



University of Dar es Salaam

UDSM
Counseling Policy (CP)

I. INTRODUCTION

It is fair to observe that counseling practices at the University of Dar es Salaam (**UDSM**), would have been undertaken informally since the University was established. The initiative to articulate the Counseling Policy (**CP**), at UDSM in 2015, which is 54 years after it was established in October 1961, suggests that it is now recognized that there is need to formalize the offer of what in the past must have been informal counseling services. The need to formalize the offer of counseling services was motivated by the fact that, UDSM was now a more complex institution with tremendous increase in enrolment of students, from 14 in 1961 to 21,967 as of 2015, and recruitment of staff from 6 to 7 in 1961 to 2,294 academic and administrative staff in 2015.

The UDSM Counseling Policy is in alignment with one of the three pillars on which the UDSM Vision 2061 itself is built, namely, “***Inspired and Motivated Staff and Students***”. As envisaged in the UDSM Vision 2061, the University would seek to work with its stakeholders in mobilizing resources to ensure that formal counseling services are made available to UDSM staff and students. This is the better way to ensure that students and staff are inspired and motivated in performing their roles including helping the University to realize its Vision and Mission

II. POLICY ORIGINS AND INITIATIVES

This UDSM Counseling Policy (CP) initiative is consistent with the perspective of the staff and students who are likely to view counseling services as those services that will enable them to cope well with their working environment. Coping well with their working environment would include being able to deal with their health related challenges; strengthening collegial relationships, cementing institutional harmony and peace, and helping them to deal with stressful situations. Indeed, it is a generalized perspective that University Staff and Students alike are vulnerable human beings craving for psychological health as well as physical and mental health so as to realize their full potential.

The policy builds on the UDSM Corporate Strategic Plan (2014- 2023). In particular, it is in alignment with the strategic goal of ***Inspiring and Motivating Staff and Students***. With respect to counseling, the UDSM Corporate Strategic Plan specifically observes by way of setting goals, that:

- The Counseling Services offered will be improved in terms of their quantity and quality;
- Students and staff will be encouraged and inspired to appreciate the challenging social, –economic and health demands of academic life;

- Ways of identifying those who need decentralized and enhanced counseling services will be strengthened.

The policy further builds on the Tanzania Education and Training Policy (2014), which suggests that:

- The objective of the policy is to have counseling and guidance services relating to education and training that are demand driven;
- Counseling will be needed and provided to Staff of all cadres and Students so that they access life skills that will help them to make informed decisions;
- The policy priority initiative is to strengthen production and provision of services at all levels of the Education System.



III. POLICY PERSPECTIVES

The need to formalize the offer of counseling services demands that decentralized institutions and networks are put in place, procedures to guide the operations of the institutions and networks are articulated, and mechanisms for ensuring resourcing these institutions are clarified. In this regard:

- The Office of Deputy Vice Chancellor Administration will facilitate the Directorate of Social Services(DSS) to have its mandate extended to include providing counseling to both staff and students and the relevant facilitation may include issuing a policy directive to that effect.
- The administration and management of the offer of counseling services will take into account the diverse and specialized nature of the four key relevant sub-sectors of university education counseling needs, namely:
 - Health related concerns/challenges;
 - Academic(teaching and learning and research) concerns/challenges;
 - Psycho-social concerns /challenges;
 - Economic and financial concerns/challenges.

- The principle of bottom–up decentralized provision will guide the offer of counseling services the better to take into the need for efficiency, effectiveness and equity in provision and sensitivity to personal/ individual propensities (i.e. while quite rightly according dignity to every individual served and offering service in equal measure, it is necessary to acknowledge that individuals are different in temperament and psycho-social needs.)
- The key principle that will guide the resourcing of the offer of counseling services will be taking into account the synergic network of specialized teaching and research competencies available in teaching, research and support units constituting the UDSM, the better to ensure equitable quality provision and value for money.
- The budget to cover the cost of offering counseling services will be recognized by the University planning and financing organs at all its relevant teaching, research and support units, thus reflected in the relevant budgets.
- With respect to human and financial resourcing, the four principal sub-sectors of counseling service delivery will be encouraged to explore possible partnerships with relevant stakeholders, both public and private including clergy, in service provision and its financing.

IV. COUNSELING POLICY AND PROCEDURES FRAMEWORK

Listed hereunder are what will constitute the counseling service milestones, as well as the permitted/agreed upon procedural frameworks that will guide the offering of the relevant services:

A. Health Challenges

- 1) The relevant University health service delivery units will assign staff to be specifically responsible for offering counseling services;
- 2) The relevant University health service delivery units will design, estimate cost and implement counseling programmes for students and staff targeting challenges related to ill-health concerns relating to diabetes, HIV/AIDS, high blood pressure and psychic disorders.
- 3) The relevant University health service delivery units will design, establish cost and implement a Health Information, Education and Communication Service (HIECS) as an awareness raising mechanism.
- 4) The relevant University health service delivery units will design, cost and imple-

ment a Health Information Management System (HIMS) as a database;

- 5) The relevant University health service delivery units will follow up on health related concerns identified by the office of the Dean of Students¹, including the offices of Wardens of Students' Hostels, as well students and staff unions.

