



UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

NEWSLETTER



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Postgraduate Convocation July 2008



*Professor Emeritus Eric Hamilton
Karunanayake receiving the Degree of
Doctor of Science (Honoris Causa).*



*Professor Emeritus Kusuma
Karunaratne receiving the Degree of
Doctor of Letters (Honoris Causa).*



*Deshamanya Rajendra KW
Goonesekere receiving the Degree of
Doctor of Laws (Honoris Causa).*

Editorial

Let us pause a little from our busy schedules and take time to think of the role of an academic in a higher learning institution such as the University of Colombo. The meaning of the noun academic in the Oxford dictionary is “a teacher or a scholar in an institute of higher education”. When the word academic is used as an adjective it is described as “relating education and scholarship; scholarly rather than technical or practical; of only theoretical interest”. According to Webster's dictionary the meaning of the noun academic is “an educator who works at a college or university”. Hence our primary duty is to impart scholastic aptitude to the younger generation and perhaps to share our knowledge and expertise with colleagues at our own level. The measure of how successful we are in this endeavor can be seen to a certain extent by student grades at examinations. As we all know, this measurement is not the best as it has many variables; however, evaluation of our lectures by students would give us a better assessment of our teaching abilities. Hence, teacher evaluation is as important as student evaluation in determining whether we fulfill our duties as academics. The recent quality assurance programs will also help us to ascertain this. However, with little expense, distribution of a questionnaire at the end of the lecture course and reading the comments from the students will help us to see whether we are doing justice to the educational system in the university. Such self evaluation is often more acceptable to us than a formal evaluation imposed on us by our superiors.

What we have today is a knowledge driven economy. Imparting knowledge brings us greater benefits in certain private institutions than in the conventional university system. Remuneration is not in keeping with the contribution we make, and hence academics are compelled to earn extra either by teaching or by using their professional knowledge in carrying out consultancy services. The university system allows this interaction, although the privilege is sometimes abused; hence we academics must remember to do justice to our primary employer first. Do our duties end here? We all have 24 hours a day and human beings should spend quality time with their families to maintain a well balanced life. Once we spend our time in the aforementioned activities, do we have enough time for an inquiring mind for research?

One may argue that the dictionary definition of an academic does not seem to involve any research component. Yet the word “development” goes hand in hand with the word “research” as we see the phrase “research and development” all the time, especially in the industry. This is a crucial factor in the survival of a company as industries must continuously revise their design and range of products to survive against their competitors. Hence, the country will benefit immensely from research geared towards solving industrial problems. What is the role of an academic towards research? Let us refer to the following excerpts of the speech delivered by Professor Eric H Karunanayake at the Postgraduate Convocation of the University of Colombo in July 2008. “Singapore, with absolutely no natural resources, reached its present state of development through investment in high quality scientific research and human resource development in frontier technologies. The scientists who reached international recognition in research conducted in Singapore received substantive cash incentives in terms of quantum jumps in their salaries. In contrast, in Sri Lanka there has been no mechanism to reward productive scientists. Even in the universities, the one doing good research and the one doing no research at all gets the same annual increment”. Whether this should be based on the number of research papers is questionable. One may argue that a mere consultation service to solve an industrial problem could be far more beneficial than having a large number of research publications.

Let us end here by allowing our learned colleagues to ponder upon the above ideas. Professor Karunanayake in his convocation address says “A University is considered a repository of knowledge and is required to create and disseminate new knowledge. It is therefore incumbent upon all academics to undertake at least some research as part of their academic activities”

The time has come for us to re-think how we spend our valuable time.



UNIVERSITY HISTORY

A glimpse into the history of the oldest medical school in Sri Lanka

Established in 1870 as the Colombo Medical School, the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka, is the second oldest medical school in South Asia.

The idea of setting up a medical school in Ceylon is attributed to Governor Sir George Anderson (1852); however it remained merely an idea. The Colombo Medical School is said to owe its existence to the “prevalence of an obstinate and loathsome disease in the Island in the 1860s which caused much misery and suffering to the natives and led to an alarming depopulation of the Wannai districts”. In 1867, the Governor of Ceylon, Sir Hercules Robinson, ordered an enquiry into the causes of the depopulation of the Wannai districts in the Northern Province. On the recommendation of Dr WP Charsley, Principal Civil Medical Officer (PCMO), this enquiry was entrusted to Dr James Loos, Colonial Surgeon, Northern Province. One of Dr Loos's recommendations for improving the general sanitary state of the country was the adoption of a plan of medical education in the Island, and on the 1 June, 1870 the Governor, Sir Hercules Robinson, opened the Colombo Medical School.



Dr James Loos became its first Principal. This honour was the reward of hard and honest work. Dr Loos is remembered up to date by a Gold Medal for Pathology. He left his post in 1875 when he was made Colonial Surgeon, Central Province. From its inception in 1870 up to 1942 when it acquired university status, the School was a government department.

