



SMU ^{In} **STRIDE**

Quarterly Newsletter

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Committed to Excellence!

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Editorial

Warm greetings to all readers.

Welcome to Vol. 26, No. 68. September Issue of SMU in Stride 2024.

Teaching and Learning Column: Highlights graduation events, effective plan preparation and implementation session, an event of recognition; Research and Development Column consists of Features news at St Mary's University's Multi-Disciplinary Seminar (MDS), Annual Student Research Forum (RSF), the 11th Open and Distance Learning Seminar (ODLS), grant writing training and PhD students experience sharing session. Furthermore, Outreach and Community Services Column covers an event of recognition of SMU by Lideta Sub City.

We are grateful for your buttress and contributions to the Newsletter. Your suggestions and comments for the betterment of our Newsletter are welcome.

Happy reading!

International Relations and Communication Office, St. Mary's University

NEWS AND EVENTS

Teaching and Learning

Graduation Ceremony

St. Mary's University (SMU) celebrated undergraduate and post-graduate students' graduation on August 3, 2024 at the Ethiopia National Theater.



The ceremony was opened by Ato Tedla Haile, Executive Vice President of St. Mary's University. He delivered the opening remarks by congratulating the graduates on their success in completing their studies. In his speeches, he commended the graduates and the university community for their hard work and dedication. He also acknowledged the families who supported the graduates throughout their educational journey.

The ceremony marked the culmination of years of commitments to academic excellence performed

by the students and the institution. As the graduates embark on the next chapter of their lives, St. Mary's University remains steadfast in its commitments to foster an expedient environment of learning, growth, and community services as articulated by Ato Tedla.



The highlight of the program was the recognition of students who graduated with distinction across various disciplines. These high-ranking achievers were awarded certificates and trophies by the guest of honor, Dr. Selam Aklilu, founder and CEO of First Spine Clinic.



At the event, the guest of honor who delivered an inspiring closing speech urged the graduates to pursue their goals with unwavering determination and resilience. She also encouraged them to develop a positive attitude towards all aspects of their lives and foster a growth-oriented mindset. Her words



resonated with the audience, offering valuable insights on personal development and leaving a lasting impact on the new graduates as they commence on their next journey.



Celebrating Excellence

St. Mary's University Faculty of Business and Economics organized a half-day recognition session at the Undergraduate Campus Multi-Purpose Hall on September 21, 2024. The event was carried out to acknowledge and celebrate the outstanding contributions of staff members who had achieved their respective departmental goals. The Dean of the Faculty, Ato Fetene Shimeles, prized certificates to the exemplary performers.

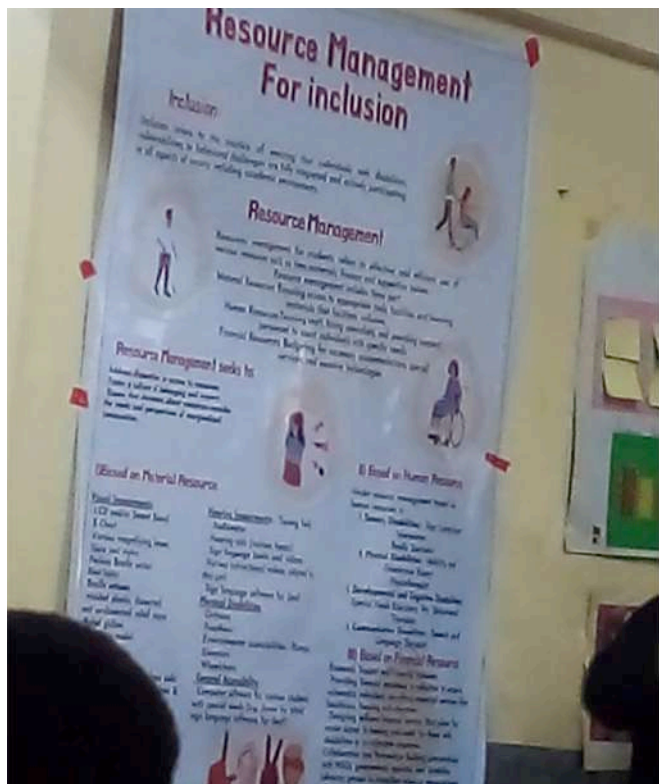
During the occasion, five instructors from the Marketing Management Department, four instructors from the Management Department, and one instructor from the Economics Department were complimented for their effective performance. These instructors demonstrated commitments to excellence and significantly contributed to capacitate the success of their respective departments.



