

# UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN COBES POLICY

## INTRODUCTION

Community Based Experience and Services (COBES) is a programme designed to introduce to life in the rural communities with a view to sensitizing them to the needs of and opportunities in the communities. (COBES programme started at the University of Ilorin in the college of Health Sciences at its inception as a faculty in 1977. COBES of the College of Health Sciences is recognized by the World Health Organization (WHO) and a Network of Community-Oriented Institutions for the Health Sciences with the Headquarters based in Maastrich, Netherlands as a full member with Silver Category. The programme is also supported by the WHO.

Given developments around the world in which Universities are reaching out to rural communities with a view to impacting them positively and learning from them, the Senate of the University of Ilorin approved the establishment of COBES programme for all faculties of the University (otherwise known as Cobesization) on June 20, 2008. COBES programme was approved as a unit of Technical and Entrepreneurship Centre (TEC). The unit is charged with the responsibility of guiding all faculties in the University to mount COBES programme in rural communities. Other units under TEC are Entrepreneurship unit and Work-Study unit. Each unit has a coordinator and the whole centre is headed by a Director who is a professor in the University.

### Vision, Mission and Organogram for TEC (See attached)

The vision and mission of COBES are subsumed in the Vision and Mission of TEC as follows:-

**Vision:** To be an acclaimed centre for imbuing our graduates with the spirit of enterprise, community service and self-worth, and equipping them with entrepreneurial skills.

**Mission:** To be a centre for the creation of new businesses and community based projects through proven innovations as means of preparing our graduates for gainful self-employment and productive community life.

**Goals:** The goals of COBES are to:

- i. Develop in students the capacity to identify developmental needs of rural communities;
- ii. Afford students opportunity to render community service; and
- iii. Promote town and gown relationships.

### General Objectives of the University-wide COBES Programme

1. To sensitize the students to the developmental needs of the rural communities and enable them to identify with such needs.
2. To identify feasible community based projects in collaborations with faculties,

academic departments and host rural communities.

3. To learn to appreciate the socio-economic and cultural peculiarities of rural communities and be able to adapt to work and live in such community.
4. To help students to develop team spirit approach in project execution and to appreciate communal living.
5. To encourage students to learn and respect the beliefs and practices of the rural Communities. Also to discourage adoption of harmful traditional practices while dispelling unfounded fears of modern practices.

#### Specific Objectives for the COBES programme

1. To acquire skills in entering a new community with a view to positively impacting and learning from the people.
2. To make a rough estimate of the population density of the community and determine its socio-demographic characteristics.
3. To assess the socio-cultural and economic life of the community.
4. To determine access of the community to educational, health, information and communication facilities.
5. To be acquainted with the pressing needs of the community.
6. To identify the culture of the people, their beliefs and modes of social and religious interactions.
7. To identify beneficial practices and the beliefs that is inimical to the well-being of the community.
8. To carry out optional projects that are of benefit to the community.

#### Basic Requirements for implementation of COBES programme

The COBES programme of each faculty relies heavily on the academic disciplines of the faculty. In general however, the following preliminary steps must be taken before students are moved to communities where they will live for a specified period of time.

- (1) Identification of communities with basic facilities for accommodation and access to potable water.
- (2) Identification of traditional and opinion leaders in the community.
- (3) Evidence of willingness of the communities to receive the students as

demonstrated by the community head.

- (4) Grouping of students into manageable sizes and identifying leaders within the groups.
- (5) Allocating staff supervisors to students in each community, who may or may not be resident with students in the community, but make regular contact.
- (6) Provision of basic cooking utensils by the University.
- (7) Provision of First Aid materials by the University.
- (8) Provision of transportation to and from the communities by the University.
- (9) Provision of transportation to the communities for the staff supervisors or mileage claims in lieu of official transportation.
- (10) Laying the foundation for sustainable mutual relationship before COBES programme and the communities through deliberate establishment of good rapport.
- (11) Preparing students for the COBES programme by introducing them to basic rural sociology including appropriate statistical and demographic tools.
- (12) Introducing students to the minimum Learning objectives as part of preparation for the programme.
- (13) The University-wide faculty based COBES programme shall be a one-time event for all students (except medical students) and shall be at the penultimate year.

### **Programme Status and Mode of Operation**

- (1) All students shall be introduced to basic rural sociology before embarking on the COBES programme (e.g. course AXR 201, introduction to general sociology, with the following synopsis: concepts, methods and principles of sociology, culture and personality; social relations and social organizations; social stratification; social process and social institutions). This course shall be a prerequisite to the COBES exercise.
- (2) COBES shall be compulsory for all students for graduation. It shall be without credit units and students shall be graded as passed or failed based on the approved COBES assessment schemes. Cognizance is taken of the COBES programme of the College of Health Sciences which involves Postings at 200, 300,500 and 600 levels. This programme shall continue to run independently of the new university-wide COBES

Programme which involves one level only.

- (3) All faculties shall be involved in organizing COBES for their students.
- (4) There shall be a Faculty COBES committee that shall:
  - (a) identify communities, community leaders, contact persons and the developmental needs of the community;
  - (b) group students, identify student group leaders and articulate the logistics needs for the COBES exercise; and
  - (c) organize COBES orientation for the students before going to the communities.
- (5) Students shall live and be involved in community life by participating in on-going community activities, for at least two weeks, and by initiating new relevant ones based on the felt needs of the community.
- (6) Students of each faculty shall give a written and an oral report of her COBES experience to the University through Technical and Entrepreneurship Centre (TEC).

