activities of the University.

2.4.1 Strategies

1. Design and implement programmes that ensure equal opportunities and affirmative action.
2. Design and implement a gender-responsive cross generational leadership and mentoring programme, particularly for young female staff in the science disciplines.
3. Establish and implement programmes with adequate facilities and resources to support the multiple roles of University staff, including career, studies and care-giving roles.
4. Develop and implement a gender sensitive and responsive human resource policy.
5. Develop a data bank of qualifications, specialties and experiences of women and utilize it as a basis for appointing more women on the University governing bodies such as the University Council, Academic Board and other related bodies.
6. Review the current system of representation to all governing bodies and devise a mechanism to ensure that it alternates between male and female in constituencies where there is an odd number (e.g., one representative) and 50/50 for those with even numbers.

2.5 Creation of University Gender Mainstreaming Unit

The University shall establish a Gender Mainstreaming Unit reporting within QAPU to the Vice-Chancellor so as to enhance its capacity to facilitate and monitor the implementation of the Gender Policy at all levels and units.

2.5.1 Strategies

1. Establish and mainstream gender within the University's policies and programme;
2. Mainstream gender into all areas of the university including its policies and programmes, and provide support for mainstreaming in related institutions.
3. Promote and support men and women's equal participation in decision-making at all levels within the University.
4. Promote the gender equality and the human rights of men and women and assist in the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and men within the University.
5. Establish a programme for student leadership (both male and female) to work in selected primary and secondary schools as role models and mentors.
6. The Gender Mainstreaming Unit will organize meetings every year to assess and monitor the implementation of the policy.

2.6 Prevention and Combating Gender Based Violence and Harassment

The University will be committed to taking all reasonable steps to prevent gender-based violence and harassment and to discipline those who do harass others.

2.6.1 Strategies

1. Staff and students will be sensitized on gender-based violence and harassment.
2. The University will be motivated to conduct research, teaching and training on gender – based violence and all forms of harassment.
3. Campaigns will be funded and efficiently run.
4. Management for staff and students will be better equipped to deal with such challenges.
5. Staff and students will be empowered to resist and report cases of harassment.

3.0 Thematic Areas and Strategies

In line with the National Gender Policy eleven thematic areas have been developed to promote gender equality and equity. For each thematic area some relevant strategies have been formulated to ensure gender is mainstreamed in all activities of the University.

3.1 Thematic Area One: Affirmative Action in Staff Recruitment

The University will be committed to the achievement of gender balance affirmative action with respect to staff recruitment.

3.1.1 Policy objective

To increase the proportion of female senior members, staff recruitment to at least 30% within the next five years

3.1.2 Strategies

- a. The University shall give preference to women applicants in the recruitment process in situations where both sexes perform equally. However, departments where the ratio is already weighed in favour of women, men will be favourably considered.
- b. Faculties, Departments, Sections, Centres and Units shall search for qualified women to fill vacant academic and administrative positions targeting at least 30%.
- c. The University shall ensure that there is a fair representation of both women and men on all committees and boards using the quota system of about 30%.
- d. Women shall be encouraged to take up higher levels of responsibilities.
- e. The University will provide a mentoring scheme for women in areas where there is an identified need.

3.2 Thematic Area Two: Gender Balance in Enrolment of Students.

The Sunyani Technical University in Sunyani is committed to achieving gender balance in enrolment of students.

3.2.1 Policy objective

To increase the enrolment of female students in the University

3.2.2 Strategies

- a) The University will adopt appropriate concessionary measures in designated disciplines where numbers in a particular gender are unacceptably low.
- b) The University shall ensure gender equity in the award of scholarships.

3.3 Thematic Area Three: Gender Disaggregated Data on Staff and Students

The University will maintain gender-disaggregated data on both staff and students for decision-making purposes.

3.3.1 Policy objective

To provide gender-disaggregated data for reporting, monitoring and decision-making purposes

3.3.2 Strategies

a) The University will maintain a gender-disaggregated data of all staff, by Faculties, Departments, Sections, Centres and Units and Committees will update this data annually and publish it.

b) The University will maintain a database of all members of the academic and administrative staff, specifying their qualifications, experiences, areas of expertise and interest.

3.4 Thematic Area Four: Engendering the Curriculum

The University will address gender issues in the content of courses and course materials.

