

SUBJECT REVIEW REPORT

**DEPARTMENT OF
MASS COMMUNICATION**



***FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE
UNIVERSITY OF KELANIYA***

25th to 27th February 2007

Review Team :

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The review team resolved to express its thanks to the Department of Mass communication Faculty of Social Science, University of Kelania, for the arrangement made to facilitate the review process comfortably and smoothly with the cooperative spirit of the Head of the department, the academic and non academic staff with the support of VC and the Dean during the time of its review visits. The review team had facilities and easy access to places for the site observation and to the sources of information's and relevant documents for the review.

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1. SUBJECT REVIEW PROCESS

Government expects every university be mindful of its dedication, devotion and responsibility for the excellent quality service and estimated quantity outputs characterized by relevant capacity and capabilities from the point of perception that tertiary education is public goods very necessary for creating conducive environment for the prevalence of good health, sufficient wealth and opportunity for wellbeing of mankind. In other words universities answerable to the government the public and stakeholders for its contributions towards higher education in Sri Lanka.

Subject Review (SR) evaluates the quality of education within a specific subject or discipline of the university. It directed its attention among other things on students learning environment, student progress and achievements, postgraduate studies, peer observation and academic guidance & counseling.

The subject review was first brought in to effect by the Committee of Vice -Chancellors and Directors (CVCD) and the University Grants Commission (UGC) .Now the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council (QAAC) of the UGC has undertaken the task of the subject reviews and institutional reviews in the Sri Lankan Universities. Prof: Colin Peris, Quality Assurance Specialist of QAAC has requested by a letter of 07th February 2008 the following team members to perform the SR of the Department of Mass Communication, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Kelaniya during the days falling from 25 to 27 February 2008.

Dr. S. M. M. Ismail	South Eastern University of Sri Lanka
Dr.Tudor Weerasinghe	Sri Palee Campus, University of Colombo
Dr.Ajantha Hapuarachchi	University of Colombo

The main features of the SR process are the preparation of Self Evaluation Report (SER) by the department concerned on the subject they teach where as SR evaluation is to be done by the subject review team on the SER based on the aims and learning outcomes stated therein and the submission of SR Report is the duty of the Team (refer section 1.3 Review judgment and outcomes)

SER of the Department of Mass Communication in the university of kelaniya, prepared in 2007 was submitted to the members of the Team with the letter of 07th February 2008 requesting the Team to perform the SR. The SER contained Aims, Learning outcome and programmes details in 2 pages, learning outcomes and contents of curriculum in six pages , programme details in 3 pages, students, staff and facilities in 3 pages, curriculum, design, content and structure of programmes in 1 page, teaching learning and assessment methods in 2 pages, quality of students, progression and completion, student feedback, quality management, post graduate studies in 3 pages and peer observation, skill developments, academic counseling and guidance and conclusion in 2 pages.

The Team has evaluated the progress made in the quality of education in the Department of Mass Communication based on the aims and learning outcomes as indicated in the SER. The objective of the visit was to assess and examine the evidences and information provided by the department.

At 8.30 a.m. on 25th February 2008 the Team was taken around by the head and academic staff to the Department of Mass Communication. There the team met with the head of the department and faculty members after that the team had a formal discussion with the Dean of the faculty of Social sciences in the presence of quality assurance specialist of QAAC.

After the meeting an agenda for the review visit was finalized. In the morning session of the day Head of the Department of mass communication gave a comprehensive presentation covering all aspects included in the SER and the progress made up-to date. The review process thereafter was conducted by the Team according to the agenda.

The Team held meeting with the following member(s)

Dean of the faculty
Head of the Department of Mass Communication
Academic staff members of the department
Meeting with Technical staff and Non-academic staff members of the department
Undergraduate students
Post graduate students
Special degree students
Student Counselors/ Academic Advisors/Personal Tutors
Librarian
Person in charge for Computer Laboratory

The Team visited the following places of the department/faculty/campus for observation.