#### Funding of the programme

The programme shall be funded through student charges, University supplementation and community support through provision of accommodation.

#### Student Assessment

Field assessment (30)

Attendance

Participation

Team spirit

COBES Report presentation (50)

Appearance

Team approach

Use of audiovisual resources

Meeting specific programme objectives

Clarity of presentation

Conclusion drawn

Optional activities

Problems encountered and solutions to them

Handling of questions

Quality of written report

Written examination (20)

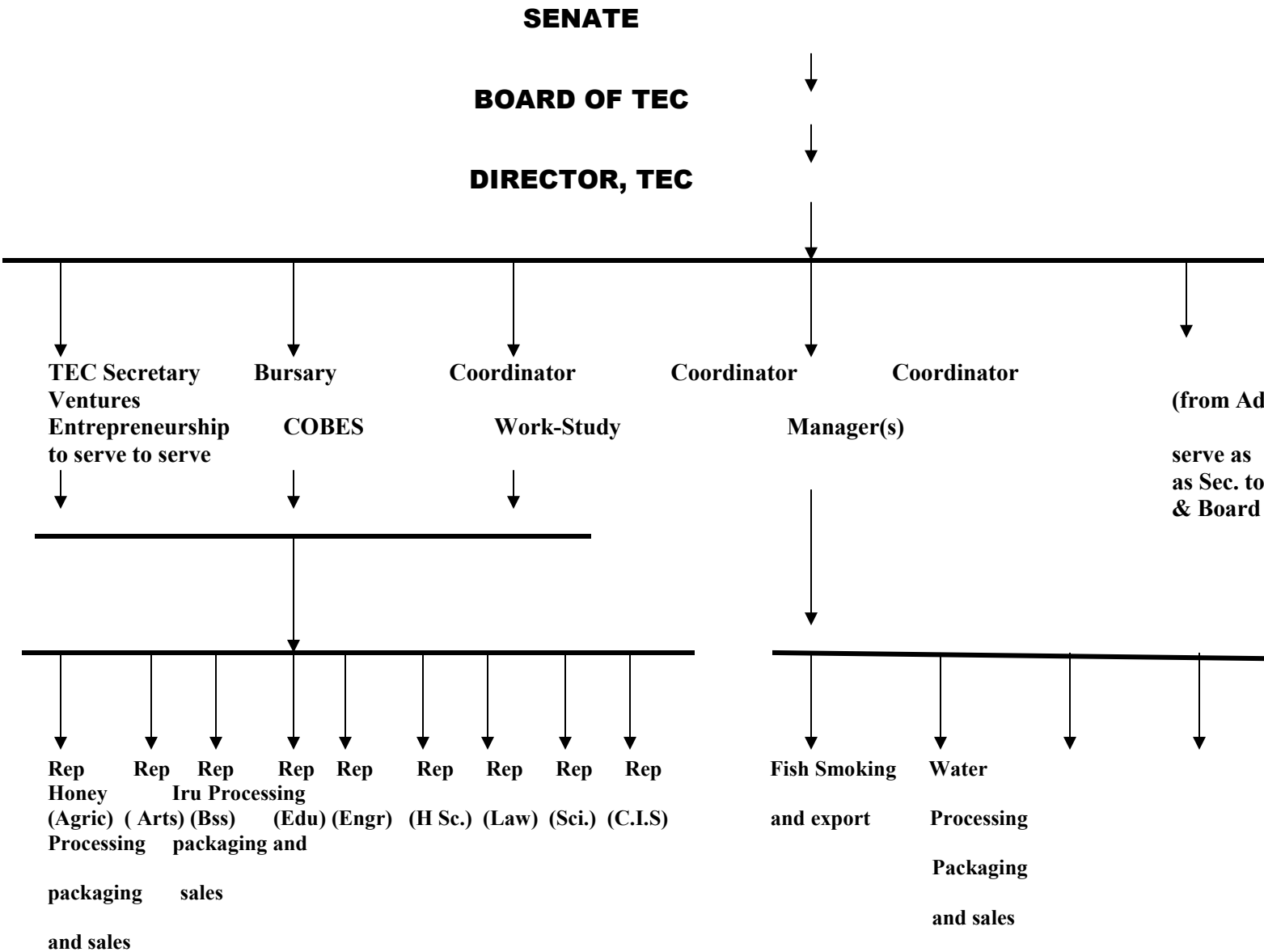
### Programme evaluation

Specific instrument shall be designed for carrying out programme evaluation at three levels by the students, teachers and the community.

### COBES Report presentation and information dissemination

At the end of COBES posting, which is once a year for each faculty (except College of Health Sciences), there will be a written and an oral report presentation with appropriate audiovisual aids. This will be a University event featuring each faculty and invitees from the rural communities involved. Functionaries of both the state and local governments will also be invited and there will be adequate print and electronic media coverage.

## **ORGANOGRAM FOR TEC**



\* It will be ideal to have a manger per venture, someone with the relevant expertise, but for a start, we can make do with one who may have to be a fresh appointee from outside the University. He should not be a staff of the University, but of the Ventures and his retention tied to the performance of the ventures.