3.4.1 Policy objective

To ensure the engendering of the curriculum by making sure content of courses and materials for teaching and learning are gender responsive.

3.4.2 Strategies

- a. Encourage the review and restructuring of courses to ensure coverage of gender issues.
- b. Promote an environment that is supportive of women in all aspects including teaching and learning processes, classroom management, organization, socio-cultural and physical environment, values and attitudes.
- c. The University will ensure that its annual budget follows the tenets of gender mainstreaming.
- d. Plan for the implementation of gender studies within the University in the next five years.

3.5 Thematic Area Five: Organizational Culture

The University will be committed to building and ensuring a gender responsive organizational culture that promotes gender equality and the empowerment of women.

3.5.1 Policy Objective

The University shall promote and enforce a gender-responsive organisational culture to eliminate patriarchal-based inequities in all University activities.

3.5.2 Strategies

- a. Develop and enforce policy guidelines on the use of gender inclusive language throughout the University.
- b. Review and update all existing University policies, forms and procedures to eliminate sexist language and establish gender equality.
- c. Develop and operationalize a policy prohibiting public display of visual aids and materials that are demeaning to women and men.
- d. Develop and enforce a gender-sensitive code of conduct for University staff and students.
- e. Organize special gender awareness orientation programmes for new members of University governing bodies, staff and students.

3.6 Thematic Area Six: Gender Sensitive Language

The University will support the development of policy documents from a gender perspective and the use of gender sensitive language at all levels of activity.

3.6.1 Policy Objective

To promote the use of gender sensitivity in:

- a) All University documents;
- b) All published materials ascribed to STU;
- c) All information conveyed to students, staff and applicants for positions in the University.

3.6.2 Strategies

The following practices should be observed:

- a) The use of 'man' or 'men' as generic terms to describe both genders should be avoided as much as possible. The use of these terms should be restricted to males. Gender neutral/sensitive terms exist and should be used, for example, 'person', 'people', 'staff', 'personnel';
- b) Plural subjects should be used in case of unspecified gender to avoid awkward use of pronouns. For example, the phrase "Each student should check his or her results" should be expressed "Students should check their results";
- c) Where it is not relevant, a person's gender should not be mentioned. For example, the phrase "The woman referee...." should be expressed "The referee"
- d) Educate the University community on the use of gender sensitive language.
- e) Encourage the review of STU policy documents from a gender perspective.

3.7 Thematic Area Seven: Gender Visibility for Grant, Proposals and Projects

The University will be committed to ensuring that gender issues are included in University grant proposals and projects.

3.7.1 Policy Objective

To ensure that proposals for funding are gender sensitive.

3.7.2 Strategies

- a) Project proposals in all fields shall consider the needs of all sexes, with greater emphasis on women's training and capacity building.
- b) Monitoring and evaluation of projects should identify the impact on women.

3.8 Thematic Area Eight: Access and Participation among Students and Staff

The University will be committed to ensuring that gender issues are considered and included for marginalized and vulnerable groups.

3.8.1 Policy objective

The policy objective is to increase access and participation among students and staff of STU including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.

3.8.2 Strategies

- a) Award special scholarships and bursaries to vulnerable and marginalized students and staffs undertaking undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.
- b) Sensitize the University community to give care and support to persons with special needs including the hearing and visually impaired and the physically challenged.

- c) Provide facilities that are suitable for challenged male and female students and staff.
- d) Carry out needs assessment among vulnerable groups as bases to establish their needs and design appropriate mechanisms to address specific and general concerns.
- e) Initiate monitoring and mentoring programmes including guidance and counselling to ensure that all students and staff are attached to existing programmes in the university.

3.9. Thematic Area Nine: Promotion of Gender Equality Network and Partnership

The University will be committed to the creation and support of gender equality networks and partnerships in order to develop strong gender equality advocacy and activism within and outside the University.

3.9.1 Policy Objective

The University shall promote and support gender equality networks and partnerships in order to develop strong gender equality advocacy and activism within and outside the University.

3.9.2 Strategies

- a) Develop and disseminate guidelines on engendering outreach programmes at the national, regional and international levels.
- b) Develop and implement programmes that promote grassroots linkages and civil society organisations for greater gender activism.
- c) Design and disseminate technologies for outreach programmes that are gender responsive.
- d) Encourage and support the participation of university staff and students in national, regional and international conferences and other forums that enhance knowledge and sharing on gender issues.

