

SUBJECT REVIEW REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STATISTICS



**FACULTY OF ARTS
UNIVERSITY OF SRI JAYWARDENEPURA**

19th to 21st May 2010

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1. SUBJECT REVIEW PROCESS

This report presents the findings of the subject review conducted at the Department of Social Statistics (DSS), University of Sri Jayewardenepura (USJP) during 19th to 21st of May 2010 under the guidance of Quality Assurance and Accreditation (QAA) Council of the University Grants Commission (UGC) of Sri Lanka. Subject review process evaluates the quality of education within a specific subject or discipline. It is focused on the student learning experience and on student achievement; and designed to evaluate the quality of both undergraduate and postgraduate programs. However, the responsibility for quality and standards lies within the institution itself, since it alone has the power to control and to change existing practices. Review process was conducted according to the guidelines given in the quality assurance handbook for Sri Lankan universities, published by the CVCD and UGC in July 2002.

The DSS, Faculty of Arts (FoA), USJP submitted a Self Evaluation Report (SER) consisting of twelve sections, namely: Introduction, Aims; Students, Staff and Facilities; Curriculum Design, Content and Review; Teaching Learning and Assessment Methods; Selection, Progress, Quality and Achievement of Students; Extent and Use of Student Feedback: Quantitative and Qualitative; Postgraduate Studies, Peer Observation and Review, Skills Development, Academic Guidance and Counseling and Conclusion. The quality of education was reviewed according to the aims and learning outcomes given in the (SER).

The following eight aspects of education were reviewed at subject level:

1. Curriculum design, Content and Review.
2. Teaching Learning and Assessment methods.
3. Quality of students including student Progress and Achievements.
4. Extent and use of Student Feedback: qualitative and quantitative.
5. Postgraduate studies.
6. Peer observations.
7. Skills development.
8. Academic guidance and Counseling.

The review team visited the department from 19th – 21st May, 2010. The agenda of the three day visit is attached (see annex 1)

The evaluation of eight aspects was based on:

- Meetings held with the QA specialist of the QAA Council of the UGC of Sri Lanka; Vice Chancellor of the USJP, Dean of the FoA, Head of Department, academic staff, non-academic staff, library staff of the university, Chief Student Counselor, Student Counselors of the Department and Undergraduates and Postgraduate students.
- Observation of physical facilities of the Department. Namely, Student's Resource Center, Mini Auditorium, Lecture rooms and the main Library of the University,
- Observation of Lectures, Student's Presentations, etc.
- Reviewing research publications and available documents at the Department and
- The presentation made by the Review team on their findings during the review to the staff of the DSS allowing the reviewers to further clarification of certain points.

Each of the eight aspects was judged as good/satisfactory/unsatisfactory, based on strengths, good practices and weaknesses in each.

2. BRIEF HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY, FACULTY AND DEPARTMENT

Vidyodaya Pirivena was founded in 1873 as a centre of learning for Buddhist monks by the Ven. Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala Maha Thero. From the inception up to the year 1959, it functioned as an internationally recognized centre for oriental studies under the guidance of learned venerable monks like Baddegama Sri Piya Ratana and Welivitiye Sri Soratha. The Vidyodaya Pirivena was promoted to the status of a university on January 01, 1959 by the Parliamentary Act no. 45.

Academic work of the new university was commenced on the January 16, 1959 by its first lecturer Ven. Velivitiye Soratha on the subject of Buddhist Civilization. Following were among the pioneers in the campaign to promote Vidyodaya Pirivena to the status of a university: Ven. Velivitiye Soratha, Prof. Palonnoruve Wimaladhamma, Prof. Paravahera Vajiragnana Nayaka Thero, Prof. Wimal G. Balagalla, Mr. Ananda Guruge, Mr. S.W. R.D. Bandaranayake and Mr. W. Dahanayake.

Initially, lectures were conducted in the class rooms of the Pirivena. As a result of the efforts of Ven. Velivitiye Soratha who was the first Vice Chancellor of the University, a new building complex for the university was constructed in its present location.

At the beginning, the university functioned with five Faculties, namely, Buddhist Studies, Philosophy, Languages, Arts, Ayurveda and Science. According to the statistics available at the university, there were 376 students, of whom 366 were undergraduates and the balance 10 were postgraduates.