Dean's Office
The department of Mass Communication
Computer Laboratories
Faculty Research Center
Common Room
Faculty Library

The Team went through the following Documents and Files

Special Degree programme and Syllabi (4years) of Mass communication
General degree Program and Syllabi of (3years) Mass Communication
Diploma in Mass communication (1 year) program and Syllabi
MA in Mass Communication program and Syllabi (1year)
MSSC (Masters of Social Sciences) (2 years) in Mass Communication Syllbi
Peer Observation records
Student's Performances and Activities records
Student's presentation materials
Films produced by Students
Faculty publications
Questions Papers
Skill Development Events records
"Aesop" Stage Drama
Guest Lecture materials
Department Video Productions items
Lecturer's Video productions items
Student's Training records
Staff Curriculum Vitae

Alumni Data base
Staff's meetings minutes
Student's Meetings minutes
Handouts for Diploma courses
Handouts for MA-MSSC courses
Lecturer's Portfolio
Student's Counselors records
Media Counselors records
University Counselors
Faculty Researchers publications
Post graduate Prospectors and University news
Short Stamp Film Festival information

Festival Documents

Harasara Sammana Festival
Sanjanee media festival
Sanjananee FM
Media Workshop
"Ape Hendewe" performance Programme
Cinema Festivals

Workshops and Other Documents

Film Workshops
Broad Casting Workshops
Print media Workshops
Advertising Workshops
Kelanisara Dancing Programme-Diploma
Proposal for certificate Course
Proposal for Film Library
Proposal for Orientation programme for special 1st year
Proposal for Editing Studio
Proposal for photo library
Proposal for Broadcasting Studio

The Review Team after having studied and observed all the activities carried out by the department of Mass Communication has resolved to make the judgments on the consideration of good or satisfactory or unsatisfactory in the respect of each of the eight aspects namely:

(1) Curriculum review, content and review, (2) teaching, learning and assessment methods, (3) quality of students including student progress and achievements, (4) the extent of student's feed back , qualitative and quantitative ,(5) postgraduate studies, (6) peer observation (7) skills development, and (8) academic guidance and counseling.

2. BRIEF HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY, FACULTY AND THE DEPARTMENT

The University of Kelaniya has its origin in the historic Vidyalankara Pirivena, founded in 1875 as a center of learning for Buddhist monks. It was one of the two great national centers of traditional higher learning, heralding the first phase of the national movement and national resurgence.

With the establishment of modern Universities in Sri Lanka in the 1940s and 1950s, the Vidyalkara Pirivena became the Vidyalkara University in 1959, later the Vidyalkara Campus of the University of Ceylon in 1972 and, ultimately, the University of Kelaniya in 1978.

Today, the University of Kelaniya is one of the major national Universities. It has two major campuses, seven locations, six faculties and four institutions. It was one of the first universities to begin teaching science in Sinhala, and also the first to restructure the traditional Arts Faculty into three separate Faculties of Humanities, social Sciences and Commerce and Management. It also has several unique Departments not generally founded in the Sri Lankan University system and some Kelaniya innovations have been adopted subsequently by other Universities. These include the departments of industrial management and microbiology in the faculty of science; departments of linguistics, fine arts, modern languages and Hindi in the faculty of humanities; and mass communication and library and information sciences in the faculty of social sciences.

In keeping with its historical root, the University is one of the national centers of excellence in Pali and Buddhist Studies and related fields. It has long established and well developed Departments of Pali and Buddhist Studies (incorporating chairs in Buddhist Civilization and Buddhist Philosophy), Sanskrit, Linguistics, philosophy, Sinhala and Hindi as well as the postgraduate institute of Pali and Buddhist Studies. Kelaniya also maintains close links with the Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka (whose Vice Chancellors have often been drawn from University of Kelaniya faculty). At the same time, the University of Kelaniya has a modern and multi-cultural structure and perspective, with the faculty of science, medicine, social sciences and commerce and management and a strong base in modern languages, including the teaching of Chinese, English, French, German, Hindi, Japanese, Russian, Tamil and modern linguistics.

The faculty of social sciences at the University of Kelaniya was the first to house department of Mass Communication and department of sport science and physical education in a university in Sri Lanka.

