

NATIONAL COLLOQUIUM AND DIALOGUE

By Margaret Lok Lai Sung



I was honoured to be chosen to attend the National Colloquium for Tutors organised by the Centre for Tutor Management and Development (CTMD) at OUM from 10 to 12 April. I would be updated on OUM's aspiration to provide quality teaching in order to produce quality graduates. There was so much to learn from the panel speakers, lead and senior tutors as well as all those who prepared the sessions.

On the night of 10 April, we were shown a movie called "The Secret." It was about allowing oneself to transform weaknesses into strength, power, perfect peace, health and motivation. This movie gave me insight on how to deal more effectively with my strengths and weaknesses.

Earlier that same day, I listened to the opening address by OUM President, Prof Tan Sri Dr Anuwar Ali. He said the objective of the national colloquium was to enable OUM to tap into the experience of tutors in order to enhance the delivery systems.

He said the colloquium and dialogue aimed to help improve tutors' skills in providing open and distance education. This was to be achieved through the sharing of the latest developments in OUM. Lastly, he said he hoped the colloquium would strengthen ties between the University's tutors, learning centre directors/ administrators, faculties, management and staff.

While Friday was dedicated to the dialogue with lead tutors, Saturday was spent on the national colloquium. The colloquium began in the morning with a talk by the Senior Vice President, Prof Dr Mansor Fadzil, who touched on the latest developments and experience of OUM. He also spoke about the vision and values of OUM. His sharing hinged on the ultimate objective of producing quality graduates by leveraging on good learning materials, quality tutors and relevant IT and physical infrastructures.

This was followed by a talk entitled "OUM's Plan for Development" by the Vice President, Prof Dr Rosli Hamir. He presented financial figures to substantiate how serious OUM was in obtaining its own premises to provide a conducive learning environment for its learners. Having its own buildings would allow better control and cost management of the premises, he said.

The following are the seven sessions for the three days:

Session 1: New Assessment Method by Prof Dr Shaari Abd Hamid

He spoke about producing quality graduates based on three main contributions – a relevant curriculum, efficient delivery system and effective course assessment.

Session 2: Mobigogy and Mobile Learning at OUM by Prof Dr Zoraini Wati

She highlighted mobigogy, which was the art and science of producing learning through mobile devices to complement primary modes of learning. Benefits included enhancing OUM's blended learning method, reaching out to learners and making them feel connected.

Session 3: MCQ Item Development by Yap Yee Keong, Items and Assessment Formulation Consultant

He presented on how the development of Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ) had considered factors to enhance reliability of assessment results.

Session 4: Mini Workshops conducted by faculties

This workshop focused on issues pertaining to tutorials, modules, programmes, assessment, administrative/ finance matters and myLMS. The participants gave feedback on the issues they encountered during their teaching. This was to allow constructive steps to be taken to close the gap between the teaching workforce and the management.

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Session 5: ICT Initiatives in OUM (Plagiarism Detection, myLMS) by Prof Dr Ahmad Hashem, General Manager of Meteor Technology and Consultancy Sdn Bhd

According to him, initiatives were being made to discourage plagiarism by learners and module writers to ensure originality of materials. This would safeguard OUM from copyright infringements and ensure students were provided with original resources.


Session 6: Evaluation of student's learning experience at OUM by Prof Dr Latifah Abdol Latif, Director, Centre for Student Management

The evaluation was based on the 2008 Important-Performance Survey and 2008 Graduate Tracer Study. The conclusions of the survey were encouraging but there was room for improvement in areas like creativity in teaching and delivery skills.

Session 7: Students' performance by Teoh Beng Kuan, Deputy General Manager (Examination)

Areas covered included coursework issues, assessment of tutor's participation and plagiarism. Students' performance charts and data were given for the January and September 2008 semesters to allow general observation and comments on issues that contributed to the need to revise the present assessment method.

On Sunday, we toured the main campus, visiting the Centre for Instructional Design and Technology, library and faculties. This tour allowed me to have an insight into the commitment OUM had towards achieving its vision to be the leading provider of flexible learning.

The whole three-day event was memorable. In his closing remarks, Prof Dr Mansor Fadzil said that teaching was a noble profession as it helped to improve the quality of life of others by improving their academic status. This would then have a positive impact on the nation as it would raise the standard of the people. 

Margaret Lok Lai Sung is a tutor at the Labuan Learning Centre. We are pleased to present her with RM50 as a token of appreciation for contributing this article.



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