The first Convocation of the university was held on 22 November 1961, at the Bandaranayake Hall of the university. The Governor General and the Chief Nayaka Theros of Malwatta and Asgiriya of that time were the chief guests of this occasion. On the same day, foundation stones were laid for the main halls, Sumangala Hall, Ratnasara Hall and Gnaneswara hall.

In 1966 with the enactment of the Higher Education Act no. 20 following changes of the administrative structure of the university were implemented.

Even after upgrading the Vidyodaya Pirivena to university status, until this year, the administrative structure of Vidyodaya University remained unchanged. Once the Act No. 20 was enacted the administration system was changed from a Pirivena system to a conventional university system.

As a result of these changes both male and female students were admitted to the university without discrimination.

Until this year, only the Buddhist clergy were entitled to be the Vice –Chancellor of Vidyodaya University. The new act relaxed this condition allowing both laity and clergy to become the Vice-chancellor.

The Vidyodaya University became the Vidyodaya Campus of the University of Sri Lanka in 1972.

In 1973, the Faculty of Commerce and Management was established. In the same year, Faculties of Buddhist Studies and Religion and Languages were merged and formed the Faculty of Arts.

In 1978 by the Universities Act no. 16, it was renamed as the University of Sri Jayewardenepura after Sri Jayewardenepura-Kotte was made the administrative capital of the country.

The University of Sri Jayewardenepura (USJP) in its current form is one of the leading national universities of Sri Lanka. The Five Faculties that comprises the main academic body of the University are:

Faculty of Arts

Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce

Faculty of Medical Sciences
Faculty of Applied Sciences
Faculty of Graduate Studies

Mission of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura

The mission of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, founded upon the tenet *Vijja Uppattam Setta* (among all that arise knowledge is the greatest), is to excel as an institution of higher learning.

The university is committed to pursue the transmission of knowledge through teaching, scholarship and research and active service to the community in an environment which values creativity, freedom of intellectual thought and expression, equal opportunity, fairness and professional growth. The university's endeavor is to contribute to national development by providing a balanced education which blends the finest in theory and practice and by forging interactions between the university and the wider community.

Faculty of Arts

Today the Faculty of Arts is one of the largest faculties in the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. Under the academic and administrative guidance of the Dean of the faculty, it has developed into nine academic departments covering 23 fields of study in humanities and social sciences.

Mission of the Faculty of Arts

The Faculty of Arts is committed to the development of the community and the nation at large through the dissemination and enhancement of knowledge enriched with the country's cultural heritage.

Department of Social Statistics

The Department of Social Statistics, which is the only Department in Statistics in an Arts Faculty in Sri Lankan University system, was established in 1995 in the Faculty of Arts in University of Sri Jayewardenepura. Until then academic work and administration work related to the subject of Statistics were undertaken by the Department of Economics.

In the latter part of 1960's teaching of statistics to the arts students was merely confined to a single paper in Basic Statistics in the special degree in Economics. Under the curriculum reform in the Economics Department in early 1970's the subject of Statistics was introduced as special subject area in the Economics special degree program. The degree program was designed by late Prof W.A.Jayatissa in consultation with Professor of Economics.

At the beginning, in the Faculty of Arts, Statistics was offered only for Special Degree Program in Economics. This was later extended to all the degree programs offered by the Faculty of Arts. In the same time, the Special Degree program in Social Statistics was introduced by the Department of Economics. In addition, Social Statistics was introduced as a main subject in the general degree program of the Faculty of Arts.

The University of Sri Jayewardenepura is the first University to introduce such an interdisciplinary, program, which was later followed by other Universities in the same name. In the post graduate aspect, the Post Graduate Diploma in Applied Social Statistics was introduced considering the severe shortage of competent Statistician in analyzing economic and social data. This diploma program became very popular among academics and professionals in the country.

A separate department for Social Statistics was formed in 1995 in response to high administrative pressure to the Economics Department and to the student demand for unique identity for the subject. The new department introduced another special degree program and a postgraduate diploma program in Business field in parallel with earlier programs in Social Statistics. For the general degree, Management and Information Technology was introduced. At present, the Department is planning to upgrade the Postgraduate Diploma program to a Masters Degree.

Statistics is an extremely diverse discipline, which has its application in almost every field. Statistics offers a wide range of career opportunities in many fields. In general, Applied Statisticians can easily fit into carriers in Social Sciences, Marketing, Economics, Education, Agriculture, etc.