Promoting Inclusiveness in Tourism and Hospitality

On September 21, 2024, first-year students of Tourism and Hospitality Management program was conducted and an insightful poster presentation gave due emphasis to issues of inclusiveness. Utilizing innovative teaching methods such as flipped methodology and various presentation aids including flip charts, the students demonstrated their researches which had been analyzed on several decisive topics.

The presentation comprises need-based resource management for disabilities, specific needs of individuals with visual and physical impairments, legal framework for inclusiveness in the tourism and hospitality sectors, and the importance of collaborative partnerships with various stakeholders for the enhancement of inclusiveness. In addition, the friendliness of hotels for persons with disabilities was critiqued and analyzed through a pictorial showcase. These activities were part of the partial fulfillment of the course "Inclusiveness," facilitated by the course instructor, Manaye Adela. The session provided the students with a platform to engage deeply in the subject matter and present their findings in a creative and impactful fashion.



The role of Quality Enhancement Committees (QECs)

On August 17, 2024, St. Mary's University Center for Educational Improvement and Quality Assurance (CEIQA) conducted a brainstorming session on the role of Quality Enhancement Committees (QECs). Shegaw G/Medhin, Director of CEIQA, led the presentation and accentuated the salient of Quality Assurance (QA) and Quality Enhancement (QE) in higher education.



QA ensures services that meet specified standards boost confidence and credibility, and includes Accreditation, External Quality Assurance (EQA), and Internal Quality Assurance (IQA). QE focuses

on continuous improvement and capacity building, aiming at enhancing instructional methods and instilling a culture of quality among staff. The session covered activities, such as annual planning, staff training, self-assessments, curriculum reviews, and regular feedback collection. The meeting was concluded by QEC members who were imparting their progress and challenges in the course of their work.

Effective Plan Preparation and Implementation Session

On July 20, 2024, the Center for Educational Improvement and Quality Assurance (CEIQA) of St. Mary's University conducted a half-day training on the development and execution of annual plans in the Syndicate Room. The training was intended to student club representatives, heads of undergraduate departments, Quality Enhancement Chairs, and CODL representatives. The session was led by Ato Shegaw G/Medhin, the Director of CEIQA, who underscored the importance of strategic planning in steering the University's daily operations and resource management.



Ato Shegaw outlined the comprehensive process of creating, implementing, and revising annual plans at SMU. Key components of the annual plan include setting clear objectives, detailing the steps to achieve these goals, establishing timelines, assigning responsibilities, and identifying necessary resources.

The planning process at SMU is accomplished in collaboration with all members of the departments and offices. Once the draft plan has been created, it is reviewed by CEIQA for technical accuracy. Feedback is then incorporated into it, and the revised plan is resubmitted to CEIQA. An annual plan review session, in which all planning heads and senior



management staff are discussants, is organized by CEIQA at the end of September to ensure all plans are aligned and comprehensive.

Ato Shegaw also discussed the purpose and timing of plan revisions, which are typically conducted after midyear evaluations. Revisions may be needed to add new activities, cancel impractical ones, adjust budgets, or update indicators based on new information. The revised plans are submitted for approval in mid-April and finalized by the end of April.



Reporting is another vital facet of the planning process at SMU. All planning units are expected to produce various reports, i.e. activity reports, monthly performance reports, and annual performance reports. These reports serve as verification tools and help track progress toward the university's goals. The training was concluded with an interactive discussion, where participants asked questions and shared their insights and experiences on planning and reporting.

Research and Development

Grant Writing Training and PhD Students' Experience Sharing Session

The Research and Knowledge Management Office (RaKMO) of St Mary's University organized an enlightening session on July 18, 2024 at the Main Campus Syndicate Room, focusing on grant writing and PhD students' experience sharing.

Ababaw Yirga, a Professor at Addis Ababa University (AAU), led the training during the morning session with his captivating presentation on Research Grant Writing. The training aimed to equip participants with essential knowledge, practical skills, diverse perspectives, and inspiration for effective grant writing. Professor Ababaw provided a comprehensive overview of grant writing, detailing the key components of a grant proposal writing. He emphasized the importance of aligning the proposal with the grant provider's goals and interests, highlighting the necessity of time, human resources, and financial planning for a successful grant proposal writing. He shared both general and specific tips, offered participants a wealth of actionable advice.



A key take away from his session was the importance of adopting the perspective of the funding agency. He advised participants to understand the funders' priorities and objectives and tailor their applications accordingly. Participants were highly engaged, actively asking questions and seeking for clarification on various aspects of grant writing.



