



**GENDER POLICY
FOR UNIVERSITY OF BENIN,
BENIN CITY, NIGERIA.**

JANUARY, 2019



Prepared By
Centre for Gender Studies,
University of Benin,
Benin City, Nigeria.

Foreword

The University of Benin, Benin City is committed to promoting a diverse, scholarly community in which people are valued, respected, and treated equitably. Its quest to achieve excellence in teaching and research requires an academic environment in which staff and students from a wide range of backgrounds can flourish irrespective of class, race or gender.

The development of this Gender Policy has been inspired by the overwhelming demand to correct the imbalances in academia with regards to issues of equality amongst the sexes.

This policy aims to deliver equity outcomes to all groups, especially those from low socio-economic backgrounds, those with disabilities, women in areas where they are under-represented and to the general staff.

The University of Benin opposes discrimination on the grounds of gender, ethnic or national origins, employment status, disability, family status, marital status, health status, gender identity, age, religious or ethical belief. This policy strategy requires that all selections, appointments, promotions and evaluation processes should be based on impartial assessment of merit, which definition is inclusive of diverse skills and contributions. Where necessary, procedures will be

reviewed, training provided and assistance given in achieving the successful delivery of equal opportunities.

I am confident that the Gender Policy will serve as a point of reference in policy making and implementation in the University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria.

Prof. (Mrs.) Evelyn Uwa Edosomwan
Director, Centre for Gender Studies.

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1. RATIONALE

There is a growing awareness in the University of Benin of the need to improve gender equity and equality.

Our society value men and women differently, and allocate roles and responsibilities specific to their gender. This results in gender division of labour and significantly influences who has access to resources, benefits and decision making powers.

Men often experience better access to, more control over and more use of productive resources than women do. Differential valuing of gender roles places power in the hands of men and this perpetuates discriminatory gender roles throughout various levels, including the household, the community and the public spheres.

This gender policy will guide the University of Benin in its actions to eliminate barriers and gender inequality within the University community.

The policy seeks to create a framework that will assist the University to encourage gender equality in all staff and student activities and ensure equitable participation and appropriate representation of both genders in all its decision making processes. Specifically, the policy commits the University to applying the principle of gender equality in staffing, training and development, student enrolment; and provide equal opportunities in teaching, learning and research.

2. Centre's Vision and Mission

The Centre shares the vision of the University which is to be a model institution of higher learning which ranks among the best in the world and is responsive to the creative and innovative abilities of the Nigerian people.

The Mission of the Centre is to be a Centre of Excellence in academic and intervention activities that will contribute significantly to gender equity and equality in the University, the community and country.

2.1 Objectives

The objectives of the Centre for Gender Studies are to promote:

- i. Excellence in multidisciplinary research and teaching on gender issues that will lead to mainstreaming gender, women's and children's right issues, development of gender responsive curricula, good gender policy formulation, dissemination, evaluation and monitoring. Broaden the learning experiences of female and male students for better future job options.
- ii. Empowerment, capacity building and utilizing potentials in Research methodologies leadership abilities and personal skill, intervention project.

- iii. Conferences/Seminars/Workshops/Education/fairs/Documentation/Retrieval/Publication for increased gender sensitization and awareness.
- iv. A gender sensitive University Community.
- v. Excellence in multi disciplinary research and teaching of gender differentiation in all fields.
- vi. Capacity in women to cope with the quality of intellectual and family responsibilities.
- vii. Re-orientation of men and women in relations to women education and employment, gender roles and equity in children upbringing.
- viii. Examination of gender based attitude, aspiration, discrimination, difference in power and authority.
- ix. Examination of the impact of economic and political system on the under-privileged (both male and female).
- x. And to serve as a reference material for students in the following programmes:
 - a. Diploma in Gender Studies
 - b. Certificate in Gender Studies
 - c. Master's Programme in Gender and Peace Building.
 - d. Doctorate Programme in Gender Studies.

3. APPLICATION

This policy applies to the whole University, covering both Campuses, all Colleges, Faculties, Schools, Departments, Sections, Institutes, Centres and Units.

4.0 POLICY PRINCIPLES, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

This policy is based on the following values:

- a) The University is sensitive to gender issues and committed to addressing gender imbalances in enrolment of students and staffing;
- b) Women and men are to be valued equally in all dimensions of employment or responsibilities providing equitable opportunities for development;
- c) To develop and include a course on Gender and Transformation Leadership;
- d) A curriculum that includes learning experiences and areas of knowledge which will assist all students to gain an understanding of gender disparity in most societies, and of the meaning of the universal right to equality;
- e) The commitment of the University to building an all-inclusive academic community which provides the opportunity

for all persons to develop their full potentials irrespective of disability, socio-cultural background and sex;

f) Affirmative action strategies to improve the quality of education for women based on a recognition that action is required at all levels of the education system to advance women's development and achieve gender equality and equity.