The Department believes the quality of graduates produced in the field of Social/Business Statistics affect the employment of graduates and their contribution to the nation. This evaluation report concerns various aspects of the Department of Social Statistics, which are useful in reviewing for quality.

3. AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

3.1 Aims

According to the SER submitted by the Department of Social Statistics, the aim of the department is to produce *high quality graduates* with a sound *knowledge and skills* in *collecting, organizing, presenting, analyzing and interpreting data for planning and decision making* in social and business fields.

To meet this target, the department offers:

- Two special degree programs; one specializing in Social Statistics and the other specializing in Business Statistics. Both programs are offered in a multi-disciplinary environment;
- In addition to the two special degree programs, the department also offers number of course units for General Arts degree students and also a course catering for special degree students in social sciences other than statistics;
- Almost all the course units offered by the department are with range of challenging learning opportunities such as assignments, projects, computer simulations, field surveys etc. enabling students to develop their skills and potential;
- Mathematical Applications, Computer Applications, Management and IT are also offered for special degree students, introducing multi-disciplinary environment.
- A friendly, responsive and supportive departmental environment that is conducive to enthusiastic learning, high standards and good completion rates;
- Department also offers two Postgraduate Diploma programs in Business Statistics and Social Statistics. These two programs provide opportunities for those engaged in work related to statistical applications in their professions to gain further knowledge and skills relevant for their work.;
- Encouragement for teaching staff in their career development, including the provision of feedback and peer advice;
- Organizational structures for effective teaching, learning, assessment, review and quality assurance.

3.2 Learning Outcomes

- On the successful completion of degree programs in Social and Business Statistics, the students should have gained theoretical and practical knowledge in Statistics in the fields of social sciences and business studies, based on academic programs that provide basic frameworks followed by progressively increasing depth of study.
- Acquired essential knowledge in Mathematics, IT and operations research to enhance the analytical skills.
- Learned how statistical techniques could be applied in multi-disciplinary environment.
- Developed a range of personal and transferable skills such as critical thinking, independence of thought, oral and written communication, teamwork, interpersonal relationships in real life situations.
- Developed the ability for self-directed learning and research.

Programs Conducted by the Department

The Department of Social Statistics offers two special degree programs, two subject streams for general degree program and two postgraduate diploma programs. Details of these programs are given below.

Program	Duration (Years)
B.A. (special) Degree in Business Statistics	04
B.A. (special) Degree in Social Statistics	04
B.A. (general) Degree Social Statistics as a major subject	03
B.A. (general) Degree Management and Information Technology as a major subject	03
Post Graduate Diploma in Social Statistics	01
Post Graduate Diploma in Business Statistics	01

Selection Criteria (Undergraduate): There is no any pre-requisite to follow first year subjects offered by the department. In the class visits, evaluation team observed that the students in first year classes are highly heterogeneous in terms of knowledge in Statistics and Mathematics. Majority of students have not learned Statistics. Therefore the majority can be considered as beginners to the discipline.

In order to be qualified for special degree programs offered by the Department of Social Statistics students should have done Statistics and Mathematics in the two semesters of the first year and have secured minimum of B grades. In addition to that pass in first year Economics is compulsory in order to join the special degree in Business Statistics. Best students among the applicants for the special degree program are recruited. In general, around 30 students are recruited for special degree programs every year.

All other students who have done first year subjects offered by the department but not qualified to follow a special degree are eligible to follow general degree programs.

Selection Criteria (Postgraduate): Graduates with bachelors' degree in any discipline or equivalent qualifications can apply for postgraduate diploma programs and students are selected based on qualifying examination.

B.A. (special) Degree in Business Statistics: Entry qualifications to this program are described under selection criteria. Curricula of this degree program are given in the SER and are reproduced below.

	Subject Codes	Status
First Year	SOST 1101, SOST 1102, SOST 1201, SOST 1202	Compulsory for students in this stream. Serve as entry qualifications for special degree programs.
	ECON 1101, ECON 1202	Guided Options
Second Year	SOST 2101, SOST 2102, SOST 2201, MGIT 2202, MGIT 2205	Compulsory for Special Degree Students in this stream.
	MGIT 2101, MGIT 2201, ECON 2110, ECON 2215 ECON 2130, ECON 3140	Guided Options
Third Year	SOST 3101, MGIT 3102, SOST 3201, SOST 3202, SOST 3205, MGIT 3202	Compulsory for Special Degree Students in this stream.
	MGIT 3201	Guided Options
Fourth Year	SOST 4101, SOST 4102, SOST 4103, MGIT 3103, SOST 4201, SOST 4202, SOST 4203,	Compulsory
	MGIT 4999	Dissertation

B.A. (special) Degree in Social Statistics: Curriculum of the BA (Special) in Social Statistics program is presented below.