The session continued with experience sharing, featuring insightful presentations from Ato Yehualashet Rade and Ato Mekonnen Tadesse. They recounted their PhD journeys which covered the stages from registration and admission to dissertation titling. They shared the challenges they faced and provided valuable advice to their colleagues. Other PhD candidates also shared their experiences, discussed how they navigated various challenges and divulged their hopes of completing their doctoral studies.

The 16th Multi-Disciplinary Seminar

St. Mary's University (SMU) held the 16th Multi-Disciplinary Seminar at St. Mary's University, Multi-Purpose Hall on July 11, 2024. This seminar brought together scholars, researchers, practitioners, and development partners from various fields to share research findings and discussed crucial issues in their field of specializations.



The seminar opened with a speech by SMU founder and president, Wondwosen Tamrat (PhD, Asso. Prof.). He averred that the seminar is known for bringing together experts from various backgrounds and a multitude of multidisciplinary topics that address a variety of subjects and themes of societal importance.



“The diversity of the topics is a clear indication of what the seminar is all about. The background

of presenters is suggestive of how this platform is contributing its share toward the increasing public private-partnership of the Ethiopian higher education sector needs,” he remarked.

In the 16th Multidisciplinary Seminar, nine research papers were presented, covering a diverse range of subjects, such as university education, technology, food security, women’s empowerment, economics, conflict resolution, agriculture, social capital, and children’s school experiences.



After the presentations, there were lively discussions where participants asked questions and had insightful conversations with the presenters. This would in turn help presenters explain their researches in detail and encouraged the participants to exchange ideas.



The seminar concluded with remarks by Misganaw Solomon (PhD), Vice President for Research and International Relations at SMU. He highlighted that the seminar held in this academic year after a month and a half since the university organized the 22nd International Conference on Private Higher Education in Africa is the second research forum at SMU.

He noted the diverse range of papers presented across various disciplines, made the seminar truly multi-disciplinary and reflected SMU’s contribution to Ethiopia’s strategic plans, even in the areas where

formal training has not been provided.



The 18th National Student Research Forum

St. Mary's University (SMU) held the 18th National Student Research Forum at St. Mary's University, Multi-Purpose Hall on July 25, 2024. This annual event, dubbed "By Students for Students" continues to provide an invaluable platform for undergraduate students from various higher learning institutions to share the findings of their senior essay to the students and SMU community.

For the last 17 years, this forum was a cornerstone for academic exchange where students could showcase their research and learn from one another. The event commenced with an inspiring opening remark by Ato Tedla Haile, Executive Vice President of St. Mary's University. He commended the presenters for their confidence and resilience in successfully defending their papers before their advisors and then presenting to a larger audience. Furthermore, he remarked, "Today's paper presenters are part of the new generation who will take up diverse positions in the civil service, business, and industry in the coming year."



Every aspect of the forum was student-driven. From the master of ceremony to the chairpersons and rapporteurs, students took the lead, providing them

with opportunities to enhance their skills and prepare for future professional achievements. The forum featured eight research papers from a variety of disciplines: Capital Market, Impact of E-Marketing, Cooperatives, Information System Practice, and Finance presented by students from Arsi University and St. Mary's University.



Following the presentations, lively discussions took place with the participants who asked questions and engaged in insightful conversations. This interactive session allowed the presenters to elaborate their research in greater detail and receive valuable recommendations.



Matheas Shimelis (Ass. Prof.), Director of the Research and Knowledge Management office, highlighted that the primary goal of the Forum is to provide an opportunity for students to practice presenting their research at a professional conference.

He also noted that the diversity of topics covered was a testament to the breadth of talent and creativity inherent in the student community.

He acknowledged the hard work and contributions of the entire SMU staff who worked tirelessly to make the event successful and officially closed the 18th National Student Research Forum.



The forum concluded with Ato Ayele Legesse, Co-Ordinator of Short Term Training and Consultancy, awarding certificates to the participants.



For the last 17 years, this forum was a cornerstone for academic exchange where students could showcase their researches and learn from one another.

Enhancing Inclusive and Quality Education through via Open and Distance Learning: Insights from the 12th ODLS



The Research and Knowledge Management Office (RaKMO) of St. Mary's University organized the

12th Open and Distance Learning Seminar (ODLS) on September 21, 2024, at the Syndicate Room, Main Campus. The Seminar, themed “Promoting Inclusive and Quality Education through Open and Distance Learning,” was opened by Wondwosen Tamrat, PhD, Associate Professor, founder and President of the University. He emphasized the Seminar’s unique role in addressing the often-overlooked area of open and distance learning, highlighting its importance as a platform for academicians from both public and private universities to share knowledge and strengthen partnerships.