The Colombo Medical School was born—appropriately enough—in the Female Surgical Ward of the General Hospital of that time. The land on which the Colombo Medical School now stands was gifted to the Government in 1875 by public benefactor and philanthropist, Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate, Samson Wijegoonaratna De Abrew Rajapakse, JP. Among the other benefactors to whose munificence the School is indebted were Mr CH de Soysa, JP, Mr Susew de Soysa, Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate, Mr J W Charles de Soysa., Mr A Simon Fernando Wijegooneratne, Muhandiram and Mr Vimala Gunawardane Mudaliyar. Mr CH de Soysa built the Dr Soysa Lying-in-Home and presented it to the Government in 1870, where students received their instruction in midwifery. Also in 1870, Mr Susew de Soysa donated a block of buildings to the School which housed the colonial medical library, the Pathology Museum and the biological laboratory. The bacteriological institute was built in 1899 through the generosity of Mr J W Charles de Soysa. The buildings which made up the School in its early days exist no more. All that remains of the early landmarks is the Koch Memorial Clock Tower erected in 1881 to perpetuate the memory of Dr Edwin Lawson Koch, the second Principal of the School. Sadly, Dr Koch held office for just two years, and died in 1877 at the age of 40 from the effects of a wound received when performing a post-mortem.

Of the present buildings which constitute the Faculty of Medicine, the anatomy block was built mainly in 1913; the physiology block was completed in 1930; the pathology block in 1941 and the administration block in 1954. After Dr EL Koch's death Dr JL Vanderstraaten was appointed Principal in 1878 and served in that capacity for some 21 years.

The institution which began as “an elementary school “ in 1870 was raised to the dignity of a “ College “ ten years later by the Acting Governor, Sir John Douglas.

He did this on the recommendation of the Principal Civil Medical Officer and Inspector General of Hospitals of that time, Dr William Raymond Kynsey, after whom Kynsey Road is named. Kynsey road led from General Hospital to the Kanatte Cemetery; and some see a grim humour in this token to Dr Kynsey's memory. In 1884 the course offered by the School was extended to one of five years. The standard of medical knowledge of the graduates of the School was by then considered to be as high as those of the provincial medical schools of Great Britain. From 1888, licentiates of the College were entitled to append to their names the three letters LMS. The diploma of LMS (Ceylon) was a prestigious one. In 1887 Queen Victoria and her Privy Council granted full recognition to licentiates of the School who were at liberty, if they so desired, to practice in Great Britain.

In 1885, the General Hospital, Colombo, which was the teaching hospital of the Medical School, consisted of 22 wards, one house physician and one house surgeon who were guided by a visiting physician and surgeon. The visiting surgeon at that time was Dr WG Roekwood who is commemorated by the Roekwood Gold Medal awarded for surgery. In 1892 women were admitted to the School for the first time. The first woman licentiate, though, was Miss A de Boer who joined the school in 1893.

From 1898 to 1915 Sir Allan Perry was principal of the school. The quarter of a century (1915—1940) following Sir Allan Perry's retirement saw no less than four Principals of the School (OJ Rutherford, JFE Bridger, JFL Briercliffe and ST Gunasekera). In 1924, the control of the Ceylon Medical College was vested in a special council called the Ceylon Medical College Council.

The present physiology and pathology blocks came into being in 1926. The Pathology block was converted during the second World War into a convalescent hospital for the commonwealth.

The year 1942 marked a major turning point in the story of the Colombo Medical School. In that year, the school acquired university status, being incorporated in the University of Ceylon as its Faculty of Medicine. To Sir Ivor Jennings must go the credit for making the University of Ceylon materialize at the time it did, Almost single-handedly he transformed the University College and the Ceylon Medical College, into the University of Ceylon. He secured the University its autonomy and the freedom to develop as a University and not as a government department. The LMS was converted into the degree of MBBS.

With the incorporation of Colombo Medical College in the University of Ceylon its “principal executive and academic officer” became, the Vice-chancellor of the university. It was however the Dean of the Medical Faculty who organized teaching and set in motion the machinery of the Faculty.

The first Dean of the School (1942-1945) was Professor WAE Karunaratne. He effected a smooth transformation of the Ceylon Medical College into the Medical Faculty of the University of Ceylon. The second Dean, Sir Nicholas Attygalle was responsible for many improvements in the Colombo Medical Faculty. It was during his time as Dean that the post graduate examinations of MD, MS and MOG were first conducted. Further, during his time as Vice-Chancellor separate departments for Paediatrics, Bacteriology, Biochemistry, Pharmacology and Parasitology were created. Professor OER Abhayaratne was the third Dean of the Colombo Medical Faculty. He was elected as Dean for five successive triennia from 1954 to 1967.