	Subject Codes	Status
First Year	SOST 1101, SOST 1102 SOST 1201, SOST 1202	Compulsory for students in this stream. Serve as entry qualifications for special degree programs.
	ECON 1101, ECON 1202	Guided Options
Second Year	SOST 2101, SOST 2102 SOST 2201, SOST 2202	Compulsory for Special Degree Students in this stream.
	MGIT 2101, MGIT 2201	Guided Options
Third Year	SOST 3101, SOST 3102 SOST 3201, SOST 3202, SOST 3205	Compulsory for Special Degree Students in this stream.
	MGIT 3201	Guided Options
Fourth Year	SOST 4101, SOST 4102, SOST 4103, SOST 4104 SOST 4201, SOST 4202, SOST 4203, SOST 4204	Compulsory
	SOST 4999	Dissertation

BA (General) Degree Stream in Field of Management and Information Technology: Curriculum of the BA (General) in Management and Information Technology program is presented below.

	Subject Codes
Second Year	MGIT 2101, MGIT 2102, MGIT 2201, MGIT 2202, MGIT 2205
Third Year	MGIT 3101, MGIT 3102, MGIT 3103, MGIT 3201, MGIT 3202,
	MGIT 4999 (Dissertation)

BA (General) Degree Stream in Social Statistics: Curriculum of the BA (General) in Social Statistics program is presented below.

	Subject Codes
Second Year	SOST 2102, SOST 2201
Third Year	SOST 3101, SOST 3102, SOST 3201, SOST 3202

Undergraduate students following General Degree program can choose both Social Statistics and Management and Information Technology as the two main subjects in their B.A. (General) Degree program. In that case, SOST 2101 is not allowed. Instead of SOST 2102, they have to select SOST 3205.

To enter the B.A (General) in Management and Information Technology or Social Statistics, a student must have completed the SOST 1101, SOST 1102 and SOST 1201 units in the first year.

4. FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW TEAM

Findings of the review team are presented here under the 8 categories given in the guidelines for subject reviews.

4.1 Curriculum Design, Content and Review

Design

Department of Social Statistics offers course units for five different types of undergraduate programs; two special degree programs offered by the department, subject combinations for two general degree streams and a course unit on Basic Statistics for all Social Science students other than Statistics. As a very small department (with only eight staff members including two probationary lecturers) this work load must be appreciated. At the same time, the concept of “Subject Streams for General Degree Students” is appreciated because it gives a certain degree of discipline for general students. In most of other Arts Faculties general degree comprises certain number of course units offered by different departments without any coordination.

For special degrees, students are required to follow 2/3rd of the entire degree program from the courses offered by the department. The remaining 1/3rd can be selected from other

departments. However, the department guides students in selecting the subjects from other departments. Students cannot select “any subject” from other departments. The subject they select from other departments must be relevant for the special degree they follow. In this regard, special preference is given to subjects offered by Department of Economics and Management Faculty.

However, the Review Team believes that few alterations will further improve the quality and relevancy of the undergraduate training at the DSS. The review team recommends the introduction of a course unit on Project Planning and Appraisal and Costing for the two special degree programs and a course unit on Actuarial Science for Business Statistics degree program. This can perhaps be done by replacing some management course units or merging some of the units into one.

Application of Software is inbuilt in most of the course units. Review team learnt through students and staff consultations that statistical and Econometric software such as SPSS and Eviews are taught. However, none of these were in the curricula. Therefore, formal incorporation of these into the curriculum is recommended.

Contents

Theoretical contents in the curricula are standard at undergraduate level. However, following alterations are required for further improvement of it.

Curriculum and readings given must be updated. Most of the references given with course contents are very old. It is also recommended to change the reference style. Instead of giving references at the end it is recommended to give references on topic and chapter basis. It is also important to highlight compulsory reading and optional ones.

Language editing is required in some of the curricula and redesigning of Econometrics curricula is required.

Learning outcomes of the degree programs must be defined properly. In current curriculum overall learning outcomes are not stated and the learning outcomes given in most of the course contents refer only to the knowledge that students can acquire upon the completion of particular unit. Skills that they are expected to improve is not stated.

