UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Research Policy

2022

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Foreword

The University for Development Studies' vision is "to be the home of world-class pro-poor scholarship". As the first public university in northern Ghana, with a unique focus on practically-oriented participatory approaches to teaching and learning, UDS recognises the importance of quality research and its mandate to contribute to scientifically rigorous, ethically compliant and nationally relevant research. High-quality, cutting-edge research is the bedrock of every university; it drives knowledge creation, innovation and funding. This is reflected in the UDS motto, "Knowledge for Service", and its Problem-Based Learning methodology of teaching, research, and outreach/internship.

To enter the league of the top 100 best University rankings, research and grantsmanship leading to quality publications are very relevant. Thus, UDS research shall purposively promote research outputs pertinent to national development. Hence, the relevance of this Policy is to guide and direct the conduct, dissemination and use of research in UDS.

The joint effort of all and sundry to make the Research Policy document available is heartily acknowledged.

Prof Gabriel Ayum Teye
Vice-Chancellor

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All members of the Committee are acknowledged for their commitment and selfless service in developing the document. They are Prof. Francis K. Amagloh (Chairman), Prof. Elliot H. Alhassan (Member), Prof. Mamudu A. Akudugu (Member), Dr. Felix T. Y. Longi (Member), Dr. Gilbert A. Abiiro (Member) and Alhaji Bawah A. Kassim (Secretary).

1.0. Introduction

1.1 Preamble

The University for Development Studies (UDS) has the mandate to facilitate teaching, research and community outreach programmes to contribute to the socio-economic development of northern Ghana in particular and the country as a whole (Republic of Ghana, 1992; University for Development Studies, 2017). As the first public University in northern Ghana with a unique focus on practically-oriented participatory approaches to teaching and learning, UDS recognises the importance of quality research and its mandate to contribute to scientifically rigorous, ethically compliant and nationally relevant research. This recognition implies that there is a need to have a policy document to guide research at the University. Therefore, this Research Policy is developed to guide and direct the conduct, dissemination and use of research in UDS.

1.2 Research Policy Context

The UDS was established by PNDCL 279 in 1992 with a vision to be "a home of world-class pro-poor scholarship" (Republic of Ghana, 1992). This is reflected in its motto, "Knowledge for Service", and its mission of promoting the equitable and sustainable socio-economic transformation of communities through practically oriented, community-based, problem-solving, interactive research, teaching and learning and outreach programmes.

With the mandate to foster closer interaction between academia and rural communities in the quest for practical and sustainable solutions to the myriad of challenges facing the country, Goal 7 of the strategic goals of the University's strategic plan (2017-2023) aims to improve innovative research for community and national development (University for Development Studies, 2016). Accordingly, the University has also established the Directorate of Research, Innovation and Partnerships Services (DRIPS) to coordinate and facilitate research towards realising its research-oriented strategic goal. Within this context, the University has developed

this research policy to provide a comprehensive framework to guide research towards the realisation of its strategic goals and as reference material for quality research within the University community.

1.3. The Goal of the Research Policy

The Research Policy aims to ensure that the governance, conduct, dissemination and use of research in UDS conform to the highest research quality, ethical standards and international best practices.

1.4 The Objectives of the Research Policy

The Policy aims to:

a. create an enabling environment for the conduct of research;
b. enhance capacity for research and innovation;
c. direct the research efforts of the University toward the achievement of its vision, mission and strategic goals;
d. ensure that research conducted in the name of the University and by people associated with it is of the highest quality and ethical standards;
e. strengthen research management and coordination;
f. improve research culture and practice;
g. increase capacity to mobilise and manage funds for quality research and innovations;
h. promote local, national, regional and international collaborations in research and foster partnerships with industry; and
i. increase the returns for the conduct of research to achieve global researcher visibility and attract both human and financial resources to the University.

1.5 Policy Scope and Application

UDS Research Policy applies to all staff, students, and affiliates who conduct research (or are involved in the research process) in, for, or on behalf of the University at all its locations.

2. Operationalisation of Key Concepts, Terms and Principles

- **Research**: This is a systematic inquiry oriented toward discovering knowledge, creative cultural and conceptual expressions, or innovative scholarships that may contribute to development.
- **UDS/the University**: The University for Development Studies (UDS), Tamale and all affiliated institutions or organisations controlled by the University and governed by the University Council.
- **Research Misconduct**: The commitment of fraud in research, which includes fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, theft of research data, or other practices that deviate from those commonly accepted within the research community for proposing, conducting or reporting research. It does not include honest errors or honest differences in interpretation or judgements of data.
- **Innovation**: Discovery of any new idea or devise emanating from a scientific inquiry, technological creativity, or intervention.
- **Intellectual Property**: This refers to legal rights resulting from the creation of the mind, which leads to inventions, scientific discoveries, and literary and artistic works.
- **Policy Framework:** Research principles and corresponding statements about the principles.
- **Unsolicited Research:** This is in two categories. The first relates to a scientific inquiry initiated and wholly funded by staff or students in the University. The second evolves as a result of staff or students submitting a research proposal to an organisation, a group

or an individual for support beyond the proposed areas. For this Research Policy, the second case shall be considered a Research Grant if contractual funds are received for conducting the research.