On the 1 June 1970 the Colombo Medical Faculty celebrated its hundredth birthday. As always, the Head of the State His Excellency the Governor-General William Gopallawa was there to grace the occasion and to wish the Faculty well. Today, the Faculty of Medicine is one of the foremost centres in medical education and research in the country.

OUR STRENGTHS

The University of Colombo School of Computing

Academic Programmes

In 1988, the first batch of 20 students entered the Computer Science special degree programme at the University of Colombo which has since produced over 600 graduates. With the setting up of the UCSC, a direct intake of 120 students was admitted by the UGC for the *Computer Science* stream to the UCSC in 2003. In 2004, this was further increased to accommodate 160 to the Computer Science stream and 80 for a newly launched Information Systems stream titled *Information & Communication Technology*. Both these streams have three year and four year programmes with the fourth year dedicated to research.

The UCSC also conducts several general degree courses for students of the Faculty of Science. More importantly it also services the interdisciplinary joint honours programmes in Bioinformatics, Computational Physics, Computational Chemistry, Statistics and Computer Science and Mathematics with Computer Science.

Back in 1989 the first Masters programme in Computer Science in Sri Lanka was established with assistance from a UK ODA grant with faculty from Cardiff University undertaking several courses. Over the past 20 years, this programme has evolved and presently consists of two separate Masters programmes – one for those with a basic Computer Science or IT degree (the Master of Computer Science programme) and another for those with a degree in a non-IT area (the Master of Information Technology programme). Together with the Postgraduate Diploma programme that commenced in 1988 conducted by the Institute of Computer Technology, the University of Colombo has so far produced more than 1,000 postgraduates, many of whom hold the senior positions in today's IT industry.

In response to increasing demands from the industry, the UCSC through its predecessors, the ICT and DSCS, launched the Bachelor of Information Technology programme as a scalable external degree programme in the year 2000, with all the teaching provided by private training institutes. Hailed as one of the more successful examples of effective public-private partnerships, the BIT programme during its first 7 year period has been able to produce about 500 BIT graduates, 2500 IT Diplomates, and over 1000 Higher Diplomates in IT. In its first curriculum revision cycle in 2003, a pilot Learning Management System was introduced to be expanded in the second revision cycle in 2006 as a fully blown online degree programme renamed the eBIT. To date, significant improvement in student performance has been recorded through these initiatives.

In addition to these formal degree programmes, the UCSC also offers industry oriented high demand courses in areas such as AutoCAD, Intermediate and Advanced Java, Linux User and Administration, Digital Video Production, Advanced Web Development, Graphics and Animation, and PC Application Packages during evenings and weekends.

Research

Since 2004, the UCSC has focused on exploiting its research potential in a bid to differentiate itself from the large number of foreign franchised and privately established IT degrees in the country. At the beginning most of the research carried out by its staff was through short-term undergraduate and postgraduate projects, but now new research groups are forming around externally funded research projects. Research funding has been secured from agencies such as the NSF, the US-NSF, IDRC of Canada, SIDA of Sweden, SPIDER of University of Stockholm, and JICA of Japan for many medium scale projects ranging from 2-4 years in duration.

These groups have been set up in areas such as Language Technology, e-Learning, Wireless and Sensor Networking, Distributed Computing, Mobile Computing, Geographical Information Systems, Computer Vision and Multimedia Databases.

International Events

Since 1993, the UCSC (and its predecessors) have been conducting Regional and International training programmes using the generic title Third Country Training Programme (TCTP) in areas such as Systems Analysis & Design, Web Development, Network Design and Administration and eLearning mainly in a 6 week residential format with financial assistance from JICA of Japan and SIDA of Sweden. More recently a local version of these programmes termed In-Country Training Programmes (ICTP) have also been supported by JICA for residential (for those from outside the Western Province) and non-residential (for those in the Western Province) programmes in eLearning within Sri Lanka. The UCSC is also a key organizer of the International IT Conference (IITC) held in Colombo annually to bring together ICT research done in Sri Lanka and the Region. Once in two years, the IITC is associated with the industry acclaimed Infotel Exhibition. The UCSC also selects and coaches the Sri Lankan team to the International Olympiad in Informatics each year; this is an effort which has yielded 3 Gold, 6 Silver and 16 Bronze medals for the country since 1992.

Training and Consultancy

The UCSC has continued its consulting through the Computing Services Centre (CSC) mainly in Customized and Industry oriented training programmes and Software Consultancy and Development. The latter is carried out through its versatile Software Development Unit. It has mainly been consulted by the Government in the past, but also has some NGO and private sector clients in its portfolio. In particular, it has been frequently consulted by the Information & Communication Technology Agency (ICTA) of Sri Lanka on many of its national level strategies and technologies. In 2007, in accordance with a long standing action item in its Corporate Plan, this consulting arm of the UCSC was established as a non-profit company, setup as an Association named *Theekshana*. Theekshana has already been able to successfully bid for and win a World Bank funded project through the ICTA, owing to its non-state status. It has also been able to win 2-3 other contracts within its short period of existence since.