Review

Through staff consultations and meeting with head of department, review team learnt that two major curriculum reviews are done in recent past; one in 2001 with the introduction of course unit and semester system and the other in 2004. The 2004 curriculum revision plan will be implemented in 2010. Stakeholder consultations and students’ feedbacks etc. are considered in the curriculum reform plan in 2004.

Overall judgment given in this regard is ‘GOOD’

4. 2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods

Teaching

In this regard, the review team is with the impression that the DSS is adhered to most of the standard practices in undergraduate level teaching.

Course outlines are given by many teachers at the beginning of the program. In some course units, lecture outlines and printed tutorial are also provided in advance.

Evaluation team had several opportunities to visit regular classes and student presentations. In this regard, the team is with the impression that presentation skills of students are good. Two regular classes were visited and observed that the teaching practices used in only one

class is satisfactory. Notes reading, seldom use of equipments available in the room (Magi board) was observed in the other class. Perhaps the nature of the subject (technical and theoretical) would have led the teacher to use this method.

Learning

Learning environment of the DSS is not above the standard of any state university. In the main library all the books available were very old. Journals and Periodical section of the library is not updates. There is a massive collection of most of the important journals and periodicals relevant for Economics and Social Statistics. However, recent volumes of none of them were available in the section.

E-journals (Emeralds) are available in the library. However, according to the librarian, only few students and staff members use them.

Computer facilities are available at faculty level. Evaluation team observed that the DSS guides students in using computer lab. However, the number of computers available in the lab is inadequate. There were only 80 PCs available for the entire Faculty of Arts.

Only 5 lecture rooms are available for the DSS. They share rooms with Economics Department. There is only one room with Multi-media projector and no air conditioned rooms available.

The DSS has prepared a research manual for undergraduate students. This manual is standard and being used by most of other departments.

Assessment

Assessment method is standard. In general 60 percent of marks are allocated for the final exam and the remaining 40 percent is for midterm evaluation. Various forms of midterm evaluations are in practice. For some course units, classroom tests were designed. Take home assignments, group assignments and presentations are also used as midterm assessments.

Dissertation is assessed as two course units (double credits).

Question papers are standard. At least some question papers focus on both knowledge and skills of students.

The judgment of the team with regard to this aspect is 'GOOD'

4.3 Quality of Students including Student Progress and Achievements

The Department of Social Statistics offer degree programs and individual course units in an interdisciplinary framework. It offers course units to students specialising other disciplines and students specialising Business or Social Statistics are required to follow certain number of course units from other disciplines such as Economics, Accounting, Management and IT. As a result, students from various different disciplines are attracted.

Undergraduate students are selected exclusively based on Z-score of the GCE Advanced Level examination. The Z-score of the currently enrolled undergraduate students varies between 1.22 to 1.76.

Selection for Special degree programs is based on the performance at first year in the university. Minimum qualification to enter special degree program is two B passes for Mathematics and Statistics offered by the department for first year students. In addition to

that pass in Economics is compulsory for Business Statistics Program¹. This shows that the quality of students at entry for special degree program is mixed and fairly variable.

However, according to the observations by the evaluation team, quality of the students in their third and fourth years is comparatively high. This indicates that the DSS is capable of improving the quality of highly heterogeneous group of students during the three years time of the special degree programs.

The SER submitted by the DSS indicates that the completion rate of degree programs offered by the department is 100 percent. It further highlights that over five percent of students secure first or second classes at the completion of their degree.

English language competency and IT skills of students are good. The DSS offers number of IT courses and two course units in special degree programs per semester are offered in English. Some students have done their dissertation in English.

Number of discussions held with staff members of the department indicates that the DSS has conducted an opinion survey of the graduates of special degrees offered by the department. According to the informants from the department, this survey shows that the majority of passed out graduates are currently employed. The same source also highlighted that the annual gold medal offered by the faculty for the best performing student is secured by special degree students under DSS.

In relation to this aspect the judgment of the team is ‘GOOD’

4. 4 Extent of Student Feedback, Qualitative and Quantitative

The students attached to the Department of Social Statistics has two avenues to present their feedback formally; namely, academic issues are obtained through the student representatives at the Faculty Board and a formal questionnaire is used to collect students’ assessment of the courses offered by the department. All the information collected are formally analysed and individual lecturers are informed the results.