The event featured three insightful papers: one from Debreberhan University on promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion in open and distance learning; another from Wollega University on assessment strategies to enhance student success through a critical meta-analysis; and a third from St. Mary's University on quality assurance in open and distance learning. These presentations sparked lively discussions on various aspects of distance education.



In his closing remarks, Behailu Tamiru, Dean of the College of Distance Learning (CODL), stressed the challenges and opportunities explored during the seminar. He acknowledged the contribution of RaKMO to the seminar’s success and expressed appreciation for the paper presenters, rapporteurs, chairpersons, and participants, before officially closed the seminar.

Partnership, Outreach and Community Services

University Strengthens International Ties at IGNOU Coordinators Meeting

St. Mary's University participated in the 11th Overseas Coordinators Meeting of the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), held from September 23rd to 25th, 2024, in New Delhi, India. This notable event brought together coordinators from various Overseas Study Centers, representatives from the Indian Ministry of Education, and diplomatic missions.

Representing St. Mary's University was Ato Mekonnen Tadesse, Dean of the Faculty of International Programs. He actively engaged in discussions addressing key operational challenges, including tuition fee structures and program offerings. Additionally, the platform provided an opportunity to introduce St. Mary's University and highlight its achievements to the audience.

The meeting featured valuable sessions on collaboration, program showcases, and discussions regarding the registration process with the Centre for Online Education. During the event, the Dean emphasized the importance of maintaining strong relationships with IGNOU and other international partners. He also expressed optimism about leveraging the insights gained from this meeting to enhance the university's international programs.

This participation underscores St. Mary's University's commitment to fostering global educational partnerships and continuously improving its international offerings.



An Event of Recognition of SMU by Lideta Sub-City

In a commendable display of community service, St. Mary's University was recognized by the Lideta Sub City Labour and Skills Office for its significant contribution to youth employment. The University provided essential job practice opportunities to 10 youths from Woreda 10.

St. Mary's University welcomed these young individuals into various departments, offered them hands-on experience in roles such as data encoding, secretarial work, archiving, and other services for six months. The University's commitment to nurturing talent was further demonstrated by offering



permanent job opportunities to those who exhibited high performance during their apprenticeship.

In recognition of this outstanding initiative, the Lideta Sub City Labour and Skills Office organized an acknowledgment event on September 10, 2024, where St. Mary's University, along with other institutions, was awarded a certificate of recognition. The event highlighted the University's dedication to empowering youth and fostering a skilled workforce.



Successful Students Stories

Compiled by the International Relations & Communication Office, SMU

Meti Shitaye was awarded a trophy and a medal as one of the 2024 graduates of St. Mary's University. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree from the Department of Management, regular program, with a Cumulative GPA of 3.94. Aiming to draw lessons for those pursuing their studies at SMU and other universities, the International Relations and Communication Office of SMU interviewed Meti to share her experiences and the factors that contributed to her success. Here is her story:

Choosing SMU and Her University Experience

When asked how she chose SMU and what her stay at the university was like, Meti explained, "I chose St. Mary's because it is one of the best private universities in Ethiopia. Additionally, my brother was successful in studying at this university. My family also advised me to join St. Mary's University because the students were ethical and the instructors adhered to the rules and regulations of the university. Besides these, I had good interactions with the instructors who taught first, second, and third-year students, which allowed me to ask for clarifications related to my studies. I was also the chairperson of a charity club and had good contact with my fellow students and the staff while serving the club."

Factors Contributing to Her Success and Time Management

Regarding the factors contributing to her success at the university and her time management skills, Meti appreciated the quality of education at St. Mary's University. She said, "The instructors were very friendly, even outside the classroom, and excellent at encouraging students to work hard." On time management, she advised, "Most students think they need to study for long hours to be successful. However, I study each subject immediately after each class instead of waiting for exam time. I use the days before the exam only for revision. I attend my classes attentively and consider it part of studying. Time management is very important, and students should not miss classes and should attend them attentively to be effective in their studies."

Advice to Current Students

Finally, Meti advised current students at SMU to set



appropriate goals and commit to achieving them, manage their time effectively, and be disciplined by not missing classes.