The subject of Mass Communication was started in 1973 as a career oriented course. The founding committee members in 1973 were Prof. Wimal Dissanayaka, Prof. Sunanda Mahendra, Edwin Ariyadasa, D.B. Nihalsinghe, Prof. M.B. Ariyapala and Prof. Ediriwera Sarathchandra. Founding lecturers were Prof. Wimal Dissanayaka, Prof. Sunanda Mahendra, while Edwin Ariyadasa, D.B. Nihalsinghe, K. Jayathilaka, D.C. Ranathunga and Piyasiri Gunarathna were visiting Lecturers. Courses were conducted in Sinhala, Tamil, and English (Tamil and English courses were up to 1982 only).

From the beginning it had Special Degree and General Degree in Mass communication. The new Curriculum and the Diploma in Mass Communication started since 2000 and MA studies and MSSC.

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Lecturers. Courses were conducted in sinhala, Tamil, and English (Tamil and English courses were conducted till 1982 only)

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Table 01-Students' Composition

Special part	Students' Population
Special part -01	21
Special part -02	18
Special part -03	26

General Degree Students

General part	Students' Population
General Part - 01	329
General Part – 02	82
General Part – 03	74

3. AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

The stated vision of the department is to develop a new media culture and give the public an understanding on media and communication.

Mass Communication projects a perspective on a wide variety of human activities and institutions. As a discipline Mass Communication leads to gain understanding of Communication process, to become aware of the effects of mass media upon society, to understand the theoretical underpinnings and ethical standards within the field of mass media, to enhance media literacy and media culture and to learn about the norms and practices within the field of mass media

3.1 Aims

The stated aims of the department of mass communication in this context are to:

- * Provide degree programmes in Mass Communication that foster better understanding of this discipline with a view to enabling students to develop their knowledge, skills and potential.

- * Promote learning, teaching, and research in Mass Communication.

* Provide opportunities for students to develop their skills talents through the teacher – student friendly relations.

* Provide opportunities for academic staff of the department to develop their careers through research.

3.2 Learning outcomes

By following anyone of the degree programmes under the department of mass communication the students will be able to:

- Develop their ability to understand concepts and fundamentals of Mass Communication.
- Gain knowledge of recent developments and trends in this discipline.
- Understand how the gained knowledge can be applied to their working life.

4. FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW TEAM

4.1 Curriculum Designing and Content and Review

The courses in mass communication offered by the department are sufficient academically and professionally. The structure and contents of the degree programmes are found up to the level necessary for quality of education and opportunity to enhance the skills of the students. BA special programmes of the department of mass communication conform to the University's modular units system. According to this system each student must obtain 120 credit points by successfully completing the units to be eligible for the award of a special degree.

Each student of the Mass communication course of BA special degree should submit a dissertation in their final year. It enables students to have experience in research skills.

It was revealed during the discussion with the academics of the Department that the students' requests and their views as well as that of the stakeholders were taken into account in designing the curricula which the review team considered positively.

The students are assigned with justifiable work loads and enough time for studies as they have 15 hours of lectures for week.

The team recommended the followings according to review team observation:

1. It is appreciable if the course unit called 1.2.4-“**Media and Society**” be enriching with the components of the impact of the computer, internet, recording industries and most modern subject area in the world of media literacy.

2. The course unit called 1.2.5 “**Language and Communication**” will have more strength if the components of listening and creativity are added to it. The team recommended selecting some world famous speeches from Sri Lanka and other countries and encouraging the students to listen to this selected speeches so as to promote their capacity of creativity as followed in other countries in the modern world.

3. The course unit called 1.2.11 ‘**Print Media Studies**’ will have more benefit if the areas of publishing books and Magazine are brought in to its boundary.

4. The course unit called 1.2.12 “**Development Communication**” will be very useful and rich if Millennium Goals, Brundtland Commission report including Environmental communication are added.

5. It is recommended to include the areas of on –line marketing and new trends of PR in the course unit called 1.2.13 “**Public relations**”

6. It is advisable to include the areas of recording industries which badly effect for the society all over the world in the course unit called 1.2.16 “**Broadcasting Media Studies**”.

