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Vice Rectorate in Europe



DAAD

Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst
German Academic Exchange Service

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Major step achieved to improve educational opportunities through e-learning at Yaoundé I University in Cameroon

United Nations University in Bonn and the University of Yaoundé I signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to formalize the institutional collaboration between the two universities. Both agreed to further enhance the e-learning activities established already in 2008.

Bonn, 12 January 2012. Prof. Jakob Rhyner, Vice Rector in Europe of the United Nations University (UNU), and Prof. Oumarou Bouba, Rector of the University of Yaoundé I, Cameroon, were pleased that a long-lasting fruitful cooperation could now be formalized with a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). Since 2008, UNU e-learning experts were closely working together with the experts of the Yaoundé I University to establish blended learning in the Departments of Biology, Chemistry, English Language, German Language and Mathematics at the Higher Teachers' Training College of the University of Yaoundé I, as well as the Department of African Languages and Linguistics of the Faculty of Arts, Letters and Social Sciences of the University of Yaoundé I.

This e-learning initiative helps to cope with the dramatically rising student enrolments and to counteract scarce resources (teaching staff, learning material, lecture halls). E-learning bears the potential that in the future students from all over Africa will be able to participate in higher education, without necessarily having to travel for thousands of kilometres to get specialized training. A computer and internet connection, while not simply replacing the personal contacts, will help students to access necessary learning material.

To further improve the institutional collaboration between the two universities, the signing parties want to enhance information exchange, research activities and publication initiatives in the field of e-learning, for example through the training of trainers.

Background:

Cooperation between Yaoundé I and UNU-ViE in the field of e-learning dates back to 2008, when UNU-ViE was invited to the "Humboldt Colloquium on E-Learning" to explain the potential of e-learning for the University of Yaoundé I. Funded by the Alexander-von-Humboldt Foundation, Prof. Foupouagnigni spent two months at UNU-ViE in Bonn in 2009 developing a project plan and meeting other German universities with renowned expertise in e-learning.

Between 2011 and 2012 the initiative was funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) through the "E-Learning at the University of Yaoundé I, Cameroon" project. In this project, the Baden-Wuerttemberg Cooperative State University, Germany, Kenyatta University, Kenya, the University of Cape Town, South Africa and UNU work together to enable teachers to develop content, skills and understanding of e-learning methodologies and techniques at the Higher Teacher Training College of the University of Yaoundé I. This long-lasting cooperation between UNU and Yaoundé I has now culminated in the signature of the MoU. <http://www.vie.unu.edu/article/read/mou-signed-between-university-of-yaounde-and-unu-1>

Further Information:

The United Nations University Vice Rectorate in Europe (UNU-ViE) based in Bonn/Germany is an integral part of the Rector's office and the first Vice Rectorate of UNU outside the headquarters in Tokyo, Japan. Established in May 2007, it strengthens the presence of UNU in Europe. It is dedicated to develop knowledge-based sustainable solutions for global problems and is therefore an active organizer of international science policy dialogues for sustainability. <http://www.vie.unu.edu/>

Also based in Bonn, the United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS) further investigates the teaching – research nexus to enhance the graduate education and research training. The section develops open educational resources on vulnerability and risk for sharing with educators, students and self-learners to use, reuse and adapt them in teaching, learning and research. <http://www.ehs.unu.edu/>

The University of Yaoundé I is a leading university in Cameroon. Founded in 1962 as the University of Yaoundé, the university was split into the "University of Yaoundé I" and the "University of Yaoundé II" due to the reforms of the university system of 1993 that intended to diversify higher education and provide more varied programmes. <http://www.uy1.uninet.cm>

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) is the largest funding organization in the world supporting the international exchange of students and scholars. Since it was founded in 1925, more than 1.5 million scholars in Germany and abroad have received DAAD funding. The DAAD runs over 250 different programmes, through which it funds more than 74,000 German and foreign scholars worldwide per year. Students from Cameroon represent the biggest group among Africans enrolled at German Universities. <http://www.daad.de/en/index.html>

Interesting links:

E-learning UNU Bonn: <http://www.vie.unu.edu/article/read/scientia/e-learning>

Priority Africa: <http://www.vie.unu.edu/article/read/priority-africa>

UNU in Bonn: <http://www.bonn.unu.edu/>

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