3.10. Thematic Area Ten: Gender Responsive Research Environment

The University in its contribution towards the promotion of knowledge will be committed to adopting a gender-responsive research environment that improves our understanding of national development issues and impacts positively on the lives of women and men.

3.10.1 Policy objective

The University shall adopt a gender-responsive research environment that improves our understanding of national development issues and impacts positively on the lives of women and men.

3.10.2. Strategies

- a) Design and carry out a gender-focused research skills training programme for staff members;
- b) Develop guidelines to ensure that all research processes and innovations, irrespective of discipline, integrate gender analysis.
- c) Design and implement an affirmative action programme to encourage participation of female members of staff, with specific budget allocations to support their multiple roles in society.
- d) Develop and regularly update a databank that is relevant to enhancing equal opportunity for both genders and link it to the University's management tools.
- e) Expand dissemination outlets of international standards for gender-focused research and publications.

- f) Design programmes to enhance the ICT skills of both women and men for research.

3.11 Thematic Area Eleven: Protection against Discrimination and Harassment.

The University will be committed to upholding the rights, dignity and respect of all persons and promote zero tolerance of all forms of discrimination, harassment, bullying, hate crimes and gender-based violence.

3.11.1. Policy Objective

To ensure protection against discrimination and strictly prohibit harassment of any type or form

3.11.2. Strategies:

- a) Develop policy guidelines that ensure practical ways of dealing with discrimination and all forms of harassment, bullying and hate crimes.
- b) The University shall provide a safe learning, working and living environment that is free from discrimination, intimidation and prohibits sexual harassment.
- c) The University shall appoint and train a network of harassment advisors who will offer confidential 'signposting services for staff, students and visitors who may be experiencing any form of discrimination, harassment, bullying and hate crime.
- d) The university shall take reasonable steps to ensure the prevention of sexual harassment including circulating applicable policies and other relevant information to all students, staff, cooperate partners and visitors.
- e) The University will have a multidisciplinary redressal committee that will specifically address any complaint on harassment.
- f) Provide clear processes of enquiry, procedures for dealing with complaints and disciplinary action for staff, students and visitors.
- g) Provide support mechanisms for survivors of discrimination, harassment and gender-based violence.

4.0 FRAMEWORK FOR GENDER POLICY

Ghana has formulated policies and ratified major international conventions and treaties that promote gender equality. In this section, the international, regional and national policy environments are reviewed to put the STU policy into perspective.

4.1 Situating Gender Policy within the University

The Gender Policy of the University affirms its commitment to creating a gender friendly space for all. It recognizes the need for parity of all persons and prohibits all forms of discrimination and unfair treatment based on sex. The right to equality is a fundamental human right recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other International Human Rights instruments. This policy is hinged on international and regional gender statutes or conventions to which Ghana is signatory. From the Convention for the Elimination of All forms of Discriminations against Women (CEDAW) in 1967 to the Beijing Platform for Action (BPA) in 1995 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, the need for locally developed and operated gender policies has been emphasized.

4.2 International and Regional Policy Framework

This Gender Policy provides an overview of some of the international and regional statutes and policy frame works that it draws its mandate from:

4.2.1 Convention for the Elimination of All forms of Discriminations against Women (CEDAW)

This deals with human rights of women and commits states to incorporate the principle of equality of men and women in their legal systems. It consolidated gender-related laws scattered in various UN instruments. Specifically, article 10 states that “State Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women”.

CEDAW was the basis for the formulation of the National Policy on Ghanaian Women.

4.2.2 The Beijing Platform for Action (BPA) This showed a renewed commitment to the goal of equality, development and peace for all women in the 1995 World Conference on Women. It identified 12 critical areas that must be addressed to ensure equality. These critical areas are poverty, education and training, health, violence, armed conflict, the economy, decision-making, institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, human rights, mass media, the environment and the girl child.

4.2.3 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The goals have been commonly accepted as a framework for measuring progress. Goal 5 of the SDGs specifically addresses gender equality and women’s empowerment focusing on eliminating gender disparity at all levels of education. The SDGs support the implementation of women’s policy and action plan by promoting gender equality.

