

# Quality Matters

Vol. 1 No. 3 December 2006

A Quarterly Newsletter of the Center for Research and Quality Assurance  
St. Mary's University College

## In this Issue

- From Editorial Desk (p 2)
- News Items (p 3)
- Interview (p 4)
- Reportage (p 6)
- Perspective (p 7)
- Research Corner (P 8)
- Puzzle and Fun Corner (p 10)

## Quote of this Issue

“Quality is neither mind nor matter, but a third entity independent of the two, even though quality cannot be defined, you know what it is.”

R. M. Pirsig

This newsletter is published every three months by the Center for Research and Quality Assurance of St. Mary's University College. The main purpose of the newsletter is to keep the SMUC community, interested groups, government and non-government organizations informed about the activities and endeavors within and outside the institution towards fostering research and quality in higher education.

Tel 251-115-538001/537998

P.O.Box:1211

Email:research@stmarycollege.edu.et

<http://www.stmarycollege.edu.et>

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

## Nurturing a Culture of Continuous Improvement

### *The Fourth National Conference on PHEIs*

The Fourth National Conference on Private Higher Education institutions in Ethiopia (PHEIs) was successfully held on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of August 2006 at the UN Conference Center in Addis Ababa. The conference was the biggest of all the preceding conferences and attracted more than 250 participants from different sectors including Ministry of Education (MOE), Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency (HERQA), Educational Quality Improvement Program (EQUIP), NGOs, Embassies, private and public institutions.

H.E. Dr. Sintayehu W/Michael, Minister of Education, in his opening speech, remarked "our education and training policy provides a huge emphasis for education to be coordinated and integrated with research, action and development." In this respect, he said, "higher education institutions are expected to be engaged in sustainable activities of research to make possible the generation and introduction of innovative technologies as well as popularization of their economic and social benefits in national development."

Dr. Sintayehu further said that organizing a conference of this scale is very essential for conferring on various training issues and creating an enabling environment to help institutions live up to expectations and properly contribute their share towards national development. He also expressed his appreciation to St. Mary's University College for organizing such valuable conference for the fourth time.

President of St. Mary's University College, Ato Wondwosen Tamirat, noted that the growth of PHEIs should not be measured in terms of student enrollment, nor the number of their graduates.

*continued on page 9*

## From Editorial Desk

The Fourth National Conference on Private Higher Education has been covered in this issue of Quality Matters. With more than twenty research papers presented, and with the active participation of all stakeholders, the conference has demonstrated the efforts made by Private Higher Education Institutions in putting quality of education at the forefront. Private higher education institutions in Ethiopia have made a significant stride despite their tender age of less than a decade. Without getting any financial support from outside, and entirely dependent on tuition to run their programmes, these institutions have, in deed, done a great job.

In this third issue of 'Quality Matters' the Chairperson of PHEIs Association is chosen to be our guest in order to shed light on the path the institutions have traveled so far. Truly, their presence has noticeably made a difference in widening the opportunity to those who have been denied access to higher education. The Chairperson has a lot to say in this regard. He has also dwelt on the issue of public accountability, which prevents any institution of higher learning from equating education to a simple commodity of market value.

In an attempt to tap the resources of overseas institutions and address the issue of career development to the high level skilled manpower in Ethiopia, St. Mary's has launched post graduate programmes in partnership with Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), a public institution of distance learning in India. In terms of the relevance of the programmes and the reasonably low tuition fees, IGNOU's presence here would fill the gap created due to the shortage of trained manpower in certain sectors of the national economy. Quality Matters has given due focus to this post graduate initiative and to the opportunities created as a result.

Finally, the article 'Maximizing Student Participation to Enhancing Quality' advises us to consider instructional adjustments, no matter how slight, which will allow instructors to teach in a manner more in tune with their pedagogical ideals. The theory of student - centered classroom approach needs to translate into practice and bring about the expected impact on the real world of work. ■

## Useful Links

Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency (Ethiopia).  
Website: [www.higher.edu.et](http://www.higher.edu.et)

PROPHE- Program for Research on Private Higher Education  
[//www.albany.edu/dept/eaps/prophe/](http://www.albany.edu/dept/eaps/prophe/)

International Network for Quality Assurance Agency in Higher Education (INQAAHE)

Website: <http://www.inqaah.org>

Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (UK)

Website: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk>

Center for International Research Higher Education

Website:

[http://bc.edu/bc\\_org/avp/soe/cihe](http://bc.edu/bc_org/avp/soe/cihe)

Quality and Standards Authority of Ethiopia

<http://www.qsae.org/>

All interested  
are encouraged to  
contribute to the  
various columns  
of the newsletter

**Managing Editor**  
Dawit Tilahun

**Center for Research and Quality Assurance (CRQA)**  
St. Mary's University College

Tel 251-115-538001/537998

P.O.Box:1211

Email: [research@stmarycollege.edu.et](mailto:research@stmarycollege.edu.et)

Website: <http://www.stmarycollege.edu.et>

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

### **IGNOU's Graduate Programs Launched at St. Mary's**

St. Mary's University College (SMUC) has launched Graduate Programs in 26 disciplines in partnership with Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), one of the leading distance education universities in the world. IGNOU is the leading public higher distance education institution in India.

Following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the two institutions, a delegation from Distance Education Division of SMUC went to India for a week-long visit to Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU). The purpose of the visit was meant to exchange experience thereby paving the road towards launching the joint post-graduate pro-

grams. In response to the invitation made by SMUC, a group of four high ranking officials of IGNOU visited SMUC. During their visit, the officials also held fruitful talks with H.E. Ato Tefera Walwa, Minister of Capacity Building, H.E. Dr. Sintayehu W/Michael, Minister of Education, H.E. Dr. Adhana Haile, State Minister of Higher Education and Dr. Tesfaye Teshome, Director of HERQA, regarding matters pertaining to the launching of IGNOU postgraduate programs.

Currently, St Mary's has started offering seven of IGNOU's post graduate programs for the first batch of 253 students. The second round registration has been completed and the program is scheduled to start in January 2007. (Alemu Gashe)

### **Lab Training for Distance Trainees**

The Distance Education Division of St. Mary's University College organized three rounds of professional development workshops on how to conduct Natural Science Laboratory classes for Distance Education laboratory assistants/trainers at its fourteen training centers. The workshop aimed at developing basic skills of the trainees so that they could understand scientific principles introduced in their science courses: Physics, Chemistry and Biology, and their skills of conducting experiments.

The workshop, which was conducted from April to October 2006, was run by 34 qualified and experienced teachers from Addis Ababa University and Kotebe College of Teacher Education (KCTE). The Division had also prepared training manuals. The 14 laboratory training centers of the Distance Education Division of SMUC are found in Addis Ababa, Assela, Arba Minch, Awassa, Adama, Bahir Dar, Debre Birhan, Debre Markos, Dire Dawa, Dessie, Jimma, Mekele, Nekemt and Wolayita. (Tsegaye Gabisa)

### **Department of Management Short-term Training on Supervisory Management**

The Department of Management, SMUC organized a two-week workshop, from July 31 - August 11, 2006, on Supervisory Management. The workshop, which dealt with the most recent and contemporary management concepts such as managing resources, planning, decision making, and team work, and managing change aimed at upgrading participants' supervisory management skills.

Twenty-eight participants including Faculty Deans and Department Heads took part in the workshop. Participants said that the workshop was participatory and very useful to discharge their administrative responsibilities.

(Misganaw Solomon)

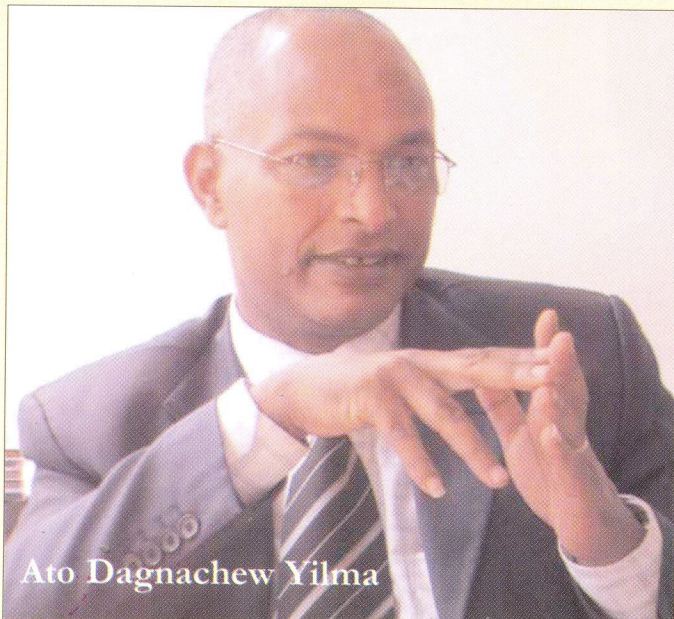
## Interview

This column features interviews of people including government officials, policy makers, and educators, presidents of universities or colleges.

The Association of Ethiopian Private Higher Education Institutions, a non-governmental and non-profit organization, was established to cooperate efforts of private higher education institutions towards enhancing the development of the sector thereby contributing to the national development. The association has 40 member institutions. Dawit Tilahun and Teshager Mersha (from Quality Matters) have interviewed Ato Dagnachew Yima, Chairperson of Managing Board of the Ethiopian Private Higher Education Institutions. Excerpts:

### **Quality Matters: When was the Ethiopian Private Higher Education Institutions Association established?**

**Ato Dagnachew:** The association was legally registered with the Ministry of Justice and established in June 2003 with 12 member Private Higher Education Institutions. However, the founders of the association were only seven institutions comprising: Unity



Ato Dagnachew Yilma

**“We felt we could make a difference collectively than working individually on issues of private higher education institutions in Ethiopia.”**

University College, St. Mary's University College, Admas College, Micro-link Information Technology College, Africa Beza College, and Queens College.

### **Why did you establish the association?**

Because we felt we could make a difference collectively than working individually on issues of private higher education institutions in Ethiopia.

### **How many member institutions do you have now ?**

Now, we have more than 40 member institutions.

### **Can you tell us about the major achievements of the association so far?**

So far, we have been giving emphasis on such issues as promoting the role of Ethiopian Private Higher Education Institutions towards the development of the country, encouraging Private Higher Education Institutions to be members of the association, nurturing the culture of working together among member institutions, promoting private and public partnership, conducting regular meetings, and promoting the association in various activities.