Elsay Tekleis is another 2024 graduate from the Undergraduate program at St. Mary's University (SMU), who achieved remarkable academic success. He graduated from the Department of Management with a Cumulative GPA of 3.83 and scored 3.85 in the Higher Education Exit Exam (HEEE), the highest in his cohort. Elsay's journey is truly inspiring. The International Relations and Communication Office of SMU interviewed Elsay to learn about his experiences and the factors that contributed to his success. Here is his story:

Choosing SMU and His University Experience

Upon completing his preparatory education, Elsay was initially assigned to Haramaya University. However, due to instability, he decided to move to Addis Ababa and enrolled at SMU. He chose SMU for its reputation, quality education, and fair tuition fees. Reflecting on his decision, Elsay shared, "My stay at the university was very exciting and memorable. It exceeded my expectations in every aspect."

Factors Contributing to His Success

Elsay attributed his success primarily to the support and dedication of his instructors. "The instructors were very supportive and helpful in many matters. The school environment was very supportive and accommodating," he explained. The courses at SMU were engaging, and the instructors provided additional supportive materials, which greatly aided his learning. He also credited his parents for their unwavering support. Elsay emphasized the importance of understanding the university's system and abiding by it. "I studied how the courses and tests were given, such as quizzes, assignments, and group work, and I prepared myself accordingly," he said.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the University

When asked about the strengths of SMU, Elsay highlighted the dedicated and supportive teachers, as well as the extracurricular activities that helped him cultivate his soft skills and insights. He appreciated the university's efforts in arranging apprenticeships at various offices and organizations, which provided him with practical skills. Field trips and surveys further enhanced his real-world knowledge and experience.



Despite the positive aspects, Elsay pointed out some areas for improvement at SMU. He mentioned issues related to the programming of classes and courses and hoped these problems would be addressed to enhance the working atmosphere in the future.

Advice to Current Students

Elsay's message to current students at SMU is to take advantage of the supportive and helpful instructors. He also advised students not to hesitate to ask for help and guidance whenever needed in connection with their studies. He encouraged students to familiarize themselves with the university's system to benefit from their education.

Elsay Tekleis's journey at St. Mary's University is a testament to the power of dedication, support, and quality education. His story serves as an inspiration to all students pursuing their studies at SMU and beyond.





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ስልክ:- 0913-426348 ወይም 0973-102988





St. Mary's University

Programs Offered



Undergraduate Degree Programs (Regular/Extension)

- ◆ Accounting & Finance
- ◆ Computer Science
- ◆ Management
- ◆ Marketing Management
- ◆ Tourism & Hospitality Management

Undergraduate Degree Programs (College of Open and Distance Learning)

- ◆ Accounting & Finance
- ◆ Banking and Finance
- ◆ Management
- ◆ Marketing Management
- ◆ Financial Economics
- ◆ Rural Development
- ◆ Agricultural Extension
- ◆ Agri-Business Management
- ◆ Agricultural Economics
- ◆ Cooperative (Accounting & Auditing)
- ◆ Cooperative (Business Management)
- ◆ Educational Planning & Management
- ◆ Economics
- ◆ Sociology
- ◆ Logistics & Supply Chain Management
- ◆ Public Administration and Development
- ◆ Management

Other Services Through Our Testing Center

- ◆ TOEFL iBT (Internet based)
- ◆ Recruitment test
- ◆ GRE
- ◆ Praxis
- ◆ (CISI) Chartered Institute for Securities & Investment

Graduate Programs (Regular)

- ◆ Master of Business Administration(MBA)
- ◆ MBA in Accounting and Finance
- ◆ MA in Project Management
- ◆ MA in Marketing Management
- ◆ MA in Social Work
- ◆ MA in Sociology
- ◆ MA in Development Economics
- ◆ MSc. in Agricultural Economics
- ◆ MSc. in Computer Science
- ◆ MSc in Quality and Productivity Management

Graduate Programs Offered in Partnership with Universita Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italy

- ◆ MBA in Impact Entrepreneurship

Graduate Programs In Partnership With IGNOU (Distance)

- ◆ Master of Business Administration
- ◆ Master of Arts in Social Work
- ◆ Master of Arts in Economics
- ◆ Master of Arts in Public Administration
- ◆ MARD (Master of Arts in Rural Development)
- ◆ Master of Arts in Sociology
- ◆ Master of Arts in Political Science
- ◆ Master of Commerce

Short Term Training

- ◆ Business, IT, and Education areas
- ◆ Certified Quality Manager
- ◆ Certified Quality Engineer
- ◆ ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System
- ◆ ISO 31000:2015 Risk Management
- ◆ Supply Chain Management
- ◆ Quality Professional
- ◆ ISO 9001:2015 Auditor
- ◆ ISO 9001:2015 Lead Auditor
- ◆ Quality and Productivity areas
- ◆ Entrepreneurship
- ◆ and more

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