On the training side, the CSC has been able to offer demand driven short-term weekend and evening courses in areas such as AutoCAD, PC Applications, Linux User and Administration, Intermediate and Advanced Java, Video Production, Advanced Web Development, Graphic Design and Animation. In addition, other national training programmes such as those in e-Learning, Web development and ICT Teacher training have been carried out by the UCSC's Advanced Digital Media Technology Centre (ADMTC) and its e-Learning Centre (eLC). Training in the use of Sinhala UNICODE and publishing has also been undertaken by the UCSC especially through its Language Technology Research Laboratory (LTRL). Over the past decade or so, the UCSC has also conducted Regional and International training programmes for JICA of Japan and SIDA of Sweden in the areas of Web Based Training and Networking Technologies respectively. These have been conducted through its ADMTC and Network Operations Centre (NOC).

Most recently, through the active participation of a set of Interns, the ADMTC's media arm has been strengthened enabling it to undertake media consulting. Its first assignment of producing an advertisement for a national bank, ran on prime time television.

The outstanding contribution made by the late Professor VK Samaranayake towards the establishment and development of the UCSC is remembered with gratitude.

APPOINTMENTS

Election of a new Dean to the Faculty of Medicine



Professor Harsha Senaviratne MBBS (Cey.) DM, FRCOG, FSLCOG was elected as Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo in August 2008. He was a student of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo from 1965 to 1970, and joined the Faculty in 1972. He has been the Senior Professor of Obstetrics & Gynecology of the Faculty since December, 1999.

Appointment of a new Director, NILIS



Mr Upali Amarasiri BA Hons (Pdn) MA (Loughborough) was appointed as the Director of the National Institute of Library and Information Sciences (NILIS) of the University of Colombo on 23 February 2008. Prior to this appointment Mr Amarasiri served at the National Library and

Documentation Services Board (NLDSB) for over 30 years. He was the Director General, NLDSB from 1989 to 2008.

Appointment of a new Director, SDC



Professor Marie Perera BA (Pdn), Mphil (Colombo), MSc (Colombo), PhD (Wollongong) was appointed as the new Director of the Staff Development Centre with effect from 15 September 2008. She joined the academic staff of the Faculty of Education as a Probationary Lecturer in Humanities

Education in September 1995 and was promoted to the post of Professor in Humanities Education in 2007.

FELICITATIONS

Award of the Degree of Doctor of Letters (Honoris Causa) to Emeritus Professor Kusuma Karunaratne

Professor Karunaratne received her BA degree in 1964. She obtained a Master's degree in Sociology of Literature from the University of Essex, UK. She was appointed lecturer in Sinhala in 1969 at the University of Ceylon, Peradeniya. In 1982 she received her PhD and in 1985 she was appointed as Associate Professor. In 1991 she was appointed as Professor and was promoted to the post of Senior Professor in 1997. She held the posts of Head of Department of Sinhala for over 10 years and Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies for 3 years. She had authored over 50 research publications and had authored, co-authored and edited several books. She had conducted a series of programmes over the radio and television on language, culture, society, ethics and gender issues. Professor Karunaratne has contributed in no small measure towards strengthening cultural relation between Japan and Sri Lanka.

Award of the Degree of Doctor of Laws (Honoris Causa) to Deshamanya Rajendra Kalidas Wimala Goonesekere

Deshamanya RKW Goonesekere obtained the LLB Degree in 1950. He joined the staff of the Department of Law in 1951 as a lecturer and was enrolled as an Advocate of the Supreme Court in 1954. He read for the Postgraduate Degree of Bachelor of Civil Law at Queen's College, University of Oxford. He was the Principal of the Ceylon Law College from 1967-1974. He held the post of Reader in Law at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria from 1976-1982. After his return to Sri Lanka, he recommenced his legal practice in the appellate courts in the country and excelled in the area of Public Law. He has appeared in many leading cases, in particular in the area of Constitutional law and Fundamental Rights. He has authored many books, monographs, case-books, journal articles on a variety of subjects in the field of law.

Award of the Degree of Doctor of Science (Honoris Causa) to Vidya Jyothi Professor Emeritus Ulpagoda Pathira-arachchige Eric Hamilton Karunanayake

Vidya Jyothi Professor Emeritus Eric Hamilton Karunanayake obtained his BSc degree (Chemistry special) from University of Ceylon in 1967. He obtained a Masters in Biochemistry in 1972 and PhD in 1975 from Imperial College, University of London. He joined the University of Colombo in 1980 as a lecturer in Biochemistry at the Faculty of Medicine. He was promoted to Associate Professor on Merit in 1985, appointed to the Chair of Biochemistry in 1987 and promoted to Senior Professor in 1994. He became the Founder Director of the Institute of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Biotechnology in 2003 and retired in 2007 after 27 years of service to the University. Professor Karunanayake brought International Recognition to the University of Colombo through high quality research. The amount of research funds he brought in and the facilities established are immense. These culminated in the establishment of the Institute of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Biotechnology (IBMBB), an Institute dedicated to postgraduate training, and research and development on Molecular Life Sciences. He is currently the Chairman of the National Research Council, Sri Lanka.