We have also managed to establish good relations with the Ministry of Education (MoE), Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency (HERQA) and Higher Education Strategy Center (HESC). This has created a forum whereby private higher education institutions make the government and other governmental institutions aware of the real challenges that private higher education institutions in Ethiopia face.

### **What was your role towards promoting the Public-private partnership?**

We prepared a document on public private-public-partnership. The document has been submitted to the Ministry of Education. We are waiting for the Ministry to organize a panel

discussion on the issue.

### **How do you describe the quality of education in Ethiopian private higher education institutions?**

Quality in higher education is all about perception of students, institutions and other stakeholders (i.e. the society and government). Students of higher learning value quality in terms of what they gain in return to their money, time and energy. In this regard, if the institution fulfills all these parameters set in the mind of students, it has quality.

In the eyes of the institutions, quality is viewed in terms of the institution's purposes. The question may be whether or not the institution is fit for its purpose. Obviously, the purpose of an education institution is not just making profit. On the other hand, in the eyes of the society or employers or government, quality is valued in terms of the level of skills students gain through education. Whatsoever years or months a student stays in an institution, employers question whether the graduate is capable of doing their job.

To comment on the quality of education in private higher education institutions in Ethiopia, I think we need to know the outcomes of the private higher education institutions in terms of the number of graduates, the knowledge and skills students acquire, and change of attitude. In this regard, nobody has conducted a survey on graduates of private institutions and the students' level of employability skills. Nobody has adequate information on which to base our judgments of quality education in private and public higher education institutions.

Hence, it is very difficult to be judgmental about the quality of education in private higher institutions. Even there is no any institution that conducts qualification test to see whether the graduates are competent in the local market.

### **What is the role of the association in ensuring quality amongst member institutions?**

Actually, we do not have the mandate to monitor and ensure quality. But we have been contributing towards the government's endeavor in ensuring quality through various means. For

**“Quality in higher education is all about perception of students, institutions and stakeholders.”**

example, the association is a board member in Higher Education Strategy Center (HESC) and Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency (HERQA). Thus, we deliberate on issues of quality of education in our meetings.

The association cares for quality. As an assembly of education institutions if we do not care for quality, we are doomed for failure.

### **What are the challenges of private higher education institutions in Ethiopia?**

A higher education institution can properly function if all the inputs are in place. If we just consider our case, almost all of the private higher education institutions operate in rented buildings, which were not originally built for educational purposes. As a result, students of some private colleges roam on streets before and between classes. Some private colleges conduct classes in very noisy apartment buildings, and some colleges have very unpleasant and inconvenient campuses. The reason for this is that the government does not have a special scheme whereby private higher learning institutions buy plots of land at a relatively lower price. On the other hand, private higher learning institutions pay 30 % profit taxes same as other business.

Special privileges should be made to private higher education institutions with regard to availing them with plots of land. My point is we should not be treated just as any business organization. Helping the institutions means helping students. And helping students ultimately means helping the country.

**“The government should not consider private higher education institutions just like any other business organization.”**

## Legal Education Reform Update

In fact there are few private higher education institutions that have managed to buy plots of land at the lease price. But I believe that this should not continue. We should be given special privilege with regard to land if we have to improve the quality of education in private colleges in Ethiopia.

### The government provides special tax holiday for education. Is that true?

Of course, we are given 2 to 3 years grace period. The provision by itself is something good. But what happens in reality is that the holiday expires before the institution starts making profit. In other words, we have been asked to pay taxes for what we have not made profit. The tax holiday is not enough for a sector that plays a crucial role in the development of the country.

### So what do you think the government should do?

I think the government should not consider private higher education institutions like any other business organization. For instance, in some developing countries private higher education institutions pay very low taxes - not exceeding 20%. If the government wants the private higher education institutions to grow, it should reconsider its tax policy. Besides, the government needs to consider the provision of soft loan and land at lower price for investors in education.

### What have you planned in the future?

In the future, we have planned to strengthen the association financially and play a significant role in the country's education system. In this regard the association plans to build its own building. But we have not yet secured the land and other necessary support from the government. I hope the government will help us with this. We have also a plan to open the association's resource center.

### Your final remark?

My concern is whether the quality of education or service is improving or up to the standard. If not, we all, public and private institutions, need to work together to make a difference. At the same time, we also expect the necessary support from the government. Not only providing support, it has to further monitor the quality of education. ■

Over one hundred instructors from Ethiopian Law Schools participated in a workshop on Legal Education and Training Reform in Ethiopia that was held at Ethiopian Management Institute on July 17th and 18th 2006. A Document on Legal Education and Training Reform has been endorsed during the workshop and subsequent meetings of the Technical Committee (comprised of Law School Deans and Stakeholders).

Parts V and VI of the Reform Document entitled "Standards for Law Schools" and "Guidelines (of Interpretations for the Standards)" are meant to ensure and enhance standards and quality in legal education. The Document requires the fulfillment of Sixty Standards against which Ethiopian Law Schools are to be evaluated.

St. Mary's University College is committed to work towards the attainment of these standards. The Center for Research and Quality Assurance congratulates SMUC Faculty of Law for having attained a Student: Staff ratio of 28.2 in the Degree Program (ahead of Standard 19/4 of the Reform Document) and a ratio of 30: 1 in the TVET Program. Recent developments at St. Mary's Faculty of Law include the assignment of Acting Associate Dean for Degree Program, Acting Assistant Dean for TVET Diploma Program, Administrative Assistant to the Dean (stated as Faculty Manager in Standard 31), and a significant increase in the number of Academic Staff.

Regular and extension first year students at St. Mary's have been informed about the new curriculum that requires externship of certain hours per week for a semester and a national exit exam during the final year.

## Maximizing Students' Participation to Enhance quality

These days in Ethiopia, quality is perhaps the most popular catch word in education, especially in higher education institutions. As result, many institutions seek better ways to promote quality in schools or colleges; some have taken the problem to define what they mean by quality.

I feel that a high quality institution is one that maximizes students' participation in the instructional process in order to develop their intellectual and personal features. In light of this perspective, I personally like the definition of quality given by the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions, 2004, which reads as follows:

*'Educational quality' refers to the quality of the student learning itself: both the extent to which the institution provides an environment conducive to student learning, and the extent to which this environment leads to the development of knowledge, skills, behavior and predisposition of value to students and the society they are preparing to serve.*

Since learning is the function of students, institutions are expected to create an excellent and quality learning environment among which the necessary ingredient is student active involvement in the instruction.

Time, students active involvement in instruction refers to the amount of mental and physical energy that the student devotes to the academic experience. The higher the environment/participation, the higher the academic achievement. Hence, an actively participating student is one who, for example, devotes considerable effort to read, speak, listen, think deeply, and writes, spends a lot of time in doing independent work, at the library and on campus, and who actively participates in classrooms and co-curricular activities and interacts frequently with faculty members.

Although higher education institutions are constantly preoccu-

pled with accumulating and allocating financial resources, the central idea of active learning suggests that the most important institutional resource may be maximizing students' participation in the instructional process so as to maintain an excellent academic experience.



Ato Melaku Girma,  
Dean of Faculty of Teacher  
Education, SMUC

According to several literature on active learning, the extent to which students are able to construct knowledge in school/college is a direct function of the amount of effort and time they devote to various activities designed to produce the gain.

How, then, can student participation be maximized in colleges like St. Mary's University College?

I think there are three major things, which are mutually reinforcing, to be considered for maximizing student participation: student service, assessment and feedback, and instruction.

In the area of student service, participation can be enhanced through more use of facilities, creative planning and programming for different faculties, active involvement of staff in student academic advising and the expansion of orientation in to the 1st year.

**“ Since learning is the function of students, institutions are expected to create an excellent and quality learning environment among which the necessary ingredient is student active involvement in the instruction. ”**

As for assessment, the main problem so far seems to be that most assessment is done for passive, evaluative purposes - to sort, review, and classify students - rather than to inform and enlighten them. The active learning paradigm suggests that assessment should be used primarily as feedback, to increase the participation

of students and faculty members, to develop their competences as fully as possible. Such assessment is active than passive, since it is designed to facilitate and improve performance.

In the area of instruction, there are different specific suggestions; however, the focus is the greater use of active rather than passive instruction, i.e. a shift from teaching to learning paradigm. Most faculties are guided in their classroom instruction by traditional theory that assigns students a passive role in the learning process: the "Knowledgeable" professor lectures to the "ignorant" student so that the student can acquire knowledge. In the modern theory: active learning advocates that students are indeed active and take responsibility for their own learning. In active learning students construct knowledge through gathering, synthesizing information and integrating it with the general skills of inquiry, communication, problem solving, critical thinking and so on. The professor's role is to facilitate and to coach.

Teaching and assessing are intertwined. Assessment is used to promote and diagnose learning. According to theory, instructors must plan the lesson based on learner-centered, active learning style rather than lecturing all the time. It is indeed a challenge for the instructor who has been trained to stand in front of the class and lecture, and to know "all the answers or all the facts" or at least to pretend to know. It is indeed a challenge. But it is a challenge that we can meet and bring about the desired change, i.e. the active participation of the students, which is the basic element in building up quality in the instruction. According to Terrence Deal (1990) in order to transform schools/colleges successfully, educators need to navigate the difficult space between letting go off old patterns and grabbing on to new ones.

By becoming more conscious of the values underlying the importance of students' participation and showing commitment to promote students participation in instruction, both administrators and staff can greatly increase the likelihood that, eventually, academic institutions will be able to maintain excellence and quality which necessarily reflect educational effectiveness rather than mere reputation. ■

**Title:** The Emerging Private Higher Education Institutions of Addis Ababa

**Researcher's Name:** Zewdu Desta

**Type of Research:** MA Thesis

**Date and Place of Publication:** May, 2001; Addis Ababa University, School of Graduate Studies

Zewdu's research is perhaps one of the earliest pieces of research made on private higher education institutions (PHEIs) in Ethiopia. This research paper investigated a) The major causes that necessitated the emergence of private higher education institutions (PHEIS) in Addis Ababa; b) issues and trends related to PHEIs; and c) The mechanisms that would allow the development of the private higher education sector.