B. Academic Challenges

- 1) Colleges, Schools, and Institutes will each establish Counseling Liaison Committees (CLS) with representatives drawn from relevant disciplinary clusters;
- 2) The established Counseling Liaison Committees (CLS) will be facilitated by the relevant colleges, schools, and institutes to design, estimate costs and implement counseling programmes for students and staff targeting challenges related to academic underperformance and low productivity manifested in absenteeism incidences of professional misconduct and work related stress;
- 3) Colleges, Schools, and Institutes will design cost and implement an Academic Under-achievement Information, Education

and Communication Service (AUIECS) as an awareness raising mechanism;

- 4) Colleges, Schools, and Institutes will design, cost and implement an Academic Under-achievement Information, Education and Communication Service (AUIECS) as a database;
- 5) Colleges, Schools, and Institutes will follow up on academic under achievement related concerns identified by the office of the Dean of Students, including the offices of Wardens of Students' Hostels, as well as students and staff unions.

C. Psycho-Social Challenges

- 1) The office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor responsible for Administration will facilitate the establishment of a Psycho-Social Counseling Unit in one of the three Departments of Sociology, Psychology and Educational Psychology with its staff, who will be inter-ate drawn from the same three Departments.
- 2) Where Constituent Colleges are concerned, the office of the relevant Principal will facilitate the establishment of a Psycho-Social Counseling Unit in one of the Faculties/De-

partments that are responsible for teaching and research of subject matter relating to Sociology and Psychology, with its staff drawn from the related Faculties/Departments.

- 3) The established Psycho-social Counseling Unit will be facilitated by the Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor Administration whereby the relevant Constituent College Principal will design, cost and implement counseling programmes for students and staff targeting concerns of a psycho-social nature, such as the effects of sexual harassment, alcohol and drug abuse, as well as various forms of discrimination and exclusion, including stigmatization and bullying.
- 4) The established Psycho-Social Counseling Unit will be facilitated by the office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Administration/ the relevant Constituent College Principal to design, estimate costs and implement a Psycho – Social challenges Information, Education and Communication Services (PSCIEC) as an awareness raising mechanism.
- 5) The established Psycho-Social Counseling Unit will be facilitated by the Office of

Deputy Vice Chancellor for Administration/ the relevant Constituent College Principal to design, cost and implement a Psycho-Social Counseling Information Management System (PSCIMS) as a database.

- 6) The established Psycho-Social Counseling Unit will follow up on Concerns of psycho-social nature identified by the office of the Dean of Students, including the offices of Wardens of Students' Hostels, as well as students' and staff unions .

D. Economic and Financial Challenges

- 1) The University of Dar es Salaam Business School (UDBS) will establish an Economic and Financial Challenges Advisory Unit that will organize entrepreneurial clinics for needy students and staff.
- 2) Where Constituent Colleges are concerned, the office of the relevant Principal will facilitate the establishment of an Economic and Financial Challenges Advisory Unit in one of the Faculties/Departments that are responsible for teaching and research on subject matter relating to Business Administration and Economics , with its staff drawn from the related Faculties/Departments.

- 3) The office of the Dean of Students will design, cost and implement Students' Economic and Financial Challenges Advisory Service involving the establishment of an Help Desk Service to provide information to students in need of advice on how to handle economic and financial challenges.
- 4) The office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Administration and the relevant Constituent College Principal will design, estimate costs and implement a Staff Economic and Financial challenges Advisory Service involving the establishment of a Help Desk Service to provide information to staff in need of advice on how to handle economic and financial challenges.



V. CROSS-CUTTING ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The policy and procedural framework and the options adopted therein will be guided by the under listed overarching ethical considerations. Adherence to these considerations will be the responsibility of the University administrative unit tasked with the implementation of the relevant policy option.

- 1) There will be protection of persons counseled from the effects of counseling;
- 2) There will be insistence on securing consent from persons counseled;
- 3) There will be assurance of confidentiality;
- 4) There will be assurance of avoidance of unethical use of information gained during counseling sessions;
- 5) There will be assurance of a credible offer of the option of anonymity.

VI. COORDINATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

1. The office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Administration will assume overall responsibility for coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the delivery of counseling services for students and staff implemented at UDSM.
2. In discharging the overall responsibility for coordinating, monitoring and evaluation, the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Administration may devolve power to follow up on the said responsibility to the office of the Director of Social Services whose responsibilities may thus be extended to the extent that the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Administration considers appropriate.
3. Where the Constituent Colleges are concerned in discharging the overall responsibility for coordinating, monitoring and evaluation, the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Administration may devolve power to follow up on the said responsibility to the office of the relevant Principal.
4. There will be an Inter-Institutional Counseling Steering Committee (ICSS) appointed by the Deputy Vice Chancellor to be chaired by the Director of Social Services.

5. Where Constituent Colleges are concerned, there will be an Inter-Institutional Counseling Steering Committee (ICSS) appointed by the relevant Constituent College Principal to be chaired by the relevant Constituent College Principal.
6. The role of the ICSC will be to:
 - a) Oversee and monitor implementation of UDSM Counseling Policy and Procedures;
 - b) Provide higher level coordination of the activities of lower level implementing agencies / units;
 - c) Ensure consistency with broad UDSM policies;
 - d) Institute an annual joint stakeholders' review process that operates in alignment with the UDSM commitment to the Counseling Policy and Budget support.
7. As part of its coordinating role, the Inter- Institutional Counseling Steering Committee in the Office of the Director of Social Services, will design, estimate costs and implement a Communication Strategy and Action Plan that will clarify how the office of the Dean of Students will work with various Counseling Units at UDSM.

(Endnotes)

- 1 ***The office of the Dean of Students currently functions as an administrative clearing house that assists students to be linked to units inside and outside the University, where the students may go to access the relevant counseling services. It may be recalled that in the past, Faculty Deans and Heads of Departments used to assign every first degree student an Academic Advisor drawn from the academic staff of the relevant Faculty.***



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