- **Research Grant**: Contractual funds are received to conduct scientific inquiry from the University, an external institution, or an individual.
- **Research Contract:** Research contracts are targeted at addressing a specific concern of an entity. The entity seeking a staff's services shall expressly spell out the terms of reference. This implies that research contracts are tied to specific deliverables and timelines. Failure to deliver has legal implications for both the staff and the University.
- **Consultancy:** This refers to services including research, training and advisory activities demanded by either an external or internal entity from staff or students in the University. The engagement in this service attracts a commercial fee for the staff, students, or affiliates involved and the University. A staff or a student using resources of the University shall expressly seek permission from the University through DRIPS. In such a circumstance, the entity demanding the service shall financially compensate the University for using its resources as enshrined in the UDS Consultancy Policy (Institute for Interdisciplinary Research and Consultancy Services (IIRACS), 2017).

3. Policy Framework

3.1 Overall Policy Statement

UDS expects staff or students engaged in research or the process of research to act by following the highest standards of integrity and quality regardless of the funding source(s) for their research. To this end, the University presents its Research Policy Principles and Statements under the proceeding section.

3.2 Policy Principles and Statements

3.2.1. Priority Areas of Research

a. Each school, faculty, institute, directorate, centre and their constituent units will be required to develop and implement its research strategy that should feed into the University's overall research strategy to be produced by DRIPS regularly.

b. The University may also come out with priority research areas from which schools, faculties, institutes, directorates and centres will draw their research agenda.

c. In deciding the priority areas of research foci, the fundamental consideration should be relevant to the national development plan, alignment with the University's vision, mission and strategic goals, usefulness to industry and benefit to community and societal development in line with prevailing global development agenda.

3.2.2 Conduct of Research

The conduct of research is one of the three core activities undertaken by staff, students or affiliates in the University. Hence, the Research Policy provides guidelines to promote adherence to good practices in the industry and systematically track research engagement undertaken at the University. Research can be classified into unsolicited research, research grants and research contracts. These research engagements are expected to lead to publications, working papers, conference proceedings, news briefs, policy briefs, newsletters and technical reports. Staff, students, and affiliates engaging in research activities, mainly commissioned research, are expected to:

i. inform DRIPS and follow due processes and standards such as ethical research considerations in the submission of proposals and undertaking of research activities;

ii. submit their proposals through DRIPS;

iii. disclose complete and perfect information regarding the conduct of any research to the University through DRIPS;

iv. indicate to DRIPS the use of both tangible and intangible resources of the University;

v. submit a copy of all outputs that will result in the engagement of the research exercise;

vi. archive all research data through DRIPS;

vii. state institutional affiliation on all research outputs;

viii. outline both the immediate and broader benefits of the research to the University;

ix. ascertain clearance from the University legal team through DRIPS on the terms of the research contract;

x. include at least five per cent of the personnel cost to be equally shared as administrative cost for DRIPS and School or Faculty of staff or students; and

xi. include five per cent of the personnel cost as overheads for the Department or Unit where the staff, students, or affiliates belongs.

3.2.3 Academic Freedom and Reciprocity

The University's central functions of teaching, learning, research, and scholarship depend on an atmosphere where freedom of inquiry—thought, creativity, innovation, expression, publication, and peaceful assembly are given total protection. Expression of the broadest range of viewpoints shall be encouraged, free from institutional orthodoxy and internal or external coercion. Furthermore, holding appointments at the University should in no way affect the rights of staff as citizens as set out in the Constitution of the Republic of Ghana. These central functions shall be realised through concerted efforts by the University to create a conducive, nurturing and enabling environment. In addition, the University will provide resources for research and create opportunities for researchers to access funds/resources both locally and internationally. The following are the required mechanisms:

i. intellectual space;

ii. mutual respect for all branches of knowledge;
iii. suitable physical space and infrastructure to increase research productivity;
iv. appropriate teaching and service loads;
v. capacity building and mentoring;
vi. promotion of research networks and interdisciplinary research within Ghana and internationally; and
vii. recognition of excellence.