It is the view of the review team that the curriculum design and content review of the department can be judged as satisfactory.

4.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods

The Department of Mass communication follows a system of combination of lectures, practical, individual presentation and tutorial for the completion of teaching mass communication which has many advantages for the students to develop their latent talent and cognitive power.

To make teaching very efficient and effective the department follows the system of organizing Seminars, Conferences, Guest lectures, Field trips, Discussions, Surveys, Research Assignment and media production presentations, Individual and Group works which is found very impressive.

In order to make available accurate and informative materials to the students’ handouts and study guides are prepared and issued with the approval of the faculty of Social Sciences and the Senate of the University of Kelaniya with the help of lecturers who involved in preparation an appreciable practice impressed by the review team.

To enrich and to make the class room teaching environment attractive lectures are provided with multimedia projectors, overhead projectors and slide projectors in order to keep the students attentive. These are modern techniques to promote teaching and learning.

The review team is attracted by the training facilities provided to the students of special degree programmes (Television media, Broadcasting media, Journalism, Mass Communication research, development communication) with the Government sector and private sector organization. This arrangement is very much appreciable because it trains the students in cultivating their personality and creative power.

The Reviewers satisfied very much with the students’ active participation and interactive habits in the classroom situation par excellent.

The team observed with satisfaction in the practice of question paper setting and answers scripts marking by the internal as well as external examiners.

Despite this appreciable progress the review team observed some obstacle in the sense of limited space for office management, staff consultation with the students and meetings. This situation has induced the review team to highlight the needs to narrow the gaps.

It is the view of the review team that the present teaching, learning and assessment methods of the department can be judged as good.

4.3 Quality of Students, including Student Progress and Achievements

Of the special degree courses by the faculty of social sciences the mass communication course is a very competitive one for the students to select as practically most of the students prefer mass communication course to any other course. This is because the students following mass communication course are given opportunities to have training in private and public mass communication media sectors for employability and they are in close to metropolitan area so that they can find jobs while there are in the last stage of university course. The information about this training facilities and student future role in the job market could be understood on the occasion of the site visit where necessary documents were provided to study these facts and figures. The review team members were placed in grate pleaser when they were told that some of the students have acquired international and local recognition for their creative works related to mass communication.

The table bellow indicates the educational achievements of the students from 2001/2002 academic year to 2005/2006 academic year.

Academic year	2005/2006 HS/2002	2004/2005 HS/2001	2003/2004 HS/2000	2003 /2002 HS/1999	2002/2001 HS/1998
1 st class	1	0	0	0	1
2 nd class upper	19	6	13	19	23
2 nd class lower	05	04	02	05	06
Normal passes	0	0	0	0	0

It is the view of the review team that the Quality of students including student's progress and achievements of the department can be judged as good.

4.4 Extent and Use of Student Feedback

The department obtains feedback from students with the mechanism of monthly student staff liaison group seminar and the student staff liaison committee meeting. Also there is practice of distributing questionnaire regarding the quality and quantity of lesson and about the quality of teaching. As per the questionnaires the areas dealt with under different equations are found sufficient. This quality feedback system is formalized to have effective academic practice. It is appreciable that if the feedback collected are properly analyzed to identify the needs for further improvement. It is opinion of the team reviewers that in the future these feedbacks should be formalized to obtain better expected results.

It is the view of the review team that the extent and use of student feedback, qualitative and quantitative of the department can be judged as good.

4.5 Post Graduate Studies

The given by the department it functions with one professor, five senior lecture Gr I , three lecturer probationary and 15 visiting lecturers. Out of these staff strength it is noticed with appreciation that four of them have completed Ph.D degree , two are with MA and others are pursuing master degree programme. Another praiseworthy feature is that this is capable of offering following Ph.D and Master degree courses.

1. Ph.D in Mass Communication. It is a fully individual research degree to be completed within minimum period of three years or maximum period of six years.
2. M.Phil in Mass Communication. It is a fully individual research degree to be completed within minimum period of two years or maximum four years.
3. M.S.Sc in Mass communication by research which is designed to complete in two years.
4. M.A in Mass Communication by course, which is designed as a one year taught course.
5. One year Diploma course in Mass Communication. It is a research component.