BOOKS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Monograph on Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka: Changing Dynamics

The Washington-based East-West center published in its prestigious series of 'Policy Studies', the above monograph authored by Professor Jayadeva Uyangoda in 2007. This monograph is electronically available in the EWC's website, www.eastwestcenterwashington.org. He also edited two volumes, 2007, *Religion in Context: Buddhism and Socio-Political Change in Sri Lanka*, and 2007, *Cricket, Lovely Cricket: Sports in Culture, Class and Nation in Sri Lanka*, both published by the Social Scientists' Association, Colombo.

At the Cutting Edge: Essays in Honour of Kumari Jayawardene

Professor Neloufer de Mel co-edited a book titled *At the Cutting Edge: Essays in Honour of Kumari Jayawardene* in 2007. The book was published by Women Unlimited, Delhi.

Book on Sri Lanka: Politics of Power, Crisis and Peace 2000-2005

Dr SI Keethaponcalan authored a new book, *Sri Lanka: Politics of Power, Crisis and Peace 2000-2005*. It was published by the Kumaran Book House, Colombo and Chennai.

Descriptive Dictionary of Political Science Analysis

Mr Keerthi Ariyadasa, Senior Lecturer, published a *Descriptive Dictionary of Political Science Analysis in Sinhala*. Nearly 500-page long, it contains brief essays on nearly two hundred political science concepts.

Student Medical Journal

The first ever Student Medical Journal to be published by a Medical Faculty in Sri Lanka was launched by the Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, on the 14 August 2008. Students often find it difficult to publish their work in professional journals, and the aim of the SMJ is to provide such an opportunity for students interested in research. The journal is expected to be a forum for students to share their experiences through reviews, essays and letters to the editor.

NEWS & EVENTS

Annual Research Symposium

The annual research symposium of the University of Colombo is scheduled to be held on 23 and 24 October 2008. The theme of the symposium is "The Knowledge Economy: the Role of the University".

Faculty of Arts wins Rs. 20 million grant from IRQUE to enhance the educational capacities of the Undergraduates

The Faculty of Arts (FoA), University of Colombo, has secured a grant of Rs. 20 million for enhancing the educational capacities of FoA, under the competitive funding scheme offered by the Quality Enhancement Fund (QEF) Batch 3 of the Improving the Relevance and Quality of Undergraduate Education (IRQUE) Project of the Ministry of Higher Education, in 2008.

The FoA has identified the unemployability of its graduates as the main problem besetting the Faculty at present. The root causes of the problem have been identified as a) The gap between the quality of current graduates and the standard expected by the labour market. b) The preference of knowledge-based graduates to discipline-specific graduates. c) The inadequacy of staff training in modern technologies and the need to transform the staff and d) The unavailability of adequate funds.

The FoA Project is designed to address several key issues such as students' lack of fluency in English, IT skills and soft skills. The inadequacy of computer and other modern teaching and learning equipment and facilities to cater to the Faculty's large number of students hinders the development of the said skills among them. The project proposal seeks to enhance the quality of the Faculty's undergraduates and make them employable by addressing the above issues.

Sri Palee Campus wins Rs. 15 million grant from IRQUE Project

These funds will be utilised to upgrade the quality of degree programmes in Mass Media and Performing Arts.

Committee for International Links

A Committee for International links has been appointed by the Vice Chancellor. Its aim is to foster and develop links between the University of Colombo and reputed Universities, Educational Centers, Programs, and Associations abroad with a view to making the University of Colombo an internationally recognized center of academic excellence. The committee will initiate, develop and implement programs that would lead to the following:

- ❖ Collaborative research between the University of Colombo and international academic partners
- ❖ Training of faculty of the University of Colombo at Centers of academic excellence abroad
- ❖ Student study abroad programs
- ❖ Dual Degree programs with Universities abroad
- ❖ Curriculum Development with input from international faculty
- ❖ Academic exchanges
- ❖ Institutional development at Department and Faculty level in collaboration with international partner institutions
- ❖ Academic networking
- ❖ Facilitating internationally recognized publications

Meetings were held with representatives from LaTrobe University,

Melbourne, Australia and several US universities to explore the possibility of establishing collaborative academic and research programs. Staff members of the University are encouraged to contact directly the representatives of these Universities in order to establish links relevant to their fields, which could then be discussed with the Committee. Further details can be obtained from the Chairperson of the Committee Professor Neloufer De Mel, Department of English, Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo. It is planned to establish an International Unit of the University of Colombo in order to take this activity forward.

