Blueprint For An Effective Tutorial System In Covenant University

Covenant University Tutorial Committee

(2014/2015 Academic Session)

Presenter: Henry Okodua, PhD

Date: 3rd October, 2014

Venue: African Leadership Development Centre

Outline

- Introduction
- Meaning of a Tutorial
- Purpose of a Tutorial
- Content of Tutorials
- Structure of Tutorials at CU
- Tutorial Coordination
- Course Tutor
- Tutorial Leaders
- Tutorial Groupings, Venues and Timetable
- Production of Tutorial Book
- Standard Answer Template for the Tutorial Book
- Monthly Tutorial-Week
- Assessment of Student's Performance in Tutorial Exercises

Introduction

- This blueprint for an effective tutorial system in the University is a proposed working document to drive the tutorial system.

- It was produced by the University Tutorial Committee and is intended for use during the 2014/2015 academic session on a test-run basis.

- The main thrust of the blueprint is how to make learning in Covenant University more effective and help all students to think for themselves independently.

- There are plans to produce a comprehensive tutorial guide by the end of the academic session.

- The tutorial guide will address all shortcomings in the blueprint and shall hopefully serve as a tutorial policy for the University.

Meaning of a Tutorial

- Tutorial can be defined as an intensive course given by a tutor for one or several students, usually on a special topic.

- The system is usually participatory and interactive when the individuals involved are in smaller groups e.g. 10 persons at most.

- Tutorials have the potential to enhance the transfer of knowledge and the learning process.

- A significant proportion of the input in a tutorial always comes from the student.

- Part of this input by the student is a considered, thoughtful reaction to the reading and thinking that has been set for the tutorial.

Purpose of a Tutorial

- The primary purpose of the tutorial is to teach students to think for themselves.

- A major purpose of the tutorial is also "To monitor students' working habits and learning in between the tutorials

- A good tutorial must serve the purpose of lowering or eliminating all emotional barriers to learning

- Examples include the student's fear of making mistakes, and the student's feeling of intimidation by the tutor's superior expertise

- Tutorials are typically seen as a chance to debate and develop arguments beyond the point which the student has reached independently.

- The tutorial platform must therefore emphasise participatory and exploratory learning rather than just problem solving

Content of Tutorials

- Tutorials must never include dissemination of new lecture or instructional materials.

- It should strictly be dedicated to the review and discussion of already disseminated materials

- This is purely to help the student gain deeper understanding of the core issues.

- It is recommended that the course tutor constantly look for, and use, student feedback to improve content of tutorials.

Structure of Tutorials at CU

- Tutorials are often organised differently across the University to reflect the uniqueness of each discipline, the stage of the student's course and tutors' own styles

- However, elements of a common approach for the entire University are still required.

- A number of positions are therefore considered as vital for the effectiveness of the tutorial endeavour.

- A number of practices are also considered essential for the success of the tutorial system in Covenant University.

Tutorial Coordination

- Tutorials shall be coordinated at the School level.

- To this end, there shall be a Tutorial Coordinator for each School appointed from within the University Tutorial Committee.

- Tutorial Representative shall be appointed by the Head of every academic Department in the University.

- The Tutorial Representative shall function as the departmental tutorial liaison officer.

- Appointment of the Tutorial Representative shall be the prerogative of the Head of Department.

- However, the Examination Officer in each Department is recommended for this position.

Appointment of Course Tutor

- Course Tutors shall be appointed by every Head of academic Departments to coordinate tutorials for each course in the University.

- The most junior Assistant Lecturer (AL) teaching the course is suggested for this role.

- Where no AL is involved in the teaching of a course, the most junior ranked lecturer teaching the course shall be appointed as the course tutor.

- The higher ranked lecturer teaching the course shall provide the questions and answers for tutorial purposes

Tutorial Leaders

- Two Tutorial Leaders (male and female) shall be appointed by the Course Tutor for each course offered in the Department.

- The Tutorial Leaders shall be outstanding students in the course and must be so identified by the Course Tutor.

- The Tutorial Leaders are also expected to be exceptionally brilliant students with strong passion for tutorials.

- Students are free to nominate themselves for these positions

Tutorial Groupings, Venues and Timetable

- Tutorial Groupings comprising not more than 20 students shall be formed by each Course Tutor at the beginning of the semester.

- A roster of the tutorial groups and relevant tutorial timetable shall also be made available to students at the beginning of the semester.

- All tutorial group discussions shall be on the basis of the tutorial groupings.

- Tutorial group discussions are expected to take place daily in the common rooms situated in the halls of residence as well as in lecture rooms within the academic buildings.

- Tutorial group discussions shall be conducted daily at such time considered most convenient by the concerned students.
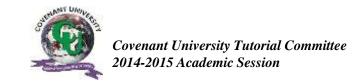
Production of Tutorial Books

- Tutorial Book shall be produced for each level in every course programme within the University.

- The Tutorial Book shall comprise standard tutorial questions and model answers for all undergraduate courses offered in the academic Departments.

- The Tutorial Book shall be in electronic form and shall be published by the Covenant University Press with the names of all contributors duly acknowledged.

- The Tutorial Book shall be made available to students on the Covenant University intranet free of charge

Standard Answer Template for the Tutorial Book

- All model answers for the tutorial book shall adhere to the following format:

- A list of all theoretical and practical issues or topic area that the student's understanding is intended for testing by the question

- A list of all key points that the examiner expects the student to emphasise in answering the question

- The model answer

Monthly Tutorial-Week

- There shall be a week (known as the Tutorial-Week) in each calendar month of the semester dedicated to tutorials.

- This shall be without prejudice to the tutorial questions given to the students at the conclusion of lectures every week.

Assessment of Student's Performance in Tutorial Exercises

- Student's performance in tutorials shall constitute a part of the continuous assessment for each semester.
- The reward for participation in the tutorial-week shall be graded as follows:
- Attendance: **2 marks.**
- Questions satisfactorily discussed/answered: **2 marks.** Relevant Questions initiated/asked: **1 mark.**
- Maximum total marks for each student per tutorial-week shall be **5 marks**.
- This will amount to a **maximum of 15 marks** for the semester awardable to any student in all three tutorial-weeks.
- This reward system will hopefully encourage full and active participation of students in tutorials.

Appreciation

- THANK YOU FOR LISTENING