

Stellenbosch University
POLICY ON TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS

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A. INTRODUCTION

Points of departure

As stated in the Strategic Framework (April 2000) and emphasised in the Learning and Teaching Policy (2006), Stellenbosch University is committed to being a “university characterized by quality teaching, by the constant renewal of teaching and learning programmes, and by the creation of effective opportunities for learning”. High quality teaching and learning resources are an integral component of a good academic programme.

The information and knowledge revolution continues to provide an increasingly rich array of resources which lecturers can utilise as teaching and learning materials in their academic programmes and which students can access to enhance their learning. The ease with which materials not subjected to peer review can be made available requires critical appraisal of such materials by users, however. Whilst this can be taken as a given with lecturers, students are often not yet equipped with the skills to meaningfully appraise the materials they access. Creating and utilising teaching and learning materials for and in new teaching and learning technologies such as WebCT also presents novel challenges to those lecturers inexperienced in their use.

The Higher Education Quality Committee Criteria for Programme Accreditation (HEQC, 2004) state the following with respect to teaching and learning materials:

3.1.1. Criterion 1. (iii) ... learning materials ... cater for the learning needs of its target student intake.

3.1.1. Criterion 1. (vii) There is a policy and/or procedures for developing and evaluating learning materials and ensuring their alignment with the programme goals and underpinning philosophy. Where necessary, members of the academic staff are trained to develop learning materials...

3.1.4 Criterion 5. (ii) ... A teaching and learning strategy is in place which ... Has mechanisms to ensure that teaching and learning methods are appropriate for the design and use of learning materials and instructional and learning technology.

3.2.1. ...It is important that teaching and learning interactions are effective and based on sound insights into the processes of teaching and learning. Teaching and learning methods and learning materials should be appropriate in order to facilitate achievement of the purposes and outcomes of the programme. ...

3.2.1.3. Criterion 12. Effective teaching and learning methods and suitable learning materials and learning opportunities facilitate the achievement of the purposes and outcomes of the programme.

In order to meet the criterion, the following is required at minimum:

... (ii) There is an appropriate balance between, and mix of, different teaching and learning methods. Teaching and learning methods are appropriate to the design and use of the learning materials and instructional and learning technology.

It is accepted that most lecturers' practice will already be aligned with the principles espoused in this policy and as such, the policy will, in most cases, serve to affirm existing good practice. It is nonetheless envisioned that this policy will provide some guidelines for good practice to lecturers embarking on their academic careers.

The principles in this policy apply to undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and to materials used in both face-to-face and indirect facilitation of learning e.g., e-Learning, with students. They further apply to the full spectrum of resources that may be utilised during learning opportunities to promote student learning, from printed materials and visual aids prepared by lecturers for students to textbooks, all manner of materials available on the internet as well as laboratory or sports equipment and even patients. It is the quality of teaching and learning materials and how teaching and learning materials are utilised rather than which teaching and learning materials are utilised that is at issue.

Aims

This policy aims to:

1. champion the use of teaching and learning materials in such a way that quality learning, as envisioned in the Learning and Teaching Policy (2006), is promoted at Stellenbosch University;
2. ensure that adequate and appropriate measures exist to support lecturers in the achievement of the ideals embodied in this policy;
3. ensure that the University meets national regulatory requirements, including those of the Higher Education Quality Committee.

Relationship to existing policy

This policy incorporates the Policy for Module Outlines and Study Guides (February 2002) (Addendum 1) and the *Prosedurele raamwerk vir gehalteversekering van leermateriale* (KLO 23/9/2005).

It should be read in the context of the following documents and policies:

- 1.1 Vision 2012
- 1.2 *Leer- en onderrigbeleid* (2006)
- 1.3 *Riglyne t.o.v. e-Leer (in Strategie vir Leer en Onderrig 2002 – 2004)*
(<http://academic.sun.ac.za/abgv/Dokumente/USbeleid/StratLeer.pdf>)
- 1.4 *Interim-benadering m.b.t. die hantering van plagiaat* (Senaat 14/2/2006)
- 1.5 “*Outeursreg op kampus: Riglyne vir Dosente en Studente*” (printed copies available through the JS Gericke Library) and information on copyright available on the Office for Intellectual Property website
(<http://admin.sun.ac.za/kie/copy-e1.htm>)
- 1.6 the University’s “Policy in respect of exploitation of intellectual property”
(http://admin.sun.ac.za/innovus/IE_policy.html)
- 1.7 Policy on Students with Special Learning Needs (Disabilities) (2006)
- 1.8 Taalbeleid en –plan

B. PRINCIPLES GUIDING THE DEVELOPMENT, SELECTION AND USE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS

LEARNING-CENTRED APPROACH TOWARDS LEARNING AND TEACHING

1. Teaching and learning materials should be developed and/or selected and used in keeping with the learning-centred approach espoused by the University (*see Learning and Teaching Policy, 2006*):
 - 1.1. in such a way that quality learning i.e., learning characterised by the development of complex and higher-order skills, deep conceptual understanding, and metacognitive skills such as the ability to regulate one's own learning, is promoted;
 - 1.2. taking cognisance of the fact that learning is active, constructive, cumulative, contextual and goal-directed.