Executive Diploma in Marketing on m-learning mode

The Faculty of Graduate studies has initiated a collaborative project with Sri Lanka Mobitel to provide an Executive Diploma in Marketing (EDM) through m-learning mode. M-learning incorporates the innovative feature of providing online lectures to candidates through mobile phone technology. Application forms for this program can be obtained from the Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Colombo, or can be downloaded from the FGS website www.cmb.ac.lk/academic/gradustd.

Stat day 2008

It is with pleasure the Stat Circle announces the very successful conclusion of the annual event, STAT DAY 2008, held at the Professor VK Samaranayake Auditorium, University of Colombo on 8 May 2008. Stat Circle is a student society of the University of Colombo, dedicated to enhancing statistical knowledge among students and the outside community. It is also aimed at providing a link to communicate and exchange ideas with other Societies, Universities and the Industry.

STAT DAY is a public event organized entirely by the students of the Stat Circle and this year saw the sixth consecutive STAT DAY on a very timely theme "Emerging Trends in Statistics".

HISSL Sessions 2008



The Health Informatics Society of Sri Lanka (HISSL) was launched in 1998 to promote the use of computers and information technology in teaching, learning, research and delivery of care in the field of health, to improve computer and information

Technology literacy of health care professionals and to improve and facilitate continuing professional development of members. The annual Scientific Sessions of the Health Informatics Society of Sri Lanka was held on 26 July 2008 with the participation of doctors and ICT professionals.

Mahapola higher educational scholarship awards ceremony



The Mahapola higher educational scholarship awards ceremony 2006/2007 was held at the New Arts Theatre on 25 February 2008.

NEWS & EVENTS CONTINUED

“Vishva Tharanga” Radio Station

“Vishva Tharanga” is a media project organized by the Chemical Society, Faculty of Science. This was aired as a radio program on the 5 and 6 of September 2008.

This was done with a view to assist students who are completing ordinary and advanced level examinations in Sri Lanka to choose suitable educational avenues and carrier paths.

Donation of Water Bottles to The Sri Lankan Army

Students and Staff of the Faculty of Arts donated a large number of water bottles to the Sri Lankan Army in September 2008.

Dept. of Political Science and Public Policy Inaugurates New Post-Graduate Programmes under the Conflict, Power and Democracy Project

This new programme is a part of an international collaboration between the University of Colombo, the University of Oslo, Norway, and the University of Gadjah Mada, Indonesia. The tripartite collaboration began in 2007. It has four major components:

- ❖ Promoting Masters Studies in Political Science
- ❖ Fellowships in MA and Ph. D in Political Science
- ❖ A Research programme on conflict, power and democracy
- ❖ Student and academic exchange.

MAPS is a fee-levying programme of two years duration. Conducted in the English medium, it combines course work, research and thesis writing. It has a specific multi-disciplinary thematic focus on Conflict, power and democracy.

Under the Fellowship programme, there are two components, MA and PhD Fellowships for graduate studies in Political Science. The MA Fellowships are being supported by a NOMA grant from Norway. Five NOMA Fellows will spend one Semester at the University of Oslo, continuing their MA course work. Up to four PhD Fellowships are offered through a NUFU grant. The MA and PhD Fellows complete their degrees at the Colombo University. Under the Fellowship scheme, they receive tuition, living and research support.

The Faculty of Law celebrates the 60th Anniversary

The Faculty of Law celebrates the 60th Anniversary of the teaching of law in a University setting in Sri Lanka this year, having commenced academic activities at Colombo in the University of Ceylon. This is being marked by a series of events in October with Academic Sessions an Oration, Legal Aid Clinics, Publications, Student Cultural Show etc. The Oration will be delivered by Deshamanya Dr RKW. Goonesekere, one of the alumni of the first batch of four law students of the University, who was recently conferred the Degree of Doctor of Laws (*Honoris Causa*) by the University of Colombo.

Three new departments in the Faculty of Law

On the recommendation of the Faculty Board of the Faculty of Law and the Senate, the Council of the University of Colombo has approved the establishment of three Departments in the Faculty of Law, viz., Department of Public and International Law, Department of Private and Comparative Law and Department of Commercial Law in place of the presently existing single Department of Law. This proposal has also been recommended to the University Grants Commission for its approval.

Sri Lankan Physics Olympiad



Annually, the Institute of Physics in collaboration with the Department of Physics, University of Colombo, conducts an island-wide competition called “Sri Lankan Physics Olympiad” to recognize and promote Physics among A/L students. The local competition takes place at the Universities of Colombo, Peradeniya, Kelaniya, Ruhuna, Jaffna and Batticaloa.

The best students receive medals and certificates from the Institute of Physics, Sri Lanka. Based on the marks obtained from this local competition, the best eight and five students are selected to participate in the Asian Physics Olympiad (APhO) and International Physics Olympiad (IPhO), respectively. They are trained extensively before attending the international competitions.