4.1 Principle One

The University of Benin is committed to the achievement of gender balance with respect to both academic and administrative staffing and decision making processes.

4.1.1 Policy Objective

To encourage increase in the percentage of females in leadership position in the University in the next five years (2019-2024).

4.1.2 Strategies

a) The University shall give preference to women applicants in the recruitment process in situations where both sexes perform equally. However, departments where the ratio is already weighed in favour of women, men will be favourably considered.

b) Colleges, Faculties, Schools, Departments, Sections, Institutes, Centres and Units shall search for qualified women to fill vacant academic and administrative positions.

c) The University shall ensure that there is a fair representation of both women and men on all committees and boards.

d) The University shall ensure that its policies on staff development are fair and non-discriminatory on the basis of sex.

e) The University shall ensure the review of its policy documents and should be gender responsive.

f) Women shall be encouraged to take on higher level responsibilities.

g) The University will provide a mentoring scheme for women in areas where there is an identified need.

4.2 Principle Two

The University of Benin is committed to achieving gender balance in enrolment of students.

4.2.1 Policy Objective

To increase the enrolment of female students.

4.2.2 Strategies

a) The University will adopt appropriate concessionary measures in designated disciplines where numbers in a particular gender are unacceptably low.

b) The University shall ensure gender equity in the award of scholarships.

4.3 Principle Three

The University of Benin will maintain gender-disaggregated statistics on both staff and students for decision-making purposes.

4.3.1 Policy Objective

To provide gender-disaggregated statistics for reporting, monitoring and decision-making purposes.

4.3.2 Strategies

a) The University will maintain a gender-disaggregated statistics of all staff, disaggregated further by Colleges, Faculties, Schools, Departments, Sections, Institutes, Centres and Units; and will update this statistics annually and publish it.

b) The University will maintain a gender-disaggregated statistics of all students, disaggregated further by Colleges, Faculties, Schools, Departments, Sections, Institutes, Centres and Units, programme and level, and will update this statistics annually and publish it.

c) The University will maintain a database of all members of the academic and administrative staff, specifying their qualifications, experiences, areas of expertise and interest and services to and outside the University.

4.4 Principle Four

The University of Benin shall address gender issues in the content of courses and course materials.

4.4.1 Policy Objective

To ensure gender-sensitive academic curriculum (e.g secrecy engenders suspicion) by making sure content of courses and materials for teaching and learning are gender responsive.

4.4.2 Strategies

a) Encourage the review and restructuring of courses to ensure coverage of gender issues.

b) Promote an environment which is supportive of women in all aspects including teaching and learning processes,

classroom management, organisation, the social and cultural and physical environment, values and attitudes.

c) The University will ensure that its annual budget follows the tenets of gender budgeting.

d) Plan for the implementation of gender studies within the University in the next five years.

4.5 Principle Five

The University of Benin supports the development of policy documents from a gender perspective and the use of gender sensitive language at all levels of activity.

4.5.1 Goal Objective

To promote the use of gender sensitivity in:

- a) All University documents;
- b) All published matter ascribed to the University of Benin;
- c) All information conveyed to students, staff and applicants for positions in the University.

4.5.2 Strategies

The following practices should be observed:

- a) The use of 'man' or 'men' as generic terms to describe both genders should be avoided as much as possible. The use of these terms should be restricted to males. Gender neutral/sensitive terms exist and should be used, for example, 'person', 'people', 'staff', 'personnel';
- b) Plural subjects should be used in case of unspecified gender to avoid awkward use of pronouns. For example, the phrase “Each student should check his or her results” should be expressed “Students should check their results”;
- c) Where it is not relevant, a person's gender should not be mentioned. For example the phrase “The woman referee....” should be expressed “The referee”
- d) Educate the University community on the use of gender sensitive language.
- e) Encourage the review of University of Benin policy documents from a gender perspective.

4.6 Principle Six

The University of Benin is committed to ensuring that gender issues are considered and included in University grant proposals and projects.

4.6.1 Policy Objective

To ensure that proposals for funding are gender visible.

4.6.2 Strategies

a) Project proposals in all fields shall consider the needs of all sexes, with greater emphasis on women's training and capacity-building.

b) Monitoring and evaluation of projects should identify the impact on women.