Five private higher education institutions were chosen as samples of the study: Unity University College, MicroLink Information Technology College, Alpha University College, Ethiopian Adventist College and Harar Agro - Technical Training College. The findings of the study, inter alia, indicate:

- \* The change from planned to market - oriented economy in Ethiopia has necessitated the proliferation of PHEIs.
- \* The majority of students in PHEIs (i.e. 90%) had a passing mark in the ESLCE but did not get the chance to enroll at public institutions;
- \* The emerging PHEIs are complementing the government higher education system by providing access to higher education;
- \* The majority of students in PHEIs come from lower and upper middle income group;
- \* The major financial source for all of the PHEIs studied is tuition fee

The researcher finally recommends that the existing regulatory framework should be revisited to promote the growth of the sector; regulatory bodies should further strengthen their financial and human resources to facilitate the smooth development of the sector; a variety of financial schemes need to be developed to counter students' financial difficulties in settling their fees at PHEIs; and PHEIs should take all the necessary care in guaranteeing quality education to their customers.

For those who might wish to access the full text visit our website at <http://www.stmarycollege.edu.et> or visit the Graduate School Library at Addis Ababa University.



*continued from page 1*

## Nurturing a Culture of Continuous ...

At this time of unprecedented higher education expansion, he added, ensuring quality should rather be an institutional and national goal that all stakeholders should strive to achieve.

Chairperson of the Managing Board of the Ethiopian Private Higher Education Institutions' Association, Ato Dagnachew Yilma, also urged the Ministry of Education and other government offices to provide all the necessary support to Private Higher Education Institutions that would help them to properly discharge their duties and responsibilities.

A total of 29 research papers were presented during the conference under the theme: "Nurturing a Culture of Continuous Improvement". The objectives of the conference were: to examine the challenges and prospects of PHEIs in ensuring quality education on continuous basis, to encourage and facilitate research undertakings and national deliberations on PHEIs and creating database on the various issues of PHEIs that would facilitate discussion, policy making, and the enhancement of awareness about the sector.

(Dawit Tilahun)

## Answers to Puzzle # 2

The second issue of 'Quality Matters' contained a puzzle of ten questions. The answers to the puzzle are:

- 1) Eskendes
- 2) Ediamin
- 3) Ayatollah Khomeini
- 4) Glacier
- 5) Strait of Gibraltar
- 6) Bulimia
- 7) Abuna Petros
- 8) Hurricane
- 9) Aesthetics
- 10) Ken Sarwiwa

The following people have made good attempts. But none of them have completed the puzzle without mistakes. CRQA appreciates their participation.

- 1) Abel Shimelis, IT student of St. Mary's University College
- 2) Addis Abebe, Department of Marketing
- 3) Bruk Yohannes, Management student of St. Mary's University College
- 4) Fikadu Haile, from the Department of Accounting, St. Mary's University College
- 5) Kalkidan Amare, Sales Executive in the Emirates Airlines
- 6) Mikias Wondimu, Management student of St. Mary's University College
- 7) Robel Birhanu, Management student of St. Mary's University College
- 8) Yakob Adane, Management student of St. Mary's University College



St. Mary's University College  
Social Support Forum

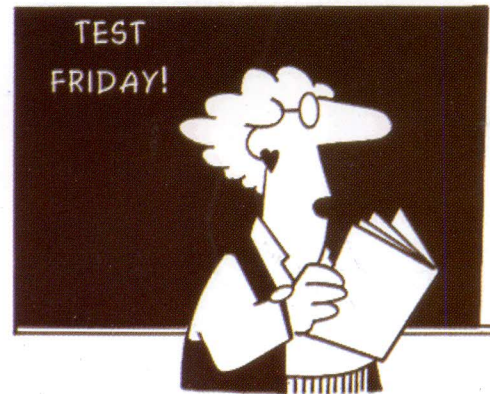
Invites all interested staff and faculty of  
SMUC to be members of the forum.  
Membership forms are available at departments.

# Puzzle and Fun Corner

The answer for the following questions are hidden in the puzzle. Find them and circle them on the puzzle (Note: answers may appear horizontally, vertically or diagonally). If you complete this puzzle without any mistakes and get it to CRQA of St. Mary's University College within a week's time, you will receive a prize, and if you successfully complete three consecutive puzzles, you will be entitled to get substantial prize.

- 1) The only mammal that can fly. **Puzzle #3**
- 2) A violent column of air in contact with the ground and extending from a thunderstorm base.
- 3) A type of snake that kills its prey by wrapping itself around its victim, suffocating it to death and then swallowing it whole.
- 4) Ethiopian language belonging to Nilo-Sahara language family.
- 5) The ability of plants to respond to gravity.
- 6) The scientific name of the group of plants that includes mosses.
- 7) The coach of the renowned Ethiopian athlete Abebe Bikila.
- 8) European missionary who discovered the famous Victoria Fall in November 1855.
- 9) German poet, dramatist and novelist who authored the world renowned dramatic poem: Faust.
- 10) Branch of Linguistics that deals with the history, development and origin of words.

k	A	G	S	R	I	T	S	E	B	E	S	T	K	T	E	J	S	D	O
S	E	A	D	G	A	Q	U	Y	U	T	T	A	A	N	D	H	S	B	N
T	K	N	Z	D	X	S	G	L	L	H	M	R	B	T	A	D	U	L	N
R	S	J	S	V	G	R	F	S	I	I	A	A	I	Y	V	N	C	O	I
A	C	H	I	A	L	D	H	O	M	O	R	T	L	A	I	Z	L	N	N
T	A	C	U	J	R	F	D	P	I	P	Y	O	A	P	D	A	A	G	I
A	C	I	A	R	O	W	S	S	A	O	S	L	B	K	L	R	R	L	S
B	O	A	C	O	N	S	T	R	I	C	T	O	R	A	I	A	R	I	K
E	H	R	S	D	F	R	L	W	L	L	R	S	Y	T	V	Y	E	V	A
T	P	E	A	C	E	R	T	A	G	O	L	M	O	R	I	A	E	E	N
Y	L	S	T	D	S	H	E	U	E	N	I	U	P	I	N	K	F	E	E
M	P	A	E	S	T	H	E	T	O	C	S	C	H	N	G	O	S	T	N
O	P	D	F	A	R	S	G	U	T	E	A	S	Y	A	T	B	J	H	N
L	D	R	H	J	P	S	S	J	R	L	U	O	T	S	O	R	A	I	I
O	N	I	J	L	E	I	R	T	O	I	O	M	E	E	N	H	E	O	H
G	F	P	S	D	G	P	S	J	P	V	P	L	S	J	I	S	S	P	Y
Y	T	X	N	E	J	K	E	D	I	A	M	I	N	K	P	C	D	I	O
R	V	E	D	A	G	O	D	L	S	P	R	G	F	D	L	B	A	A	P
F	K	S	A	V	E	A	S	O	M	T	H	J	R	E	B	S	A	L	L
S	T	O	R	N	A	D	O	I	C	A	N	E	I	R	Y	A	H	S	

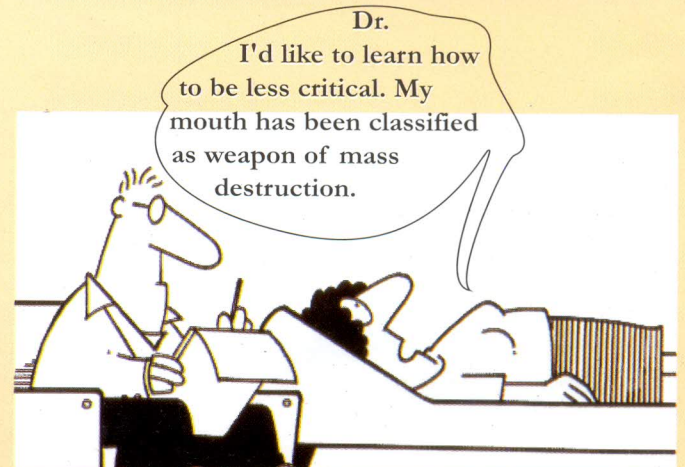


"Class, I've got a lot of material to cover, so to save time I won't be using vowels today. Nw lts bgn, pls trn t pg 122."

## This Issue's Cartoons

## A bribe for your professor

A professor was giving a big test one day to his students. He handed out all of the tests and went back to his desk to wait. Once the test was over, the students handed the test back in. The professor noticed that one of the students had attached a 100 Birr bill to his test with a note saying "A Birr per point". The next class the professor handed the tests back out. This student got back his test and 56 Birr change.



# Photo Gallery

The 4<sup>th</sup> National Conference on Private Higher Education Institutions in Ethiopia, organized and sponsored by St. Mary's University College, held on August 17 and 18, 2006 at the UN Conference Center, Addis Ababa. The following are some of the photos taken on the conference.



H.E. Dr. Sintayehu W/Michael,  
Education Minister, (Opening Speech)



Ato Wondweson Tahirta, President  
of SMUC (Welcoming Speech)



Ato Dagnachew Yilma, Chairman of  
EPHEIs Association (Keynote Speech)



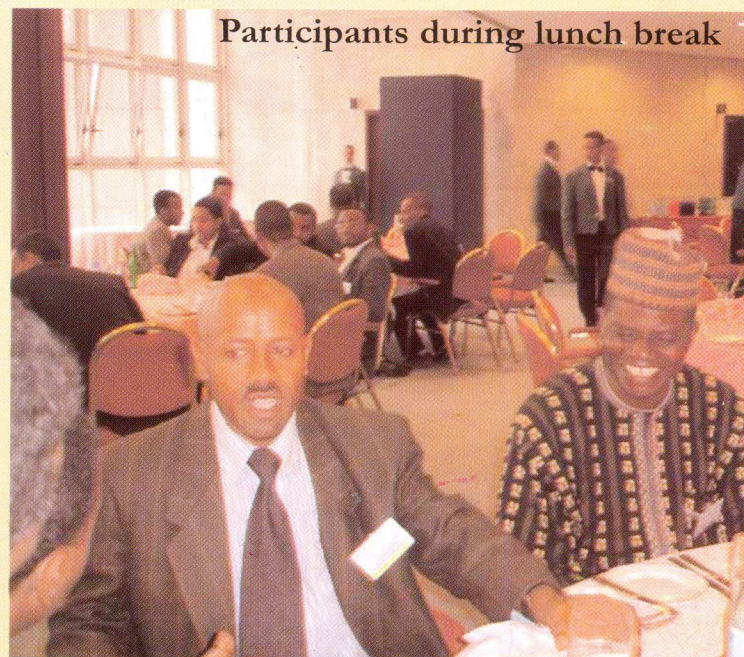
Presentations



Participants in the panels



Participants during tea break



Participants during lunch break

# Center for Research and Quality Assurance

## Research Grant Scheme

St. Mary's University College supports student researchers preparing their undergraduate and graduate thesis on Private Higher Education Institutions in Ethiopia. Research undertakings under this program are expected to meet the interests of practitioners and policy makers.