STUDENT NEEDS

2. Teaching and learning materials should be developed and/or selected and used with due reference to:
 - 2.1. the level of academic development of the students, including the ability of students to appraise the quality of materials;
 - 2.2. special needs students may have (*see Policy on Students with Special Learning Needs [Disabilities], 2006*).

LEARNING OUTCOMES

3. Teaching and learning materials should be developed and/or selected and used so as to play an integral role in the development of students as envisaged in the "Profile of the SU Graduate" (*see Learning and Teaching Policy, 2006*).
4. Teaching and learning materials should be developed and/or selected and used with a view to expanding students' knowledge and challenging their abilities and with due reference to the outcomes of the module and of the programme.
5. Materials prepared by lecturers for students should be made available in accordance with the Language Policy (with due deference to Faculty policy that may require more in this regard) and bearing in mind that the "SU Graduate" should be equipped to function effectively in a multilingual context (see paragraph 3).

GOOD ACADEMIC PRACTICE

6. Teaching and learning materials should be developed and/or selected and used with due reference to how contemporary and accurate the material is (where relevant).
7. The quality of materials prepared by lecturers for students should always reflect accepted academic norms e.g., the style in which and care with which material is crafted. Electronic teaching and learning materials e.g., PowerPoint slides,

material for WebCT, web sites etc, should reflect accepted good practice for the preparation of effective materials in these media.

8. It is taken as a given that the use of materials prepared by others will always be acknowledged and meet accepted norms of academic practice, with due deference to existing University policy in this regard (see “*Outeursreg op kampus: Riglyne vir Dosente en Studente*” [printed copies available through the JS Gericke Library] and information on copyright available on the Office for Intellectual Property website [<http://admin.sun.ac.za/kip/copy-e1.htm>] and *Interim-benadering m.b.t. die hantering van plagiaat* [Senaat 14/2/2006]).

MODULE FRAMEWORKS

9. Students must be provided with a module framework or study guide (Addendum 1) at the start of a module.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

10. Materials prepared by lecturers for students are subject to the provisions of the University’s “Policy in respect of exploitation of intellectual property” (http://admin.sun.ac.za/innovus/IE_policy.html).

LOGISTICAL MATTERS

11. Teaching and learning materials should be developed and/or selected and used with due reference to how students are expected to access the materials, particularly electronic teaching and learning materials.
12. As an integral part of the planning of a module, the development and/or selection of teaching and learning materials for any given module is the responsibility of the module team and/or department(s) presenting the module.
13. The costs of developing learning material is carried by the faculty(ies) presenting the module and is budgeted for as part of routine annual budget cycles.

REASONABLE EXPECTATIONS

14. Lecturers should take the relevance of material and cost implications for students into consideration when prescribing material to be bought.
15. There is a limit to what teaching and learning materials students can reasonably expect lecturers to provide; adequate resourcing will budgeted for by the university to ensure that generally available physical (e.g., central library, computer user areas etc.) and electronic resources (e.g., electronic access to journals and other resources) meet the needs of undergraduate and postgraduate students.

C. PRINCIPLES GUIDING THE EVALUATION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS

1. Teaching and learning materials should be reviewed as part of the routine revision of modules from year to year.
2. Teaching and learning materials should be evaluated as part of various existing internal quality management processes, as indicated in pertinent quality management policy:
 - a. during the approval process for new modules;
 - b. during routine evaluation of existing modules and/or programmes;
 - c. as part of the evaluation of departments.
3. Teaching, and by implication the nature, extent and use of teaching and learning materials, is an integral component of the annual performance appraisal of lecturers.

D. IMPLEMENTATION

The Vice Rector (Teaching) will ensure that lecturers are apprised of the existence and implications of this policy and ensure support for lecturers, where necessary, to achieve the ideals embodied in this policy. Where necessary, resourcing for this process will be budgeted for as part of routine annual budget cycles.

Responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies in the first instance with the individual lecturer. Implementation of this policy will be scrutinised as part of existing internal quality management processes, usually by departments during quinquennial departmental evaluations. Teaching and learning materials will routinely be reviewed by departmental chairs as part of annual performance appraisal, particularly for the purposes of permanent appointment and promotion and by programme committees during programme evaluations, as appropriate.

The Vice-Rector (Teaching) will request a report on the development, use and evaluation of teaching and learning materials on an *ad hoc* basis, on the recommendation of appropriate bodies e.g., the Committee for and Learning and Teaching or the Division for Academic Planning and Quality Assurance.

04 May 2007

**PRINCIPLES GUIDING THE DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF MODULE
OUTLINES AND STUDY GUIDES**

(Based on extant policy - February 2002)

1. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the terms “module outline ” and “study guide” are to be understood as follows:

1.1. Module outlines

A module outline is a document that contains the prescribed minimum information about the module’s goal, rationale, outcomes and administrative arrangements. In short, it specifies the **contract** entered into by the lecturer(s) and students.

1.2. Study guides

A study guide is an aid designed to support and guide students in their learning. It indicates what is to be learned, how this can be learned and how students can ascertain whether they have mastered the learning material. The emphasis, therefore, is on **guiding** the students' study activities.

2. Module outlines

2.1. All lecturers are required to provide students with a module outline at the commencement of each module.

2.2. Lecturers may either provide these module outlines as separate documents or provide complete study guides incorporating all the elements of the module outline.

2.3. The module outlines must contain at least the following information:

2.3.1. Name and code of module;

2.3.2. Lecturer(s) and their contact details;

2.3.3. Goal,¹ rationale² and outcomes³ of the module⁴.

2.3.4. Study resources (e.g. textbooks, articles, Internet materials, handouts, etc.);

2.3.5. Learning opportunities created by the lecturer (e.g. lectures, group work, excursions, guidelines for self-study, etc.);

2.3.6. Specifics of timetable, contact opportunities, target dates, etc.;

2.3.7. Assessment: (a) modes of assessment, (b) place and time of assessment opportunities, (c) information on the turnover time

¹ That is to say, what I as lecturer propose to achieve.

² That is to say, the contribution which this module makes to the achievement of the programme’s goal and outcomes.

³ That is to say, the knowledge, skills and attitudes that the student who has successfully completed the module, will possess.

⁴ The goal, outcomes and rationale for modules must obviously fit in with / tie up with / contribute to the goal, rationale and outcomes of the programme as a whole. The formulation of the module’s goal, rationale and outcomes must therefore be determined in consultation with the programme coordinator. The matter of a complete determination and definition of the role and functions of programme coordinators is before the Academic Planning Committee at present; its recommendations will go to Senate shortly.

and format of feedback to students subsequent to assessment opportunities, (d) calculation of class marks and final marks and (e) admission to tests / examinations.

2.3.8. Any other special requirements (e.g. arrangements concerning aegrotat tests, participation in learning opportunities, etc.).

3. Study guides

3.1. In view of the nature and requirements of student-centred learning and teaching, it is desirable that the module outlines should be expanded into study guides that structure the learning opportunities and that stimulate, motivate and direct students' learning activities.

3.2. Components of a good study guide

Different lecturers, different study resources, different student groups, different disciplines and different learning outcomes – all of these components will determine the format of a study guide. There is simply no “cut and dried” recipe. Yet, several components can be identified without which no study guide is likely to be a good one. The following list may be useful in pinpointing these components.

3.2.1. GENERAL

- Word of welcome
- Instructional approach
- Goal of the module
- Rationale of the module
- Outcomes of the module

3.2.2. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

a) Module

- Name of module
- Module code
- Prerequisites

b) Lecturer

- Title and name of lecturer(s)
- Office number(s)
- Telephone number(s)
- E-mail address(es)
- Consultation hours
- Departmental telephone number
- Physical address of Department
- Names of teaching assistants
- Telephone numbers of assistants
- Hours of consultation of assistants

3.2.3. REQUIRED STUDY RESOURCES

- Compulsory resources
- Optional resources

- Where available

3.2.4. LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- Overview of module
- Programme / Timetable of contact opportunities / learning opportunities
- Guidelines for self-study, group work, practicals, etc. and preparation for contact opportunities
- Self-assessment and feedback
- Vocabulary / Glossary
- Study hints
- The purpose of learning opportunities

3.2.5. ASSESSMENT

- Types of assessment
- Place and time of assessment
- Assignments
- Guidelines and criteria for assignments
- Deadlines
- Composition of marks

3.2.6. OTHER SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

- Aegrotat tests
- Participation in learning opportunities