National Astronomy & Astrophysics Olympiad



The goals of the International Olympiad on Astronomy and Astrophysics (IOAA) are to promote interests and education on Astronomy and Astrophysics among the students. The first (IOAA) competition was held in Thailand in 2007 and the second IOAA was held in Indonesia in 2008. The Institute of Physics in collaboration with the Department of Physics University of Colombo initiated a National Competition to select students to represent Sri Lanka from the first IOAA.

Those who sat for the first National Astronomy and Astrophysics Olympiad competition held in 2007 won 10 national awards. Five outstanding students represented Sri Lanka at the first IOAA competition held in Thailand in 2007. The second National Astronomy and Astrophysics Olympiad competition was held in March 2008. Results of this competition will be published on the web soon. Five students selected from the national competition represented Sri Lanka in the 2nd IOAA held in Indonesia in 2008.

Sri Lankan Junior Science Olympiad

In 2008, the Institute of Physics with collaboration from the Department of Physics University of Colombo initiated the 1st island-wide competition to recognize and promote Science among O/L students, “The Sri Lankan Junior Science Olympiad Competition”. The competition was held on August 17 2008 at the Universities of Colombo, Peradeniya, Kelaniya, Ruhuna, Jaffna, Eastern and Uva-Wellasa.

NEWS & EVENTS CONTINUED

International Re-recognition for Courses offered by SDC, University of Colombo

International recognition has been obtained by the Staff Development Centre (SDC) for two lecturer-training courses CTHE and ASTHE for a further period of 3 years from July 2008. This internationally recognized SEDA (UK) accreditation has been obtained for the 4th consecutive 3-year period, showing that the SDC has been able to maintain internationally recognized standards from the time it first ran its courses in 1997/98.

The two courses that gained re-recognition are CTHE (Certificate in Teaching in Higher Education) and ASTHE (Accreditation of Senior Teachers in Higher Education) offered by the SDC for academic staff from all universities in Sri Lanka. CTHE is designed to meet the requirements of newly recruited lecturers and ASTHE is offered to senior Academics. This re-recognition has been possible with funds provided to the SDC by the SIDA-SAREC grant for Staff Development, and will help the SDC to continue its efforts to improve higher education effectiveness in Sri Lanka.

Certificate Course on Social Integration through Corporate Social Responsibility for private sector personnel

The Social Policy Analysis and Research Centre (SPARC) at the Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo has successfully conducted a 3 month Certificate Course on Social Integration through Corporate Social Responsibility for private sector personnel. The awards ceremony was held on the 26 August 2008 at the Arts Faculty Board Room. Professor Amal Jayawardena, Dean Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo and Dr Anura Ekanayake, Deputy Director of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce were invited as Chief guests for the event.

The BSc in Physiotherapy Course

The Allied Health Sciences Unit of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, admitted its second batch of students for the BSc in Physiotherapy on 25 March 2008. The inauguration ceremony was held at the new premises of the Unit at Borella Cross Road.

New postgraduate degree and Certificates offered by the Institute of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Biotechnology

- ❖ MSc in Molecular Life Sciences
- ❖ MSc in Cellular and Molecular Immunology
- ❖ MPhil and PhD Programmes

In addition, the Institute also offer a Certificate Course in Molecular Biological Techniques.

Collaborative programmes offered by the Faculty of Graduate Studies

A joint Masters Programme of the faculty and the UN Peace University, Costa Rica is to be launched in October. The UN University on its part granted a scholarship to one of the academics from the University of Colombo. A Collaborative research project with Birbeck College, University of London on Child Mental Health, will be completed in August 2009.

Faculty of Arts Annual Review Workshop 2008

The Annual Review Workshop of the Faculty of Arts was held on 27 and 28 June 2008 at Hotel Renuka, Colombo, in collaboration with the

QAA unit. A broad range of issues were discussed at the workshop and decisions were taken which would lead to an enhancement of courses and service delivery at the Faculty of Arts. Amongst the issues discussed were the development of a credit based course unit system, student internships, study streams, English medium instruction, peer review, student evaluations, and streamlining examination procedures.

Book Donation



Hon Geethanjana Gunawardana, former Deputy Speaker, donated two books to the University of Colombo library on 2 July 2008 to commemorate the 36th death anniversary of Mr. Philip Gunawardana. The titles of the books are *Philip Gunawardana- The State Council Years 1936-1942* and *Philip Gunawardana and The 1956 Revolution in Sri Lanka*, published by Godage Publishers.

Cultural Centre, University of Colombo



The Cultural Centre at the University of Colombo was established on 2 March 2001 with a view to enhancing the learning culture in the university. This was sponsored by the Ministry of Cultural Affairs. Learning and practicing musical instruments and related equipment are now being done at the Cultural Centre. Its activities at present encompass drama, photography, up and low country dancing, western and oriental music, and training in Wushu.