Priority research topics under this funding scheme are:

- \* Planning, financing and managing Private Higher Education Institutions in Ethiopia
- \* Policy and regulatory issues related to Private Higher Education Institutions
- \* Challenges and prospects of Private Higher Education Institutions in Ethiopia
- \* Quality education in Private Higher Education Institutions
- \* Teaching methods and practices in Private Higher Education Institutions
- \* Evaluating learning outcomes in Private Higher Education Institutions
- \* Student services in Private Higher Education Institutions
- \* Other issues related to Private Higher Education Institutions

Prospective researchers should submit their proposal to:

Center for Research and Quality Assurance  
St. Mary's University College  
P.O. Box: 1211  
Tel. +251-11-5537998  
+251-11-5538001 (Ext.124)  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Inquiries may be directed to: [research@stmarycollege.edu.et](mailto:research@stmarycollege.edu.et). Application form can be downloaded from our website <http://www.stmarycollege.edu.et/page/research.htm>

# St. Mary's University College

# Quality Matters

Vol. 1 No. 2 July 2006

A Quarterly Newsletter of the Center for Research and Quality Assurance  
St. Mary's University College

## In this Issue

From Editorial Desk (page 2)

News (page 3)

Interview (page 4)

Perspective (page 5)

Our Guests (page 6)

Reportage (page 7)

Puzzle and Fun Corner (p 8)

## Quote of this Issue

“Quality is doing the right thing in the right way.”

(Quality Assurance Netherlands Universities)

This newsletter is published every three months by the Center for Research and Quality Assurance of St. Mary's University College. The main purpose of the newsletter is to keep the College community, interested groups, government and non-government organizations informed about the activities and endeavors within and outside the institution towards fostering research and quality in higher education.

Tel 251-115-538001/537998

P.O.Box:1211

Email:research@stmarycollege.edu.et

<http://www.stmarycollege.edu.et>

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

## SMUC's Quality Assessment Council Launched

As part of its institutional comprehensive quality assessment task, St. Mary's University College has established a Quality Assessment Council in April 2006. The Council, run by a director and four associate directors, aims at ensuring institutional quality college wide. Assessments at faculty and office level are being carried out by the five quality assessment units.

On the occasion of the Management and the Quality Assessment Council Joint Meeting, Ato Wondweson Tamirat, President of the University College, commended the Council for its effort towards improving quality education at St. Mary's. He further noted that the Council will be acting proactively in highly professional manner, referring the greater emphasis given by HERQA for institutional self assessment in higher education.

Director of the Quality Assessment Council and Center for Research and Quality Assurance of SMUC, Ato Elias Nour, gave a brief introduction on the different activities of the Council. The Council was established following a comprehensive institutional quality improvement training given by Dr. Laila E. Denoya, a Fulbright Senior Specialist. Considering a step by step approach, the Council has decided to limit its framework of operation to the five degree programs that are being offered in the conventional classroom-based mode of learning at SMUC.

Priority has been given to fundamental issues of establishing units and preparing their job description and, in this regard, five Quality Assessment Units, with a total of 30 members were formed. Outlining the planned mode of operation, the director expressed the Council's determination to work closely with all staff members towards assuring quality education at SMUC. ■

## From Editorial Desk

St. Mary's has had external quality audit last year that focused on the teaching-learning process. This time around, we are heading towards a wider institutional self-assessment which doesn't only involve the learning-teaching process, but every aspect of the educational, support and administrative services that we provide to our regular, extension and distance students.

To this end, institutional self-assessment instruments have been distributed to students, academic staff and support staff. And, focus group discussion with our major external stakeholders will soon come by. SMUC Distance Education Division has prepared instruments that will be used for stakeholder satisfaction survey in addition to focus group discussion. Meanwhile, the instructor evaluation forms that have been filled by our students will serve as means of structured feedback towards sustained improvement.

We also had a Student Satisfaction Survey that was conducted four months back. It had limitations because it was a pilot survey that mainly targeted at certain departments, the Program Office and the Registrar's Office. Nevertheless, the Survey results have been communicated to the pertinent departments and offices. And of course, they have been promptly acted upon.

The current institutional self-assessment is wider than its predecessor, but still modest as compared to the series of comprehensive self-assessments yet to come. Apparently, the ongoing quality assessment endeavors are bound to show us where we are in light of required standards, in addition to which they can help us reflect and act upon the strengths to be nurtured and the weaknesses to be addressed. ■

## Useful Links

Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency (Ethiopia).  
Website: [www.higher.edu.et](http://www.higher.edu.et)

PROPHE- Program for Research on Private Higher Education  
[//www.albany.edu/dept/eaps/prophe/](http://www.albany.edu/dept/eaps/prophe/)

International Network for Quality Assurance Agency in Higher Education (INQAAHE)  
Website: <http://www.inqaahe.org>

Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (UK)  
Website: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk>

Center for International Research Higher Education  
Website:  
[http://bc.edu/bc\\_org/avp/soe/cihe](http://bc.edu/bc_org/avp/soe/cihe)

**All interested  
are encouraged to  
contribute to the  
various columns  
of the newsletter**

**Managing Editor**  
Dawit Tilahun

**Center for Research and Quality Assurance (CRQA)**  
St. Mary's University College

-----  
Tel 251-115-538001/537998

P.O.Box:1211

Email:[research@stmarycollege.edu.et](mailto:research@stmarycollege.edu.et)  
Website:<http://www.stmarycollege.edu.et>  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

### HERQA to Carry out Quality Audit

Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency (HERQA) will carry out the first national Quality Audit of Ethiopian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) as from September 2006. In a two-day National Conference held on June 7 and 8, 2006, the Agency announced that it has planned to carry out quality audit in more than 30 Ethiopian public and private higher education institutions. Stakeholders who participated in the conference discussed the procedures and frameworks of self-assessment and quality audit in HEIs in Ethiopia.

During the two - day conference, the agency presented documents which provide information and guidance to Higher Education Institutions on procedures and framework of conducting self-assessment and quality audit. It has also been emphasized that enhancement of quality and standards in higher education have become a prime concern.


During the reflection session participants thoroughly discussed HERQA's focus areas including: Governance and Management System in higher education institutions, Research and Outreach Activities, Academic and Support Staff, Student Admission and Support services, Program Relevance and Curriculum, Teaching, Learning and Assessment. The conference brought together about 100 participants. (Teshager Mersha)

### MOE Organized 'Project Proposal Writing' Workshop

The Ministry of Education organized a seven-day workshop from June 28 to July 4 2006 on 'Project Proposal Writing' in collaboration with NUFFIC, a Netherlands Government Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education.

Twenty-seven participants from thirteen public and private colleges and universities (including St. Mary's University College) attended the workshop which is part of a series of workshops on 'Leadership and Management in Higher Education Institutions'. The workshop aimed at acquainting participants with the fundamental elements in writing project proposals. Particular emphasis was given to issues related to project cycle management, logical framework approach for project planning, approaches and tools for strategic analysis in writing project proposal, and criteria employed in evaluating project proposal.

During the workshop, the participants were engaged in series of group work and presentations. "It was highly interactive and participatory," said one of the participants from St. Mary's University College. (Abraham Getachew)



### St. Mary's University College Community Social Support Forum

Invites all interested staff and faculty of SMUC to be members of the forum. Membership forms are available at departments.

For more information contact: CRQA

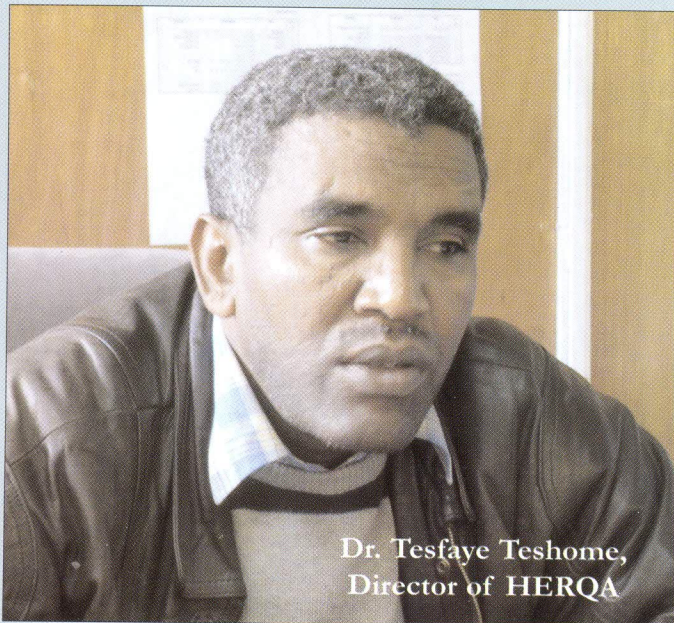
## Interview

This column features interviews of people including government officials, policy makers, educators, presidents of universities or colleges.

The Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency (HERQA) was established in July 2003 to monitor and ensure Quality of Higher Education. According to Proclamation No. 351/2003, the agency has the mandate to periodically provide information to the public about the current situation of Higher Education Institutions and, ensure that higher education and training offered at any institution are in line with the economic, social and other appropriate policies of the country. Dawit Tilahun and Teshager Mersha (from *Quality Matters*) have interviewed Dr. Tesfaye Teshome, Director of HERQA. Excerpts:

**Quality Matters:** What are the major activities of HERQA?

**Dr. Tesfaye:** Well, we are responsible for various things including guiding and regulating the country's higher education sector, ensuring a high quality and relevant higher education system in the country, and encouraging and assist-



Dr. Tesfaye Teshome,  
Director of HERQA

**“Quality is not simply inspection, but it is something that has to be perpetuated and maintained...”**

ing the growth of an organizational culture in Ethiopia. To this end, we have been undertaking different activities. For example, we have organized workshops to keep afresh the issue of quality in the education system as a whole and to assist the higher education institutions establish their own quality control system and improve the quality of Higher Education in Ethiopia. We have, for example, organized a workshop in July 2005 in which participants from public and private higher education institutions participated. Making use of the opportunity, they shared views regarding the concept of quality and what it is meant by quality standards. We have taken the initiative in setting subject benchmarking even though this was not our mandate. Subject benchmarking in nine subjects including Maths, Chemistry and Agricultural Engineering has been sent to higher education institutions.

Moreover, we had in December 2005 organized a workshop on quality audit and the protocols that could be adopted in the Ethiopian Higher Education system have been discussed. As part of our objective to assist higher education institutions towards building their own quality system, we have also conducted a self assessment pilot project in four public and private universities and colleges including Adama University, Debu University, St. Mary's University College and Unity University College. A few weeks ago we also organized another workshop, June 7/2006.

***How do you address the issue of relevance in your activity?***

This is a good question. An institute has to check if its programs are relevant to the society. Some people believe that there is relevance if there is quality. In my opinion, this is not correct. You know what I am saying? We cannot equate quality with relevance. ➔



So, the fact that there is quality in a certain program does not mean the program is relevant to the society. If a Higher Education Institution plans, let us say, to launch the best quality program in Nuclear Science in Ethiopia, the plan is meaningless if it does not consider the relevance of the program to the Ethiopian society.

*Some people say the quality of education in Ethiopia has significantly declined. What do you say about this?*

People have concerns; HERQA appreciates that, but we need evidence.

*How do you describe the partnership between HERQA and private higher education institutions?*

We have very good relations with them. The existence of good partnership with all the stakeholders really matters, because we cannot ensure quality without the involvement of all the stakeholders in the area. Quality is not simply inspection, but it is something that has to be perpetuated and maintained through the participation of stakeholders. HERQA helps the institutions build their own system of quality assurance. Though our mandate is to ensure quality as an external body in the quality system of the institutions, we believe that the institutions themselves ensure the quality. We only set the standards and provide the support.

Our partnership has been expressed in many ways. In the workshops that we have had so far, for instance, they have actively participated in the process of drafting and endorsing the Higher Education Bill. In this process more than 36 percent of them have been represented.

*What are the quality assessment methods/procedures that HERQA employs to ensure quality in the Ethiopian higher education system?*

I have already said that even though we are mandated to ensure the quality of education, it is the institution itself that assures quality. Our role here is to check if the institution has a quality control system that properly functions. We also set benchmark standards and support the institutions towards achieving the goals.

*Can you tell us about upcoming plans?*

**“Quality is not simply inspection ... HERQA helps the institutions build their own system of quality assurance.”**

We have planned to do various things. One of them is auditing the institutional quality of some private and public universities and colleges as of September 2006.

*How are you going to audit the quality institutions? And what are the criteria for an institution to be quality audited?*

First, the institutions that will be quality audited will be informed and asked to submit the self assessment report beforehand. The quality audit of the higher education institutions will be conducted by peer assessors who will be given training before they are involved in the actual job.

However, we quality audit only those who send the self assessment report. We will also establish peer assessors.

*Is there any advantage in being quality audited?*

Higher Education Institutions will check the fulfillment of their mission, vision, etc. They make sure that they are providing quality education. The Government will give additional budget for those who meet the requirement; and budget will be denied for those who do not.

*What are the main challenges of HERQA?*

The major challenges that we are facing include lack of full understanding of the quality concept and full functioning of the Academic Development Resource Center (ADRC) as quality cells. There are also other challenges with respect to staff and autonomy.

**“We believe that the institutions ensure the quality. We only set the standards and provide the supports.”**

## Our Guests

A Seminar on 'Landmarks in American History and Politics' was organized by the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy in collaboration with St. Mary's University College. Professor Charles M. Hubbard is a Fulbright Senior Specialist and Professor of History at Lincoln Memorial University (Tennessee, United States). He was recently at St. Mary's University College to conduct a five-day seminar for history instructors and teachers from various Ethiopian Academic Institutions. The seminar was conducted from July 10<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup>.

"There are times in our history, when the United States, is misunderstood and improperly interpreted," says Professor Charles M. Hubbard. The seminar primarily focuses on introducing the participants to American history, culture and society.

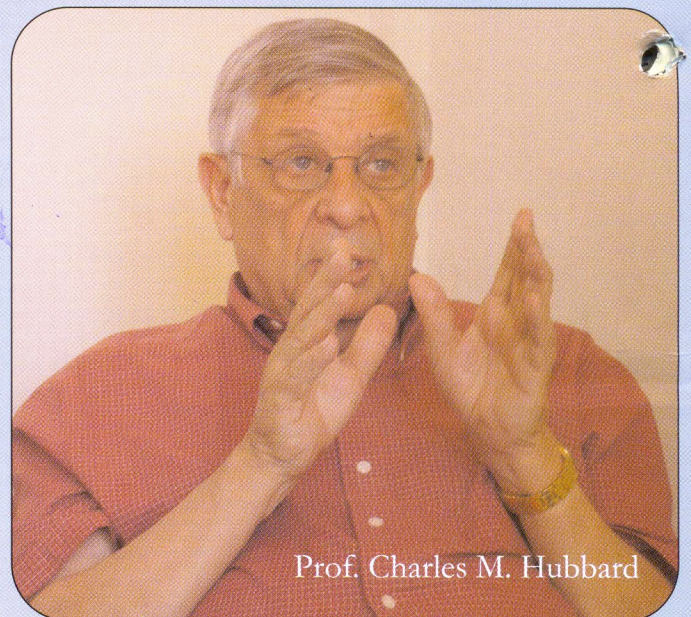
Professor Charles hopes that by responding to questions from seminar participants the American people can be reflected so that seminar participants can have a better understanding of the American people and their core values.

The Seminar has brought together about 50 instructors and teachers of history from various parts of the country. A range of topics including the British earliest encounters with what is now the United States, (which was British colonial America beginning around 1550), the early colonization process, the American break with Great Britain in 1776, and the evolution of American constitutional government were addressed.

Topics such as World War I and II, and the Cold war were covered. American Policy in the new millennium was also among topics of discussion.

The seminar participants, for the most part, were history teachers and instructors from throughout Ethiopia. Professor Hubbard was impressed with the knowledge and intellectual insights demonstrated in the discussion of a wide range of topics related to American histo-

ry and politics. A lively range of ideas between participants and Professor Hubbard clarified misunderstandings both about American political system and Ethiopian history.



Prof. Charles M. Hubbard

Dr. Hubbard said, "I am grateful for this opportunity, and want to express my appreciation for St. Mary's University College and the Public Affairs Office of the US Embassy for making it possible for me to enjoy this stimulating experience".

Dr. Charles M. Hubbard has worked with the Fulbright Foundation in several different capacities over the last decade.

**Seminar on  
"Landmarks in American History  
and Politics"**

## Perspective

When I was recruited in the UK to be a Higher Diploma Leader in Ethiopia, I was told that this licensing program was created to support teacher educators in becoming reflective practitioners, developing teaching skills based on sound theoretical knowledge and experience. Furthermore, to become role models of good teaching practice, providing a high quality experience for student teachers, while addressing gender and disadvantage issues. This, I appreciate, is achieved through careful guidance and monitoring of the program's participants. The HDP is the only course in Ethiopia which is nationally moderated, a trend which is common in developed countries.

Naturally, no innovative program is without its difficulties: consistency across institutions and national standardization being significant challenges. However, considering the HDP is only 3 years old, I can say that it has made a great deal of progress and the handbook itself draws on well-established experiential learning theories, reflective practice research and student-centered teaching principles.

For example, I have noticed change in each and every one of the participants on my course at St. Mary's University College. Some more than others, of course, but transformation nonetheless. Instructors who previously relied solely on lecture style methods of teaching have now been convinced of the merits of group work, microteaching, fun activities in the class such as 'warmers', competitions and

the like. We call these 'Active Learning Methods'. The assumption behind this is that students learn more efficiently when they are actively engaged and when the tasks they are being given in the classroom are relevant and meaningful. This has stemmed from the program's principle (based on sound international research) that learner-centeredness is crucial to effective learning - a conviction held particularly with regards to adult learning.

And I too have changed. My responsibility as facilitator and role model has been fuelled by the complexities of working in a developing country. I am challenged to 'practice what I preach' while guiding participants through the various practical tasks they are required to accomplish.

Personally, the greatest reward so far was when a candidate excitedly told me that he had rediscovered his passion for teaching. I strongly believe that passion is the root to motivation, which is the starting point to striving for quality - the foundation of success.

I have no doubt that the HDP, if implemented in the manner directed, serves, and will continue to serve educational quality in Ethiopia. It does so through carefully planned reflective tasks paired with various research projects and experience sharing. An assumption is made that experiential learning, reflective practice and expertise sharing is the path to improvement, which in turn leads to excellence. In my opinion, the HDP sets the foundation for this development.



Karen Waters

**Influencing Quality through  
the Higher Diploma  
Program (HDP) in Ethiopia:  
A Personal Reflection**

# Standards for Ethiopian Law Schools

A two-day Legal Education and Training Reform workshop of stakeholders was held at the Ministry of Capacity Building on May 29 and 30th 2006. The workshop discussed the draft document prepared with a view to enhancing standards and quality in legal education and training. The workshop was presided by H.E. Ato Tefera Walwa, Minister of Capacity Building and Chairman of the Steering Committee for Legal Education and Training Reform Program which is a component unit of the Ethiopian Justice Reform Program.

The major target audience of the focus group discussion was the institutional leadership of Higher Education Institutions, which included presidents and vice presidents of seven public universities and presidents and academic deans of two private university colleges including St. Mary's. Also present at the workshop were the Vice-president of the Federal Supreme Court, Vice-Minister of Education in charge of Higher Education, Presidents/ Vice-presidents of Regional State Supreme Courts, and Heads of Justice Bureaus.