The team had a discussion meeting with the postgraduate students. At that time they came out with suggestion that the one year M.A course and two year M.S.Sc course should be taught separately, because the present system tends to have repetition and overlapping. The team also understood as their request was reasonable. Besides they express their difficulties in accommodation facilities to stay for class days as some of them are from outstations. The team is of view that request is to be considered.

It is the view of the review team that the Post Graduate Studies of the department can be judged a good.

4.6 Peer Observation

At the meeting the review team had with the lecturers it was identified that the most of the lecturers are seniors, capable of exchanging views on teaching strength and weakness in a friendly manner. This kind of practice will help the department to consider for further improvement in teaching. The reviewers appreciate the prevalence of such an environment in the department activities. The team is of opinion that if the feedback information are well recorded and analyzed it would be very useful for the future to have better guidance in teaching.

It is the view of the review Team that the present status of the peer observation adopted by the members of the academic staff of the department is judged as satisfactory.

4.7 Skill Developments.

The present curricular structure of the department of mass communication is so designed that it would be somewhat sufficient for the students to get benefits for developing their skills in those specific fields. The reviewers were able to appreciate the different aspect of students in producing short films, class room presentation, report writing, continuous assignments, writing skills and IT skills. In order to enhance and update the quality and capacity of the undergraduate the department of mass communication is periodically conducting the guest programmes, workshop and periodical discussion with the help of resource person and experts from other universities and institutions. This is a good practice for the skills development of the students.

However it would be better that the students are given opportunity to learn English and to acquire proficiency in English and other foreign languages so that they will be able to obtain employment the local and world job markets with better remunerations for better future prospects.

Also it is observed from the discussion with students that practical experience and multi skills should be facilitated to the students so that they may be strong enough to compete with specialist coming out from other institutions.

It is the review of the Review Team that the present status of the skill development adopted by the members of the academic staff of the department is judged as satisfactory.

4.8 Academic Guidance and Counseling

The review team could gather information during the time of discussion with academic staff as well as the students that the department of mass communication is very much concern about providing counseling and guidance to the students with the inspiration of academics in a formal and informal manner apart from the system of university counseling and guidance mechanism. In this way additional opportunities were provided to students to have facilities for more counseling and guidance program.

The new students are at the time of entering the university for the first time are given orientation programme in which the students are addressed by the Dean of the faculty, Head of the Department and Students Counselors on various aspects such as , selection of courses, examination criteria and others to enable the students to fit in to the university environment.

The review team at the time of its site visit has come to know that the existence of a gap between the career guidance unit and the students. In that gap has to be narrowed down.

It is the view of the review Team that the academic guidance and counseling adopted by the members of the academic staff of the department can be judged as good.

5. CONCLUSION

The Review Team's judgment of the eight aspects studied during the review visit is summarized below.

Aspect Reviewed	Judgment Given
Curriculum Design, Content and Review	Satisfactory
Teaching Learning and Assessment Methods	Good
Quality of Students including Student Progress and Achievements	Good
Extent and Use of Student Feedback, Qualitative and Quantitative	Good
Postgraduate Studies	Good
Peer Observations	Satisfactory
Skills Development	Satisfactory
Academic Guidance and Counseling	Good

The overall judgment is suspended

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The review team would like to make the following recommendations in order to improve the quality of education in the department of Mass Communication.

1. In the matter of curriculum design and content and review certain recommendation were given to be followed.
2. Regarding the limitations and constrains that were observed by the team review the space facilities for the department should be given priority by the university for effective learning and teaching environment.
3. A curriculum development committee has to be formed with at the department level to have constant vigilant on the quality of education.
4. The practical training programs should be organized to meet the necessary needs of the students for their better future.
5. In order to ensure the strength of English learning capacity the time allocation has to be increased.
6. The one year M.A course and two years M.S.Sc course should be taught separately with separate curriculum to fit the validity of the courses.
7. The practical training should be included as a part of the syllabus.
8. Peer observation of teaching process should be formalized and observation should be extended to all the staff members of the department including the visiting staff.