Students of all the Faculties of the University are now improving their talents and skills by participating at the activities of the Cultural Centre. The Cultural Centre of the University of Colombo is open from 8.30 am to 4.30 pm daily except on Saturdays, Sundays and Poya holidays.

Call for papers

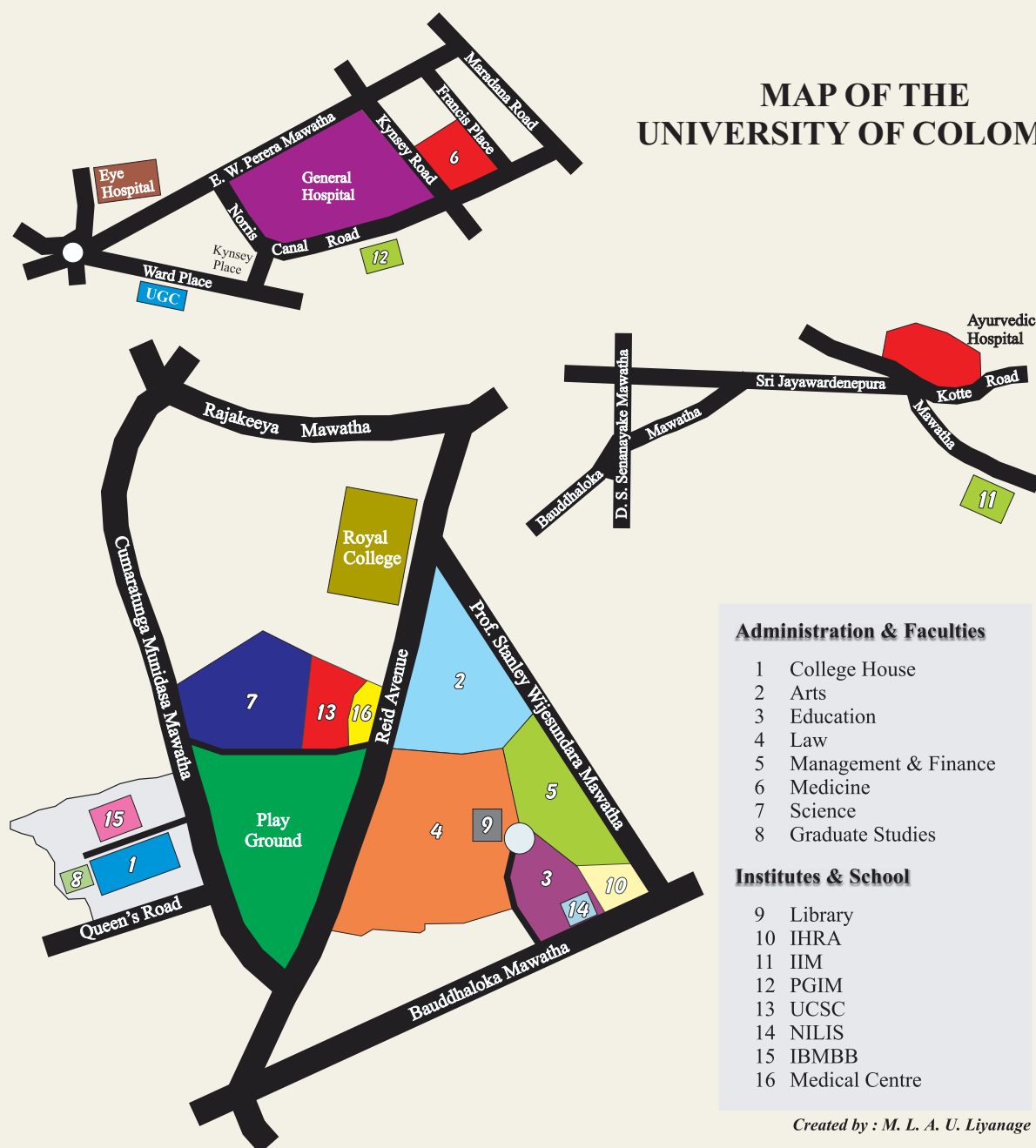
Ceylon Journal of Medical Science

Articles could be submitted to the editors Professor RL Jayakody and Dr Senaka Rajapakse, by email to editor.cjms@gmail.com. Deadline 15 October 2008.

University of Colombo Review

Articles should be addressed to the Professor Sharya Scharenguivel, Editor-in-Chief, University of Colombo Review, 94, Cumaratunga Munidasa Mw, Colombo 3.

MAP OF THE UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBO



Administration & Faculties

- 1 College House
- 2 Arts
- 3 Education
- 4 Law
- 5 Management & Finance
- 6 Medicine
- 7 Science
- 8 Graduate Studies

Institutes & School

- 9 Library
- 10 IHRA
- 11 IIM
- 12 PGIM
- 13 UCSC
- 14 NILIS
- 15 IBMBB
- 16 Medical Centre

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