The workshop covered presentations from members of the Technical Committee comprised deans/academic staff of law schools and stakeholders. The presentations and the discussion on the draft document aimed at gathering feedback from stakeholders.

The three presentations given on Monday morning (May 29th) dwelt upon the reform study process and foreign visits. At the end of the presentations workshop participants were asked to discuss on the draft document with a

view to contributing further inputs and ultimately make the document their own.

The second part of the presentation conducted on Monday afternoon addressed the issue of problems in legal education pertaining to curriculum, delivery and assessment, research, publications and consultancy, after which causes, consequences and conclusions were presented. Suggestions and comments were forwarded following the presentations.

Minimum Standards in Legal Education and Training was the topic of the presentations and discussion during the second day of the workshop. The presentations covered vision, mission, objectives, core values and Minimum Standards on Curriculum, Delivery, Assessment, Research & Publications, Leadership, Organization and Management.

Heated discussion was made on the issues addressed during which the issue of autonomy of Law Schools attracted much attention. The major comments and suggestions made during the second day of the workshop included (inter alia): the role that legal education and law schools should play in nurturing and enhancing the development of the legal profession, and the necessity of pedagogic training to law instructors. Moreover, it was suggested that the legal education reform document ought to be scaled up to other faculties. However, there were participants who stressed the need for caution in the process of implementing autonomy of law schools.

Members of the Steering Committee and the Technical Committee for Legal Education and Training Reform gave clarification to most of the issues raised in due course of the discussion. They stressed the need to upgrade legal education and noted the significance of the draft document in this regard and also expressed the need to uplift the competence



and integrity of the legal profession so that members of the profession would not be governed by the values of their clients such as profit making but rather by higher standards of professional ethics and integrity. Members of the Steering Committee and the Technical Committee explained that legal education is the concern of the entire justice system, and underlined the necessity of autonomy for law schools in various spheres of leadership and management.

Consensus among workshop participants was expressed regarding the need to break the cyclic pattern of problems in legal education. And it was suggested that the inclusion of cer-

tain courses in the category of core courses, the need to make certain stipulations normative rather than rigid, and other comments can be accommodated in the draft document.

While closing the workshop, H.E. Ato Tefera Walwa, underlined that legal education reform is not only the demand of law schools, but also the concern of all stakeholders. ■

-----  
*Our next issue will cover the second workshop (held at Ethiopian Management Institute on July 17th and 18th 2006). Over one hundred law instructors from public and private law schools have participated in this workshop.*

## Recent Good Practices

The Quality Assessment Council of SMUC has identified four activities undertaken during the last two months by different offices of SMUC and has decided that they deserve recognition as good practices.

\* The Literary and Cultural Forum organized by the Department of Languages of SMUC deserves exceptional recognition and appreciation;

\* The External Relations Office deserves appreciation in its effective facilitative role during the documentary gathering for the ETV- Channel 2 Program that reported SMUC activities;

\* The opening of the Student Wellness Development Center is also a recent good practice that needs to be appreciated;

\* The proposal and options of solution submitted by the Registrar Office to improve the working hours of the Office with a view of serving Extension students is good practice towards customer services.

## Answers to puzzle #1

The first issue of 'Quality Matters' contained a puzzle of ten questions. The answers to the puzzle are:

- 1) CUSH
- 2) ARCHANIDA
- 3) CORSICA
- 4) NITROGIN
- 5) THALERD
- 6) SENGHOR
- 7) RHODESIA
- 8) SIKHISM
- 9) VISCOSITY
- 10) OTHELO

The following four people have made good attempts. But none of them have completed the puzzle without mistake. CRQA appreciates their participation.

- 1) Abel Shimelis, IT student of St. Mary's University College
- 2) Kalkidan Amare, Sales Executive in the Emirates Airlines
- 3) Yakob Adane, Management student of St. Mary's University College
- 4) Fikadu Haile, from the Department Accounting of St. Mary's University College

# Puzzle and Fun Corner

The answer for the following questions are hidden in the puzzl. Find them and circle them on the puzzle (Note: answers may appear horizontally, vertically or diagonally). If you complete this puzzle without any mistakes and get it to CRQA of St. Mary's University College within a week's time, you will receive a prize, and if you successfully complete three consecutive puzzles, you will be entitled to get substantial prize.

- 1) Ethiopian philosopher (mid 5th century AD), who slept with his mother, disguised as another man.
- 2) Ugandan military dictator who ruled the country from 1971 to 1979.
- 3) The person who declared Iran an Islamic Republic in 1979.
- 4) The term for massive sheet of ice usually found in high land altitudes
- 5) Body of the water representing the shortest distance between Africa and Europe.
- 6) Eating disorder characterized by episodic uncontrolled eating followed by self induced vomiting with the goal of avoiding weight gain.
- 7) Ethiopian Patriarch killed by the Italians.
- 8) A severe tropical storm with winds exceeding 119 kms per hour originating in the tropical regions of the Atlantic Ocean or Caribbean Sea. It usually produces heavy rains.
- 9) The branch of Philosophy that studies beauty and art.
- 10) Writer and political activist who was killed by the military government of Nigeria on the 10th November 1995.

## The Chemistry Lesson

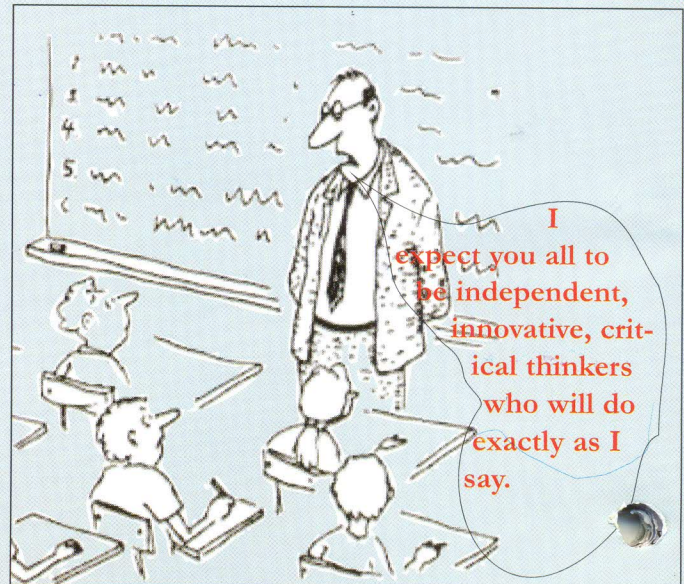
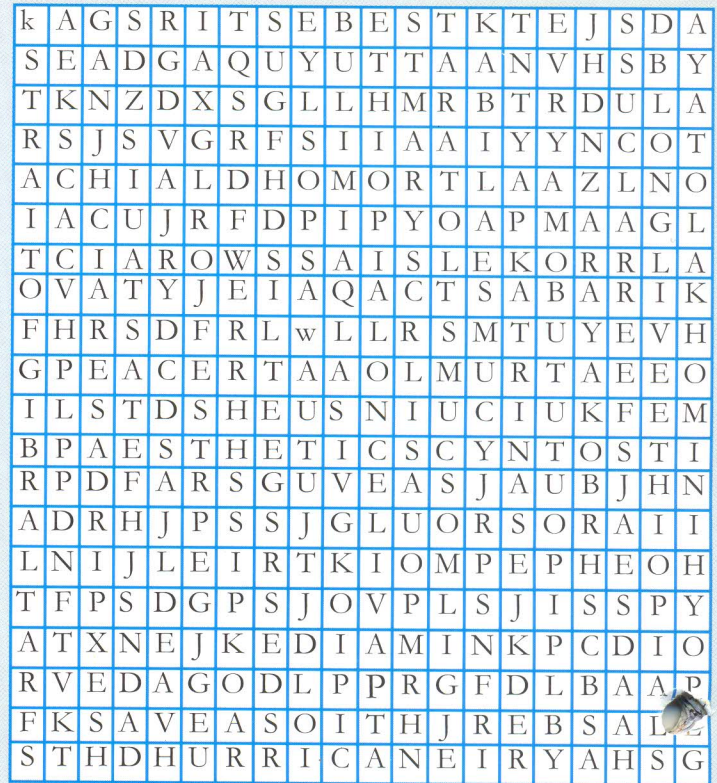
A chemistry teacher wanted to teach his 5th grade class a lesson about the evils of liquor, so he produced an experiment that involved a glass of water, a glass of whiskey and two worms.

"Now, class. Observe the worms closely," said the teacher putting a worm first into the water. The worm in the water writhed about, happy as a worm in water could be.

The second worm, he put into the whiskey. It writhed painfully, and quickly sank to the bottom, dead as a door nail.

"Now, what lesson can we derive from this experiment?" the teacher asked.

Johnny, who naturally sits at the back, raised his hand and wisely, responded, "Drink whiskey and you won't get worms."



# Center for Research and Quality Assurance

## Research Grant Scheme

St. Mary's University College supports students researchers preparing their undergraduate and graduate thesis on Private Higher Education Institutions in Ethiopia. Research undertakings under this program are expected to meet the interests of practitioners and policy makers.

Priority research topics under this funding scheme are:

- \* Planning, financing and managing Private Higher Education Institutions in Ethiopia
- \* Policy and regulatory issues in Private Higher Education Institutions
- \* Challenges and prospects of Private Higher Education Institutions in Ethiopia
- \* Quality education in Private Higher Education Institutions
- \* Teaching methods and practice in Private Higher Education Institutions
- \* Evaluating learning outcomes in Private Higher Education Institutions
- \* Student services in Private Higher Education Institutions
- \* Other issues related to Private Higher Education Institutions

Prospective researchers should submit their proposal before December 15 every year to:

Center for Research & Quality Assurance  
St. Mary's University College  
P.O. Box: 1211  
Tel. +251-11-5537998  
+251-11-5538001 (Ext.124)  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Inquiries may be directed to: [research@stmarycollege.edu.et](mailto:research@stmarycollege.edu.et). Application form can be downloaded from our website  
<http://www.stmarycollege.edu.et/page/research.htm>

# St. Mary's University College

# The 4<sup>th</sup> National Conference on Private Higher Education Institutions in Ethiopia

Organized and Sponsored by  
St. Mary's University College

Scheduled to be held on  
August 18 and 19, 2006  
UN-ECA Hall  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

*For more information contact:*

St. Mary's University College  
Center for Research and Quality Assurance

Tel 251-115-538021/537998

P.O.Box:1211

Email:research@stmarycollege.edu.et

Website:http://www.stmarycollege.edu.et

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia





## Message from the President

Quality pervades every part of our life with the astounding difference it brings as compared to common place considerations and achievements.