4.2.4 Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa

This calls on all State Parties to eliminate any discrimination against women and to ensure the protection of the rights of women as stipulated in international declarations and conventions.

According to the Protocol, state parties shall take measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and guarantee equal opportunity and access in the sphere of education and training.

4.3 National framework

With the announcement of the National Gender Policy in 2015 and the promulgation of the new constitution in 1992, the Ghanaian Government declared its commitment to the equitable socioeconomic development of women. The National Gender Policy of Ghana aims to institutionalize mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment concerns into the national development process in order to improve the social, legal, civic, political and cultural conditions of the people of Ghana; particularly women and men, boys and girls in an appreciable manner and as required by the national and international framework by creating appropriate structures in government offices and institutions so that public policies and interventions become gender-responsive in order to ensure equitable development for all Ghanaians.

4.4 Institutional and Regulatory Frameworks

The implementation of the Gender Policy requires a well-coordinated and guided institutional framework to translate goals, objectives and strategies into action programmes at all levels of the University functions. The implementation of the policy will, therefore, be operationalized through the existing University institutional structures or in new structures.

4.4.1. Enhancing Organizational Capacity to Implement the Policy

The University will aim to maximize its own institutional capacity and marshal political will to achieve the objectives of the Gender Policy by providing adequate support, guidance and training to staff and students. In addition, organizational structures, working practices and management styles that reflect the principles of gender equality and equal opportunities will be promoted throughout the University.

There shall be a Gender Mainstreaming Unit of the University reporting to the Vice-Chancellor so as to enhance its capacity to facilitate and monitor the implementation of the Gender Policy.

4.4.2 University Gender Mainstreaming Unit

For purposes of effective implementation of the Gender Policy, there shall be a Gender Mainstreaming Unit established in the University whose mandate will be to coordinate, supervise, monitor and evaluate implementation of the University's Gender Policy. The unit will also work in collaboration with the University's Planning Unit.

4.4.3 University Gender Mainstreaming Committee (GMC)

The mandate of the Gender Mainstreaming Committee shall be to oversee the establishment and operationalization of the Unit and also to report to the Vice-Chancellor on policy matters. The proposal therefore is to have a Committee on Gender Mainstreaming, which shall provide the overall supervision of the Gender Policy. The Committee may establish different technical working groups or sub-committees that will oversee the implementation of the different aspects of Gender Mainstreaming Policy.

4.4.4 Technical Working Groups/Sub-Committees

The Gender Mainstreaming Committee shall establish Technical Working Groups (TWGs) or Sub-committees composed of members drawn from relevant university units to offer expertise and extra support to the Gender Mainstreaming Unit. Examples are as follows:

- a) Anti-Sexual Harassment Sub-committee
- b) Female Scholarship Initiative (FSI) Sub-committee
- c) Technical Working Group on Engendering the University Curricular
- d) Women and Leadership Sub-committee
- e) Resource Mobilization Sub-committee
- f) Gender Mainstreaming Unit (GMU) Student Peer Trainers Sub-Committee

5.0 Implementation of Gender Policy

To ensure that the policy is implemented to make a meaningful impact, rules and regulation shall be enacted for the implementation of the Gender Policy. The University community, all individuals in the University, and all those associated with the University should adhere to the regulations in their day-to-day activities and in all communications with, or on behalf of the institution.

5.1 Requirements

The Gender Mainstreaming Committee shall oversee the implementation of the policy and the University shall demonstrate its commitment to the policy by the establishment of the Committee.

5.2 The University Council

The University Council, as the supreme governing body will provide mechanisms through which the University's strategic objectives for equality and diversity can be determined. It shall be responsible for ensuring that the institution fulfils its legal and fiscal responsibilities for promoting gender mainstreaming by eliminating gender-based discrimination. In order to fulfil this responsibility, the council shall receive annual progress report on the monitoring and implementation of the policy to enable its members to ensure that the Policy is well implemented.