Tutorial classes, Presentations, Field trips and Dissertations under close supervision of the academics of the department are another important occasion that facilitates an opportunity for the staff to receive student feedback. The academic counselor and student counselors discuss pertinent issues with the students, and help to resolve them in consultation with the Head of Department and other staff members.

The department does not maintain any data base for passed out students. The review team is of the view that this is an aspect that needs to be formalized and strengthened.

Judgment given in this regard is ‘SATISFACTORY’.

¹ However, the system at the DSS seems very flexible. Transfer from special to general and general to special degree programs is allowed until the end of second year. Transfer from general to special is based on student’s performance in all previous semester exams. In both cases students are required to make a special appeal to the faculty through department.

4.5 Postgraduate Studies

The Department conducted two Postgraduate Diplomas; one in Social Statistics and the other in Business Statistics for many years. Unfortunately due to various reasons both programs are currently not offered. The department is now designing a one year Masters degree program. All the senior academic staff members are involved in postgraduate teaching, supervision and coordination. Some of the lecturers are affiliated to various professional associations such as SLASS, Sri Lanka Economic Association. Many senior staff members engage in various consultancies and it is noteworthy to mention that they handle the Business Statistics paper in GCE (A/L) examination.

Majority of the staff in the department have obtained foreign training at the postgraduate level. Many of them have contributed to research and publications and have published textbooks and other reading materials for local readership.

In relation to the postgraduate studies the judgment of the team is ‘SATISFACTORY’

4.6 Peer Observation

The department has identified the importance of peer observation. They have developed a special format for evaluation. Almost all the lecturers were evaluated by their peers. The departmental harmonic situation would definitely contribute to the peer observation activities. The Department could use these peer evaluation results to identify staff training needs and good practice identified could definitely be shared.

As far as the examination work is concerned the moderation and the second marking are done within the department. All the staff members participate in curricular revision and other academic activities. Department meetings are held once a month to discuss the departmental issues.

However, as the minutes are not prepared and maintained regularly the decisions taken at the previous meetings cannot be traced. Therefore it is recommended to maintain the minutes of the department meetings at least in point form.

In relation to the peer observation the judgment of the team is “SATISFACTORY”

4.7. Skills Development

All Degree Programs are planned with particular attention to skill development learning outcomes.

However, skill development is not explicitly stated in the learning objectives of course outlines. The department has implemented different types of skill development programs such as presentation, field survey, computer literacy, English language proficiency, analytical skills, critical thinking and report writing. The course units related to the field of management further encourage skill developments such as team work, leadership, interpersonal skills and personality development.

All students are required to do presentations to peers and staff. As a result, by the time they make their final year presentation of the research project, they are fully confident and improved the necessary skills. In most of cases presentations are done in Sinhala. Evaluation

team believe that if students can be encouraged to do the presentations at least bilingually it would be a great opportunity to improve English proficiency of graduates.

The students in the Department, after their 2nd year do not study English language since there is no any allocation for English in the curriculum after 2nd Year. The review committee feels that it is needed to continue teaching of English language till the end of the 3rd year.

‘The Faculty Research Manual for Social Sciences’ which has recently been introduced funded by IRQUE QEF-3 would help students to prepare final year project reports with least mistakes from next year.

In order to improve the leadership skills of the students, the students in the Department have organized a society called “Social Statistics Society”. Most of the 3rd and 4th year special degree students actively participate in the following activities such as cultural programs, subject of statistics promoting programs, donation of books to rural schools and sports events. The students could also be involved in such activities Journal publication, organizing guest lectures, workshops etc since they would develop the leadership qualities of students.

Though the facilities for sports activities in the university are colossal, unfortunately, the students hardly use them. It is recommended to utilize those available facilities.

The Department is in the process of developing its own resource centre with seven networked computers and statistics related books. However, the infrastructure facilities are not available there to utilize in the centre. The facilities in the computer labs are not adequate. Only eighty computers are ready for all students in the Faculty. It is advisable to increase the number of computers for students with internet facility.

Judgment given in this regard is ‘GOOD’

4. 8 Academic Guidance and Counselling

The students in the Department are getting proper help and guidance from their academic staff and other accessible sources. Course details and information on academic support are included in the Faculty hand book. The course outlines are distributed on the very first day of the course unit. However, the course outlines are needed to be revised with new learning objectives and latest readings. Students are given regular academic tutorials. Tutors help to resolve their problems related to their subjects. Students receive guidance on how to improve the quality of their tutorials in the form of written and verbal feedback.