The question of quality is more serious in an age of higher education expansion. The current massification of higher education in Ethiopia has made the issue of quality the concern of all - much more than any time ever. If institutional differences and choices are to be measured wherever and when ever there is a need for doing so, one major parameter used will undoubtedly be quality.

St. Mary's has always been concerned about the infusion of quality in all its major undertakings: learning and teaching, research, consultancy, material production, and community services. It is the first private higher education institution in Ethiopia that has undergone internal quality audit. As a follow up to this endeavour, a

Senior Fulbright Specialist, who has come to our institution through the good offices of the US Embassy, has been assisting us in the last seven weeks to train a cadre of quality specialists who will spearhead our future efforts in this direction. The fact that the Research and Quality Assurance Office has been raised to the level of a center with the additional role of becoming the institution's brain center is indicative of our commitments and aspirations.

As we move forward, our concerns should transform into real actions, guiding our efforts and day - to - day engagements. It is my fervent belief that CRQA is well poised for this challenge. The huge tasks it is already undertaking, this publication and, hopefully, many more to come, will testify that the center is heading in the right direction.

*Wondwosen Tamrat  
President, SMUC*

Participants of a five week Professional Development Workshop on Institutional Quality graduate today on March 11, 2006. A Fulbright Senior Specialist in Educational Planning and International Education gave the workshop to 42 academic staffs of St. Mary's University College. The workshop focused on the following major themes: Institutional Quality, Institutional Quality Approaches and Institutional Quality Assessment.

### Research Grants

- The following are research grants available for seekers.
1. Sabbatical Research Grant Program, [sabbatical@ossrea.net](mailto:sabbatical@ossrea.net). <http://www.ossrea.net>
  2. The 18th OSSREA gender issues Research Grant competition for young Scholars, [girgc@ossrea.net](mailto:girgc@ossrea.net)
  3. The 20th OSSREA social science research grants competition for young scholars. [ssrgc@ossrea.net](mailto:ssrgc@ossrea.net)

### Calendar of Trainings, Workshops and Conference

1. Training in Social Science Research Methodology (9-20 Oct. 2006). OSSREA. [www.ossrea.net](http://www.ossrea.net) [rmt@ossrea.net](mailto:rmt@ossrea.net)
2. First national conference of college education. Conference, To be held on the first week of May 2006. Theme: Teachers Education for sustainable development. Organized by Institute of Educational Research, Addis Ababa University, [gena@ethionet.et](mailto:gena@ethionet.et)
3. Workshop on Lexicography and related fields, Ethiopian Experience Retrospect and prospects April 7-8 2006. Organized by ECRC, AAU

### Useful links

- \*Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency- Ethiopia (HERQA). [www.higher.edu.et](http://www.higher.edu.et)
- \*PROPHE - Program for Research On Private Higher Education <http://www.albany.edu/dept/eaps/prophe/>
- \*International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education. INAAAHE. <http://www.inqaah.org>
- \*Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (UK) <http://www.qaa.ac.uk>
- \*Center for International Research Higher Education [http://www.bc.edu/bc\\_org/avp/soc/cihe/](http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/avp/soc/cihe/)

Editorial Team: Abraham Getachew

Dawit Tilahun

Teshager Mersha

Graphic Design: Dawit Tilahun

CRQA, St. Mary's University College

News

# Fulbright Explains Programs

Mrs. Bettina Malone, Cultural Affairs Officer and Ato Yohannes Birhanu, the Cultural Affairs Specialist in the American Embassy to Ethiopia, have given explanations on the Fulbright scholarship and the procedures on how to secure them.

During their discussions with faculty and staff of St. Mary's University College, the two guests remarked that very few Ethiopian scholars from government institutions have knowledge about the program. "So we are here to make the staff and faculties of St. Mary's University College aware of the

program and tap this opportunity," said Mrs. Malone. She said that the Fulbright program is very competitive and the Embassy nominates qualified candidates



Ato Yohannes and Mrs. Malone

based on their academic merit. "The quota is only one or two per year," says Ato Yohannes, "but so

far we have received only few applications, not exceeding 14 each year." Fulbright offers different programs including: African Senior Research Program (ASRP) and the

Junior Staff Development Program (JSDP), which are mainly meant for developing countries.

The Fulbright Program is a U.S. government funded program in international educational exchange. According to its website, the program was first proposed to the U.S. Congress in 1945 by the then freshman Senator J. William Fulbright of Arkansas. His vision was approved by Congress and the program was signed into law by President Truman in 1946. Fulbright grants are made to U.S. citizens and nationals of other countries for a variety of educational activities; primarily university lecturing, advanced research, graduate study and teaching in elementary and secondary schools. Since the program's inception, more than 250,000 participants --chosen for their leadership potential-- have had the opportunity to observe each other's political, economic and cultural institutions. Of these participants, 42,200 have been overseas academics and professionals who have conducted research or taught in U.S. universities as Fulbright Visiting Scholars, and more than 40,100 U.S. faculties and professionals who have engaged in similar activities abroad.

## ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OFFERING HIGHER DIPLOMA PROGRAMS

A total of 19 faculties from St. Mary's University College are attending a Higher Diploma Program, which is intended to develop the professional skills of higher education instructors.

"The objective of the program is to upgrade the skills of the participants in their profession that would enable them

improve their ways of teaching," says Ato Melakau Girma, Dean of Faculty of Education. According to him, the program, which is launched three years ago in Ethiopia, is also meant for licensing educators in higher education institutes.

The program, which was started three months ago, is being conducted

by volunteer Higher Diploma Leaders from organizations such as International Foundation for Education and Self-help (IFESH) and Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO). "The participants of the program select the tutors who assist the leaders and will lead another program after the program is completed."

The program mainly focuses on issues such as Active learning, Action

continued on page 4

*Perspectives*

# Quality: A Many-Headed Hydra? Quality Perception in the Eyes of Different Stakeholders.

Philip Rayner (PhD) & Tesfaye Teshome (PhD)

Perhaps the Hydra is not a comfortable or reassuring metaphor to use for quality in Higher Education. As in Greek mythology, the Hydra was a malevolent snake with many heads that grew again and again when cut off. The Hydra was seen as a monster whose individual heads could maim or kill but also as a monster that was made up or more than the sum of its parts and was very dangerous.

Ethiopia is in the process of establishing an organisation to report on the quality of higher education, both public and private. The Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency was established as a result of the 2003 Higher Education Proclamation (351/2003).

The Ethiopian Higher Education sector that HERQA is to report on is in the process of a rapid 'massif' growth that has seen the number of universities increase from two only a few years ago to nine in 2005. Recently the Government announced the establishment of another thirteen new universities, plus an 'open' university. A few

years ago there were less than six accredited private colleges and universities. Today, the number is more than seventy for diploma and thirty four for degree programmes. The intake capacity of undergraduate degree programmes in public HEIs has increased from 3,000 ten years ago (1994/5) for both diploma and degree students in HEIs to 31,921 in degree programs alone in 2004/05. The total enrolment has increased from 42,132 in to over 172,000 in the same period. Private HEIs are encouraged to expand to assist the Government in meeting its targets. Private HEIs currently enroll over 39,000 students, 23% of the total National enrolment in Higher Education. At the Second Conference on Private Higher Education HE the Minister of Education announced that within the next five years students from private HEIs should account for between 40-50% of the total enrolment in Higher Education. This

expansion of market share is happening at the same time as total student numbers within Higher Education are set to double. Therefore the combined effect of this projected growth in total student numbers and the increase in private sector's share would mean a quadrupling of the numbers of enrolments of students in private HEIs over the next five years.

Nearly all those involved in the Higher Education system recognize the crucial role that an agency such as HERQA will play in the maintaining and measuring of the quality of education offered at a time of such a rapid and vast expansion. However there is one question that has yet to be fully addressed, yet alone answered: 'What is quality?' and the subsidiary question 'What does quality look like in the Ethiopian context?'

Consultation is recognized as being a key component of the process of defining and understanding what 'quality' is, however one

question is consultation with whom? The list of possible stakeholders in the higher education process is a long one: The Government, employers, students, parents, HEIs themselves (both managers and faculty), donors and probably others.

Governments when funding Higher Education, like students and employers, talk about 'value for money' and 'fitness for purpose'. Employers expect a Higher Education system that produces graduates that meet the needs of the country's industries and services. Students will often define 'quality' as good teaching, teaching that allows the student to learn effectively and that is supported by an assessment process that is fair and clearly understood by students. For parents 'quality' is likely, to be judged by the extent to which parents and their children's aspirations are realized, the type of job they attain after graduation, the

continued on page 5

## “Creating a culture of quality requires Leadership”

Dr. Laila E. Denoya

St. Mary's University College in its quest for continuously developing high quality and academic excellence decided to establish a college wide quality system at the institution. To achieve this challenging project, the institutional leadership received the full support of the American Embassy through the Fulbright Program, by providing the professional expertise of Laila E. Denoya, Ph.D, a Fulbright Senior Specialist with extensive international professional experiences in higher education, to assist in the implementation of the quality system at St. Mary's University College.

From January through March 2006, Dr. Denoya developed a comprehensive plan consisting of three specific points: Faculty Professional Development Workshop Sessions on: Institutional Quality Issues : Principles and Definitions in Higher Education; Approaches and Methodologies to Assess Quality in Higher Education institutions, with emphasis on

Performance Indicators and Accreditation, and a research project on



Dr. Laila E. Denoya

Student Assessment as a final point. The main goals of these training workshops were to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the selected participating faculties, administrative staff members, and students to train them in the quality principles, tools and techniques used for improving higher education institutions efficiency and effectiveness, and uppermost, to help them work in collaboration as teams to actively apply what was learned for the common purpose of improving the quality system and institutional processes at St. Mary's University College.