5. TIMEFRAME AND MONITORING

This policy has identified six principles with implementation strategies. The strategies serve as guidelines. Colleges, Faculties, Schools, Departments, Sections, Institutes, Centres and Units may use other strategies where appropriate to achieve the objectives in line with gender equality and gender equity principles.

To ensure that the policy is implemented and makes a meaningful impact:

- a. An interdisciplinary gender balanced committee shall be established to ensure that the policy is implemented by the different Colleges, Faculties, Schools, Departments, Sections, Institutes, Centres and Units of the University.

- b. Indicators for measuring the progress of policy objectives will be developed by the Committee.

- c. Achievements will be monitored and reported annually.

A sensitization programme will be organized on the gender policy for the University community. The policy will be made available to all staff and students.

The Policy shall be effective from April, 2019.

6. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Gender mainstreaming requires in-depth analysis, the development of tools for gender integration, capacity building of technical teams, the training and sensitization of organs, institutions and beneficiary sectors and skills for monitoring and evaluation, as well as the drafting of reports.

Definition of Technical terms used to describe this process:-

CEDAW: The Convention on Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) a document adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1977 provides the basis for realising equality between men and women through ensuring women's access to, and equal opportunities in, political and public life; and state parties have

agreed to take appropriate measures including legislation and temporary special measures so that women can enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms.

EMPOWERMENT: The process of "conscientisation" which builds critical analytical skills for an individual to gain self-confidence in order to take control of her or his life. Empowerment of women is an essential process in the transformation of gender relations because it addresses the structural and underlying causes of subordination and discrimination.

ENGENDERING: In Gender studies, engendering refers to the process of integrating gender considerations and concerns into words, action and assessment.

GENDER AWARENESS: A state of knowledge of the differences in roles and relations of women and men and how this results in differences in power relations, status, privileges and needs. It is also the recognition of the differences in the interests, needs and roles of women and men in society and how they result in differences in power, status and privilege. It also means the ability to identify problems arising from gender inequity and discrimination.

GENDER BLIND: The situation where potentially differential policy impacts on men and women are ignored

GENDER BUDGET: A budgeting method that analyses the

incidence of budgets on men and women and girls and boys. Gender budgeting entails analyses of revenue and expenditure impacts so as to avoid or correct gender imbalances.

GENDER DISCRIMINATION: Differential treatment to individuals on the grounds of gender.

GENDER EQUALITY: A situation where women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and potential; are able to contribute equally to national political, economic, social and cultural development; and benefit equally from the results. Gender Equality entails that the underlying causes of discrimination are systematically identified and removed in order to give women and men equal opportunities. The concept of Gender Equality, as used in this policy framework, takes into account women's existing subordinate positions within social relations and aims at the restructuring of society so as to eradicate male domination. Therefore, equality is understood to include both formal equality and substantive equality; not merely simple equality to men.

GENDER EQUITY: The fair and just distribution of all means of opportunities and resources between women and men.

GENDER GAP: A difference in any aspect of the socio economic status of women and men, arising from the different social roles ascribed by society for women and men.

GENDER INDICATOR: An indicator that captures gender related changes in society over time and in relation to a norm (Beck, 1999).

GENDER ISSUES: These are issues that arise when the relationships between women and men, their roles, privileges, status and positions are identified and analysed. Gender issues arise where inequalities and inequities are shown to exist between people purely on the basis of their being female or male. The fact that gender and gender differences are socially constructed is itself a primary issue to deal with.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING: Refers to a process that is goal oriented. It recognises that most institutions consciously or unconsciously serve the interests of men and encourages institutions to adopt a gender perspective in transforming themselves. It promotes the full participation of women in decision-making so that women's needs move from the margins to the centre of development planning and resource allocation.

GENDER NEUTRAL: The assumption that policies, programmes and project interventions do not have a gender dimension and therefore affect men and women in the same way. In practice, policies intended to be gender neutral can be gender blind.

GENDER PERSPECTIVE: An approach in which the ultimate goal is to create equity and equality between women and men. Such an approach has a set of tools for and guidelines on how to identify the impact on development of the relations and roles of women and men.

GENDER POLICY: An organisation's policy that integrates gender in the mainstream of its programme activities, where the policy also designates institutional arrangements, responsibilities, management functions and tools/guidelines for mainstreaming.

GENDER RESPONSIVE: Refers to a planning process in which programmes and policy actions are developed to deal with and counteract problems which arise out of socially constructed differences between women and men.