The review team feels that the library skills of the students are not up to the standard. We therefore, recommend allocating some hours for library skills during their Orientation Program and also students could be given assignments which are to be completed only by using library facilities.

In relation to academic guidance and counselling the judgment of the team is ‘GOOD’

The following judgments were assigned to the 8 aspects reviewed in the Department of Social Statistics of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, considering the information presented in the Self Evaluation Report and during the review process. It was noted that the department has the internal capacity to improve and address much of the deficiencies prevailing at the moment. However, certain structural limitations faced by the department at the time of the review including the inadequate physical space and large student numbers were taken into consideration in arriving these judgements by the review team.

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

5. CONCLUSIONS

1. Curriculum Design, Content and Review

Strengths/ Good practices

1. Curriculum covers expected knowledge at different levels and knowledge advances in a gradual incremental fashion.
2. Curriculum revision is regularly done with the assistance of experts in the discipline.
3. Inclusion of a number of theoretical and practical courses in the curriculum strengthening students' capacity in theory as well as in their practical application.

Weaknesses

1. Recommended readings are fairly out dated with regard to certain course units.
2. Properly defined learning outcomes and aligning of course contents to the learning outcome are not observed.

2. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods

Strengths/ Good practices

1. Course outlines are provided at the beginning and printed lecture outlines are also provided.
2. Continuous assessments are in practice.
3. Moderating question papers and second marking of answer scripts by internal and external examiners are in practice.
4. A research manual is prepared.
5. At least in several subjects, questions papers are not limited to assess only subject knowledge. Students' skills in using subject related matters in practical situations are also assessed.

Weaknesses

1. Facilities required for interactive teaching are inadequate. Inadequacy of lecture rooms with multi-media facilities, computers and new books and periodicals hinder the improvement of quality of education.

2. No formal marking schemes are prepared.

3. Quality of Students including Student Progress and Achievements

Strengths/ Good practices

1. Selection criterion for special degree programs is standard.
2. Flexibility to move from special to general and from general to special up to the end of second semester of second year.
3. Minimum number of failures and dropouts from undergraduate programs.
4. Gold medals for the best performer at faculty level are secured by special degree graduates from DSS.

Weaknesses

1. The department do not maintain proper records on the performance of the students.
2. No database is maintained about passed out students.

4. Extent of use of Student feedback

Strengths/ Good practices

1. Formal mechanisms to obtain students' feedback are established at faculty level as well as department level.
2. Students' feedbacks are formerly analysed and made available for relevant teachers and other relevant parties for their actions.

Weaknesses:

1. No proper system to maintain students' feedback and therefore it is difficult to examine the level of adoption of recommendations.
2. Feedbacks are taken only at the end of the teaching modules (which is the common practice in many other universities too). Therefore, current students do not get any benefit from it.

5. Postgraduate Studies

Strengths/Good Practices

1. Department is in the process of designing two Masters Degree programs in Social and Business Statistics.
2. All the senior staff members are qualified to teach at the postgraduate level and they are currently involved in supervision and teaching at postgraduate programs.

Weaknesses

1. Two Postgraduate Diploma Programs started by the DSS are now stopped.
2. There are no PhD holders or Professors at the Department.

5. Peer Observation

Strengths/Good practices

1. Formal format for peer observations and assessments is developed and is now in practice.
2. Moderation of question papers and second examination of answer scripts are in practice.

Weaknesses

1. Practice of taking and maintaining minutes of department meetings is not observed.
2. As a result most of the decisions taken at department meetings cannot be followed formally.

6. Skills Development

Strengths/ Good practices

1. In many course units skills development component is strong.
2. Presentation skills and team work skills and required attitudes are inbuilt into program through seminars and presentations.
3. Development of IT skills is inbuilt into the program.
4. Improvement in writing and presentation skills through assignments and dissertation components

Weaknesses:

1. Presentations are mainly done only in Sinhala language. Although it is not a bad practice, if students are encouraged to do it at least bilingually it would be a great opportunity for students to acquire experience.

8. Academic Guidance and Counselling

Strengths/ Good practices

1. Student counselling procedure at university level is in practice.
2. Availability of variety modes of academic guidance including Faculty Handbook, the Department Prospectus, University website.
3. Orientation programs providing the students with necessary information and backgrounds.