5.3 The Vice-Chancellor

The Vice-Chancellor will provide leadership on equality and diversity and oversee the development of equality policy frameworks and their application in the University, working as appropriate with relevant colleagues and bodies, including those committees that have a specific remit for equality issues. The Vice-Chancellor shall:

- a) On approval by the Council, establish a Gender Mainstreaming Unit that will be responsible for implementing the policy in the University.
- b) Ensure the implementation of Gender Policy across offices, faculties, departments, and centres in the University through the Gender Mainstreaming Unit.
- c) Provide the physical space and other such facilities as the Gender Mainstreaming Unit may require for its effective operations.

5.4 Deans, Directors and Departmental/Unit/Sectional Heads

These stakeholders shall be responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the University's Gender Policy and for supporting the delivery of the University's strategic objectives for equality and diversity within their jurisdiction. This involves putting the policy and its strategies and procedures into practice, making sure all members of their respective school/faculties/departments/sections are aware of their responsibilities and taking action against members who breach the policy.

5.5 Staff and Students

All staff and students have a role to play in promoting the gender policy, and in creating and maintaining an environment where there is zero tolerance for harassment and discrimination by observing this policy. All academic staff should promote inclusive research and learning environment.

5.6 Partners, Service providers and Visitors

All partners, associates, contractors, professional, statutory and accredited bodies, and those who provide services to the University are responsible for complying with the Gender Policy.

5.7 Security Section

The Security Section of the University will promote gender policy by monitoring and supervising adherence to the rules and regulations developed in this policy. The security service will also safeguard the operationalization of the policy.

5.8 Counselling Unit

The Counselling Unit will be equipped to implement this policy by exercising consultative functions and providing support and advice to victims. The Unit will help create a confidential environment that will foster the development of the policy.

5.9 The Gender Mainstreaming Unit

The Unit will work with university bodies, academic divisions and departments to ensure that the University's pursuit of excellence goes hand in hand with freedom from discrimination and equality of opportunity. In particular it shall:

- i. Consider existing and emerging equality legislation with a view to identifying relevant issues to be translated into university policies;
- ii. Provide information and guidance to all university bodies to enable them to discharge their responsibilities;
- iii. Support senior members of the University in showing leadership on equality and diversity issues;
- iv. Facilitate central consultation with specific groups of staff and students;
- v. Provide monitoring of key strategic issues and draft publications for approval by the relevant bodies as appropriate;
- vi. Provide advice on the employment of disabled staff;
- vii. Formulate guidelines on gender equality and mainstreaming;
- viii. Review the Policy periodically;
- ix. Carry out a survey on gender representation at various departments;
- x. Sensitize and create awareness on gender issues;
- xi. Plan and budget for gender mainstreaming programmes;
- xii. Monitor and evaluate gender programmes and activities;
- xiii. Develop a manual to operationalize the Policy; and
- xiv. Ensure that the Policy on Sexual Harassment is developed and put in place.

6.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation of the Gender Policy will be conducted by the STU Gender Mainstreaming Unit to ensure efficient and effective implementation of the policy. Performance monitoring and evaluation tools will be developed to include gender responsive indicators.

The Unit will ensure that data relating to gender in the University is updated annually. It will monitor both staff and students and evaluate their level of satisfaction with the services provided. This Policy and annual progress reports will be published on the University website. In addition to formal publicity via committee discussions, outcomes and continuing work will be disseminated through publications, Internet and promotional materials

6.1 Breach of the Policy

Any breach of the Policy shall be handled in accordance with the University rules and regulations. The University disciplinary proceedings may be instituted against staff and students who potentially violate both the criminal laws of Ghana and the University statutes.

6.1.1 Staff

Members of staff who wilfully contravene the rules in this policy will be subject to appropriate sanction in line with the University's Statute and Disciplinary procedures

6.1.2 Students

Students will be given information and advice in the Student Guide and Code of Conduct about University rules and their responsibilities. Any student who contravenes this policy, through inappropriate behaviour or other intentional acts, will be subject to the appropriate student disciplinary processes of the University, up to and including expulsion.

6.1.3 Others

Any other person who has a responsibility for ensuring compliance with the policy, and contravenes any of the rules will be subjected to appropriate action by the relevant authority.

6.2 Preventive Measures

The University will be committed to preventing issues of gender inequality by making education gender sensitive, creating awareness on the rights of both men and women, and organizing workshops and seminars to equip all on gender equality.

6.3 Policy Overview

This policy will be reviewed every three (3) years to factor in emerging issues and trends on gender matters.