GENDER SENSITIVE: The state of knowledge of the socially constructed differences between women and men, including differences in their needs, as well as to the use of such knowledge to identify and understand the problems arising from such differences and to act purposefully to address them.

GENDER STEREOTYPING: Constant portrayal in the media, the press or in the education system, of women and men occupying certain roles according to the socially

constructed gender division of labour and expectations in behaviour.

GENDER TRAINING: The provision of formal learning experiences and skills in order to increase gender analysis and awareness skills, which serve to recognise and address gender issues in the programming process. Training can include the three dimensions of political: introducing gender concepts and analysis, the professional: providing staff with “how-to” skills and the personal: challenging an individual’s gender attitudes and stereotypes.

GENDER: In this policy framework document, refers to the social roles allocated respectively to women and to men in particular societies and at particular times. Such roles, and the differences between them, are conditioned by a variety of political, economic, ideological and cultural factors and are characterised in most societies by unequal power relations. Gender is distinguished from sex which is biologically determined. It is also defined as the socially and culturally constructed differences between men and women, boys and girls, which give them unequal value, opportunities and life chances. It also refers to typically masculine and feminine characteristics, abilities and expectations about how women and men should behave in society. These characters are time bound and changeable.

POLICY: Guiding principles to a course of action arrived at by decision-makers to address a particular issue or issues.

SEX: The biological state of being a male or female. Sex is not equal to gender.

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GENDER MAINSTREAMING ACTION PLAN FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF BENIN (UNIBEN)

Overarching statement:

This action plan is to strengthen the gender platform to support the various activities and processes leading to the full implementation of Gender Mainstreaming Policy.

S/N	Goal	Strategy	Activities	Persons Responsible
1.	To promote the implementation of gender policy and gender mainstreaming processes Time Frame: 3 months	Engage the University Management Council, staff and students in raising gender mainstreaming awareness. Advocacy to promote and strengthen the implementation of gender equity and equality	i. Consolidation with Management; presentation of policy paper to Senate and Council on gender mainstreaming and national gender policy. ii. Development of handbills, posters, charts and audio-visual materials on gender issues with CRPU/ICT Units. iii. Organise debates for students on gender equality and empowerment. iv. Affirmation statement included in the various UNIBEN policies and other documents. v. Conduct workshop and seminars on gender equality, creation of gender equity clubs among staff and students vi. Introduction of gender studies into GST curriculum for 2020/2021 session.	Directors, Centre for Gender Studies, Distance Learning, Deans and Heads of Units (both academic and non-academic) and SUG Executives. Monitoring Indicators: Where there is positive response in terms of approval from Vice-Chancellor, Senate and Council. Monitors: Directors, Gender Studies; Distance Learning and Sustainable Development Desk Officers.

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S/N	Goal	Strategy	Activities	Persons Responsible
2.	To secure support and commitment for implementation of gender mainstreaming (gender equality and equity) in the University Time Frame: 3 months	Set up a University Gender Committee to be chaired by the Chairman of Board Centre for Gender Studies Presentation of gender equality, equity and equal opportunity documents to Union Leaders using Committees for advocacy	Committee members to lobby management and meet with executives of Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), Senior Staff Association of Nigeria Universities (SSANU), National Association of Academic Technologists (NAAT) Non-Academics Staff of Universities (NASU), Students Union Government (SUG), and UNIBEN Alumni Association	Gender Committee members, Directors for Gender Studies, Centre for Distance Learning as well as Sustainable Development Desk Offers Monitoring Indicators: Senate approval of the document Monitors: Gender Committee members, Directors for Gender Studies, Centre for Distance Learning as well as Sustainable Development Desk Offers

S/N	Goal	Strategy	Activities	Persons Responsible
3.	To improve funding for gender mainstreaming activities which include, security, staff and students' welfare Time Frame: 4 months.	i. Soliciting for the expansion of the day care facilities in the University through the University/Union members ii. Expanding the day care facilities in the University iii. Improvement of lightening in faculties and streets for security on campus iv. Clearing of grasses and pulling down unsafe structures and trees v. Providing facilities for security staff to do their work/job effectively at all time for proper surveillance of unsafe places within the campus	Sourcing for funds: Approaching alumni association of the university, organisations within university catchment area for financial assistance and also approaching NGOs and Governmental Organisations for assistance	Management of the University, Provost, Deans and Directors, Chief Security Officer (CSO) and Heads of Units (i.e. Head of Departments) Monitoring Indicators: Approval of the document by the Management Monitors: Directors, Centres for Gender Studies; Distance Learning