Weaknesses

1. No professional Counselling
2. No office facilities for Counselling

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the Self-evaluation report and the visit of the review team following recommendations could be made to improve relevance and quality of the B.A special in Social Statistics and Business Statistics and B.A. general Degree programs.

1. The course outlines should be improved by including a course description, learning outcomes for each course, comprehensive description of evaluation methods, breakdown of the total time among individual topics, recommended reading list under each topic, and relationship of learning outcome of each course with the overall learning outcome of the degree program.
2. Maintain student database to get to know the progress made by students during their course of studies and also their employability after the graduation.
3. Encourage senior staff members to engage in research and to train the juniors for research activities in their areas of specialization.

4. Student feedback procedures need to be formalized considering the future benefits that the department may receive through this process by making it an integral part of teaching in every study program
5. Adopt the practice of peer evaluation as a formal system according to established guidelines in this regard.
6. Chair Professor post is vacant for many years. Therefore, it is recommended to take necessary actions to fill the vacancy.
7. Currently only one lecture hall is with multimedia facilities. University/faculty can help departments by improving the facilities and quality of lecture halls.
8. Department should plan to change the language of instruction at undergraduate level from Sinhala to English Medium of instruction. As initial steps towards this;
 - o Bilingual teaching is recommended at least in third and fourth years.
 - o Abstracts of the undergraduate dissertations must be at least in English.
9. Alumni Association of “Social Statistics Graduates” must be formed.
10. Formalization of practical training (internship) is recommended.
11. It is recommended the Department would absorb students who have followed Statistics, Economics, and Mathematics as a subject at the Advanced Level under special window /intake.
12. The DSS should work with the librarian to introduce a short introductory program of library facilities and efficient use of library for undergraduates during their Orientation Program.

7. ANNEXURES

Annex 1. AGENDA FOR THE SUBJECT REVIEW VISIT

Day 01 - 19.05.2010

08.00 - 09.00 Privet meeting of review panel with QAA council representatives
09.00 - 09.30 Discuss the agenda for the visit
09.30 - 10.30 Meeting(s) with the vice chancellor/ chairmen, Internal QA unit/ dean, head of the dept/ head, faculty QA cell etc. (*Working tea*)
10.30 - 11.30 Department presentation on the self evaluation report
11.30 - 12.30 Discussion
12.30 - 13.30 Lunch
13.30 - 14.30 Observation department facilities
14.30 - 15.30 Observation other facilities (Library, computer centre, farms etc)
15.30 - 16.30 Meeting with department academic staff
16.30 - 17.30 Meeting with undergraduate students
17.30 - 18.30 Brief meeting of reviewers

Day 02 – 20.05.2010

08.00 - 09.30 Observation teaching - lecture (SOST 3203)
09.30 - 10.00 Observation teaching - lecture (SOST 4206, SOST1204)
10.00 - 11.00 Observation documents. (*Working tea*)
11.00 - 12.00 Meeting with technical staff and other non - academic staff
12.00 - 12.30 Meeting with postgraduate students
12.30 - 13.30 Lunch
13.30 - 14.00 Observation teaching - lecture (MGIT3205, SOST3204)
14.00 - 14.30 Observation teaching - Tutorial (SOST 4206)
14.30 - 15.00 Observation students' presentations (SOST/MGIT 4999)
15.00 - 15.30 Observation Teaching - Practical class (MGIT 3206)
15.30 - 16.30 Meeting with Special degree students
16.30 - 17.00 Meeting of review

Day 03 21.05.2010

08.00 - 09.30 Observation students' presentations (MGIT3205)
09.30 - 10.00 Observation teaching - lecture (SOST3205)
10.00 - 10.30 Meeting students counselors/ academic advisors/personal tutors
10.30 - 11.00 Review private discussion
11.00 - 12.00 Meeting with head and staff for reporting
12.00 - 13.00 Lunch
13.00 - 17.00 Report Writing

Annex 2. LIST OF FACILITIES OBSERVED

1. Office of the Department
2. Lecturers' Rooms
3. Lecture Halls
4. Computer Unit
5. Department Library
6. Main University Library

Annex 3. LIST OF DOCUMENTS OBSERVED

- Faculty and Department Hand Books
- Course Outlines
- Handouts
- Past Examination Papers (End of Semester)
- Mid Semester Examination Papers
- Attendance Sheets
- Mark Sheets
- Dissertations
- Assignments
- Student evaluation forms
- Minutes of the Department Meetings
- Academic staff Publications