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Varsity suspends staff training

By Grace Omwa Ombara

The University of Nairobi has suspended training programmes for administrators.

Speaking to *The Anvil*, administrators who requested anonymity informed our reporter that since they had applied for study leave following their admission to various faculties within the University last October they had not received any response to date.

The administrators interviewed lamented that the University had verbally informed them to look for their own scholarship if they intended to proceed for further studies. They said that the Recruitment and Training office vaguely informed them that the University had withdrawn from waiving of tuition fee due to a financial crisis.

Protesting at the University Administration's bias over the release of certain staff whose tuition fees were waived, the administrators gave *The Anvil* cases of staff who were currently paying their own fees and were on 80 per cent salary yet they had been deferred, while others in the same group had had their tuition fees waived and were on full salary. Other staff, had either sponsored themselves from their meagre savings



Prof. Francis Gichaga



Prof. Raphael Munavu

while others had sought scholarships elsewhere.

The administrators decried the Administration's silence over the issue as more staff would continue applying for courses and wasting Kshs 500 on application fees without knowing the University's stand on the matter. "They should at least send us a circular so that we have the slightest idea on how to proceed or where to look for money for further training." One of them said. They repeated a rumour going on within administrative circles of a conspiracy by the Academic staff to stifle their chances of upward mobility by denying them training while they continued advancing.

Contacted for comment the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Administration and Finance, Prof. Raphael Munavu admitted that there was a temporary "halt" of waiver of tuition fees, not only for Administrative staff but for all non-academic staff. Prof. Munavu informed *The Anvil* that staff training should not be treated as a general issue because staff normally requested for leave on individual basis depending on initiative and ambition. He noted that there were staff who did not request for study leave at all. Others who did not fall into the waiver category, joined outside institutions—both locally and abroad valued at about Shs 500,000/= per

administrator. Such staff defied bonding regulations after training and fled to other organizations costing the Varsity millions in losses.

Admitting that there had been a weakness in the structure of policy issues related to training of non-academic staff, Prof. Munavu explained that originally, the University concentrated only on the Academic staff training programmes. Then, administrators were very few. With the expansion and a large increase in the number of students, the number of administrators and other staff increased.

"It is for this reason," says Prof. Munavu, "that the Administration has decided to review staff training programmes fairly for all non-academic staff. We may have made some mistakes in the past but as an Institution we must begin to manage for the future in the right direction. We are living in a world of change and must therefore be conscious of the purpose of the Institution and realise the conditions under which it can be managed." He said that the University would review training programmes that were relevant and could be used

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Education Building for "plastic surgery"

By Wairimu Ngugi and Omiti Odiambo

Education Building is set for rehabilitation, the Principal, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Professor Francis Kibera, has said.

In an interview with *The Anvil*, Prof. Kibera revealed that the college was "in the process of rehabilitating all the lecture halls including Education Theatres." Science II, which is run by the college, has already been repaired while the others were going to be repaired in the next few weeks.

Education Building, which has deteriorated due to flooding of the basement and lack of resources for maintenance, featured recently in *The Anvil*. The problem has been exacerbated by vandalism and the heavy rains caused by the *El Nino*

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to measure staff performance. "He decried the weak appraisal programme currently in existence and said that it did not augur well for appropriate rewards for members of staff who had served the University faithfully.

On the issue of not communicating to administrators about their training, Prof. Munavu confirmed to *The Anvil* that the administration had communicated to all members of staff who applied for study leave, early this year. He asked those who had not received his or her letter to contact Recruitment and Training or his office rather than personalize issues.

Prof. Munavu denied that there was bias in release of staff and their conditions of study leave. He said that any oversight on the part of the Administrative office should be taken in good faith.