The workshops offered opportunities for teamwork building, increased

social interaction, and discussions on the different approaches to assure institutional quality. Furthermore, participants were able to gain the 'know how' of defining and analyzing institutional mission statements, measurement and development of database system of institutional inputs, processes, and outcomes, as methods to increase the effectiveness of academ-

ic programs and institutional services for the students within the Ethiopian Higher Education system, and particularly, at St. Mary's University College.

The workshops participants came from St. Mary's and, for selected sessions, from the Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency (HERQA) and from the Ministry of Capacity Building, who were engaged in this relevant topic of institutional quality.

The faculty development workshops successfully served as the strategy for developing strong commitment on the part of the participants, a comprehensive way to develop an understanding of quality both at the personal and institutional level, and empowerment for project initiatives designed for quality management at St. Mary's University College. Suggestions like: "I have learned how

continued on page 5

continued from page 2

**ST. MARY'S...**  
Research, Classroom management, and Continuous Assessment. Currently, St. Mary's University College is the

only private college offering the program for its faculty, according to Ato Melaku. The college has also started conducting the same program for a second group of faculties.

## CRQA to Offer Research Grants

The Center for Research and Quality Assurance (CRQA) of St. Mary's University College is going to offer research grants to graduate and

undergraduate students of Addis Ababa University. In December 2005, the center received eleven proposals, and a committee in CRQA has

evaluated the proposals. The committee has found out only five of them to be eligible. The grant will be offered for the proposals that go

along with St. Mary's research priorities. Since 2003, St. Mary's has offered grants to five graduate and undergraduate students from Addis Ababa University and Jimma University.

continued from page 4

### "Creating a Culture..."

we can prepare students at St. Mary's University College for the real world, the global outlook, and to become independent problem-solver, to this end, the application of quality principles facilitates it."; "I have learned how quality is related to the mission or purpose of an institution and how I personally can work to achieve that purpose...how I can contribute towards the achievement of quality at my institution."; "...in addition to what I have been doing in St. Mary's University College, I have learned that I have to think about Quality".

Dr. Denoya added to these technical training a human flavor which provided a valuable viewpoint to our individual awareness of local communities needs. Two community projects were identified by the quality teams' participants: one, a visit to an

orphanage, and the other, a visit to women with HIV-AIDS illness shelter. We visited and donated collected items and valued the smiles and gratitude of these beautiful Ethiopian citizens in high need.

According to Dr. Denoya, to create a culture of quality requires Leadership. At St. Mary's, the institutional leadership has exhibited a pioneer and exemplary role both early in the quality journey to create a quality culture, and currently by supporting institutional quality improvement based on continuous change and ensuring the necessary resources available to carry quality initiatives for academic excellence. It is Dr. Denoya's belief that in addition to the intuitional leadership, quality principles at St. Mary's would also be successful, when quality is not perceived by the campus constituents as a task to be added to their list of jobs, it should be an everyday and every-

one ways of doing the work. Quality is personal and by extension, institutional, hence, it is everyone's responsibility. Quality ought to become a goal and a process at St. Mary's University College.

And last but not least, Dr. Denoya wishes to express her thanks to the institutional leadership, to the American Embassy who sponsored the Fulbright Senior Specialist grant for all the backing to make this project a highly rewarding professional experience, and an unforget-

table opportunity to meet an excellent group of Ethiopian professionals who have gained Dr. Denoya's heart and commitment to make a sustainable St. Mary's quality assurance project. At this point, the challenge is left in the hands of these dedicated workshop participants and the entire campus. The implications for implementing the quality principles may lead us to think that: "We are not there yet, and we probably never will be, but we keep trying to do better" (Schmidt and Finnigan, 1992).

continued from page 3

### Quality: A Many...

financial security and status they experience as graduates, etc. The question of what quality means to the faculty of institutions is perhaps even less clear cut. Until recently some of the world's more traditional universities tended to assume that, in the words of Trow (2000) 'universities embody quality. They do not

need to demonstrate it.' The list could go on ....

It is perhaps anomalous to suggest that the various stakeholders are in any way similar to the many heads of the Greek monster the Hydra. However, to stretch the metaphor, it is possible to see the concept of 'quality' as a mythical beast which has many facets and that each of these needs

continued on page 6

## Puzzle and Fun Corner

The answers for the following questions are hidden in the puzzle, find them and circle them on the puzzle (Note: answers may appear horizontally, vertically or diagonally). If you complete this puzzle without any mistakes and get it to CRQA, St. Mary's University College within a week's time, you will receive a prize. If you successfully complete three consecutive puzzles, you will be entitled to get substantial prize.

1. Hebrew word referring to Ethiopia.
2. Spiders belong to \_\_\_ class.
3. A Mediterranean inland that is part of France.
4. Makes the largest composition of air.
5. Foreign currency introduced in the mid 19th century, it was widely used until 1945 and bore the image of Maria Theresa.
6. The first president of Senegal and a distinguished poet and intellectual.
7. The name of Zimbabwe before independence.
8. Adult male members of this religion wear a turban, do not cut their hair and beard and all have the sur name 'Singh'.
9. A measurement of how freely the molecules in a liquid can pass one another.
10. A Shakespeare play featuring a black man.

Puzzle 1

O	X	G	Y	N	T	D	E	S	D	E	M	O	N	A	N	E	O	N	I
C	V	I	S	C	O	S	I	T	Y	I	A	G	O	N	U	B	I	A	S
A	B	Y	S	S	I	N	I	A	I	N	L	O	V	E	W	A	T	E	R
R	W	A	N	D	A	F	N	L	S	E	N	G	H	O	R	O	I	L	S
B	I	L	L	K	I	H	S	G	I	T	I	O	D	I	N	O	X	I	D
O	B	U	D	H	A	U	T	B	K	H	A	C	V	T	U	R	G	C	O
N	I	D	R	Z	Z	M	M	M	H	I	G	E	O	G	R	A	P	H	N
N	N	I	E	I	I	A	A	H	I	O	R	O	D	E	R	I	G	O	Y
J	A	M	P	M	M	N	R	J	S	P	A	D	I	V	E	R	S	I	G
H	D	O	U	O	B	J	Y	G	M	I	C	Z	I	Y	E	R	O	P	C
O	I	C	B	L	U	I	S	Y	M	A	I	C	O	N	G	O	Z	I	A
P	N	R	L	L	A	K	C	U	A	Z	S	E	M	I	T	I	C	S	B
U	H	A	I	E	B	L	N	T	N	U	R	H	O	D	E	S	I	A	O
T	C	T	C	H	E	E	X	E	U	L	O	I	V	O	R	Y	P	A	N
I	A	I	O	T	G	U	L	E	X	I	C	O	G	R	A	P	H	Y	D
A	R	C	F	O	P	U	N	T	K	I	U	Z	U	L	U	M	A	N	I
I	A	G	R	C	O	L	L	E	G	E	S	H	E	L	I	U	M	L	O
B	T	M	A	M	A	R	I	A	T	H	E	R	E	S	A				X
U	I	K	O	R	S	I	C	A	S	T	M	A	R	Y	S	C	O	L	I
N	N	K	R	U	M	A	H	A	F	I	Q	T	H	A	L	E	R	D	

continued from page 5

### Quality: A Many...

facets needs to be addressed individually and yet also the monster itself needs to be dealt with as a whole.

The question then is what is the relationship between the parts, the various stakeholders and their particular perspectives on what 'quality' is and the sum of the parts, 'quality' as a totality for the sector and for HERQA? And how does the sum of these parts help us answer the question posed at the beginning of the paper 'what is quality?'

Vroeijenstijn (1995) recommends those involved in quality assessment should not try to discover a definition of quality as 'It is a waste of time'. Vroeijenstijn argues that

'quality' in Higher Education does not exist but that there are many concepts, many definitions and many interpretations. He notes however that 'every party concerned (students, staff, government, employers) should make clear what its requirements are'

It is perhaps therefore unrealistic to expect all the stakeholders in Higher Education to agree and share a common definition of 'quality' except in the very broadest sense. Vroeijenstijn, among others suggests that quality is 'doing the right things in the right way' - however (and by whoever) these may be defined.

What type of Higher Education a country needs and thus how its

'quality' is defined, should be part of the political debate that takes place within a country. There needs to be greater articulation and discussion between the various sector of education in Ethiopia, particularly between higher education, TVET, the secondary sector and the Regional Education B u r e a u s .

Many counties throughout the world are witnessing 'masif' growth in their higher education system and have to face the issue on how to ensure quality within an expanding system. For HERQA to ensure quality standards it needs the support and cooperation of all the other stakeholders in Ethiopian higher education. "Quality cannot be

A selection of quotes from people whose brain was obviously not engaged when speaking.

After finding no qualified candidates for the position of principal, the school board is extremely pleased to announce the appointment of David Steele to the post. (Philip Streifer, Superintendent of Schools, Barrington, Rhode Island)

Smoking kills. If you're killed, you've lost a very important part of your life. (Brooke Shields, during an interview to become spokesperson for a federal anti-smoking campaign)

The streets are safe in Philadelphia. It's only the people who make them unsafe. (Frank Rizzo, ex-police chief and mayor of Philadelphia)

achieved in isolation, and it cannot be imposed for above, it has to be a communal effort. Eventually all of us involved in the higher education sector will have to work together to ensure that we 'do the right things in the right way'.

# Center for Research and Quality Assurance

## Research Grant Scheme

St. Mary's University College supports students who work on undergraduate senior papers and Master thesis on private higher education institutions in Ethiopia. Grants made under this program are expected to result in research output that is accessible and of interest to practitioners and policy makers. Priority research topics under this funding scheme are:

- \* Planning, financing and managing of PHEIs in Ethiopia.
- \* Policy and regulatory issues in PHEIs.
- \* Challenges and prospects of PHEIs in Ethiopia
- \* Quality Education in PHEIs
- \* Teaching methods and practices in PHEIs
- \* Evaluating learning outcomes in PHEIs
- \* Student services in PHEIs
- \* And other issues related to Private Higher Education.

Prospective researchers should submit their proposal before December 15 every year to:

Center for Research & Quality Assurance  
St. Mary's University College  
P. O. Box 1211  
Tel. +251-1- 5537998  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Inquires may be directed to: [crqa\\_smuc@yahoo.com](mailto:crqa_smuc@yahoo.com). Application form can be downloaded from our website:  
<http://www.stmarycollege.edu.et/Pages/Research.htm>

## St. Mary's University College