3.2.4. Quality Research and Innovation

High-quality, cutting-edge research is the bedrock of every university; it drives knowledge creation, innovation and funding. The UDS maintains its dedication to engaging in world-class research by placing research as a high priority. The University shall also be positioned at the centre of national innovation and entrepreneurship networks in all essential and emerging fields. The University shall encourage international collaboration and funding from external/international agencies/institutions. In addition, the University shall expand and diversify its range of research by:

i. scientific and academic partnerships;
ii. incentives for productive faculty to promote research culture;
iii. significantly increase the number and proportion of postgraduate students;
iv. research partnerships to increase graduate student research productivity;
v. independent monitoring and evaluation of research practice to ensure quality;
vi. create an enabling environment for publication; and
vii. encourage faculty to seek international collaboration/funding.

3.2.5. Research and National Development

Ghana's development plan is to consolidate its middle-income status, generate wealth, promote growth, provide decent employment, and reduce poverty. The realisation of these aspirations requires serious attention to research and development. Therefore, the University will proactively develop and pursue a research agenda targeting national development needs. This research agenda would be prioritised according to the University's core strengths. To achieve this, the University will:

- **i.** promote public-private partnerships in identifying relevant research needs to support national development;
- **ii.** influence the development and implementation of national policies and programmes in:
    a. Science, Technology & Innovation (STI), and
    b. Research and Development (R&D);
- **iii.** actively work with critical national development policy institutions such as the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) to ensure the effective prioritisation of the research agenda.
- **iv.** proactively engage at the highest level with the government to ensure that the University's research agenda is supported and adequately funded.
- **v.** where necessary, shall encourage international collaboration to achieve these goals.

3.2.6 Research Ethics

The UDS recognises that ethics is an integral part of the research endeavour and should be valued throughout the research process, from planning through implementation to disseminating findings/results. The University shall protect the dignity, rights, safety and well-being of human participants and prevent animal cruelty in all research associated with UDS. Ethical research also includes avoiding misconduct, plagiarism, data forgery, misuse of

university resources and conflict of interest. All research undertaken at UDS and by staff, students and research affiliates of the University shall comply with the guidelines in the UDS Research Ethics Guidelines to promote best practice (Institute for Continuing Education and interdisciplinary research (ICEIR), 2010). To achieve this, the University shall:

i. mandate relevant Units to set up ethics and research committees;

ii. establish a university-wide system of ethical clearance for research building on the existing Institutional Review Board and Ethical Review Committees in relevant units;

iii. train and certify researchers working with human and animal subjects in ethical research;

iv. provide guidance on research ethics for all staff, students, and affiliates;

v. prepare a code of practice for research; and

vi. put in place a system for monitoring compliance by researchers by relevant Units.

3.2.7 Intellectual Property

The tenets of the UDS Intellectual Property Policy (University for Development Studies, 2020) shall be adhered to regarding research and innovation.

3.2.8 Best Practices in Research

The credibility of research findings depends on record keeping and good data management. To achieve this, the University will create a meta-database of research materials/data repositories. Under normal circumstances, the principal investigator who undertook the research will hold the original materials and data sets. The DRIPS should also be provided with this data to be stored on behalf of the University. The principal investigator and DRIPS are expected to maintain this data set for a minimum of ten years after the final project close-out. In certain exceptional circumstances, this minimum period may be extended. The University shall put in place a system for:

i. acquiring and storing research materials and data robustly and confidentially;

ii. managing research data/material;

iii. academic authorship;

iv. handling research misconduct;

v. the regular/annual review of research data storage protocol; and

vi. ensuring yearly progress reports are submitted to the University.

3.2.9 Dissemination of Research Findings

The results of research or scholarship undertaken at the UDS shall be disseminated openly and timely to the broader scholarly community and public in keeping with the University's mission. In addition to dissemination in publications, research findings shall be disseminated to critical target audiences, including policy and decision-makers, the private sector, and civil society organisations. To reach all its audiences, it may be necessary to present research findings in understandable and accessible formats, including non-traditional forms of presentation such as theatre, radio and documentaries. The University will:

i. support training of researchers in appropriate communication techniques and methods;

ii. encourage online publications and support university journals;

iii. support staff dedicated to liaising with the media;

iv. enhance university participation in public events such as lectures, seminars, workshops, exhibitions and trade fairs; and

v. require publications resulting from research to be made available at the Institutional Repository.

vi. empower the University Relations Unit to disseminate critical research findings to the target audience, including publications on the website and other print and electronic platforms.

3.2.10 Funding for Research

The UDS shall promote effective resource mobilisation to support its research. These shall include but are not restricted to:

i. grants from research funding agencies;
ii. donations and endowments;
iii. internally generated funds paid into the University Research Fund; and
iv. contract research funds.

In consultation with the Directors of Finance and DRIPS, the Vice-Chancellor shall determine the various sources of income-generation interventions and the proportion to be transferred to DRIPS to fund viable research ideas of staff, students, and affiliates. Funds for research skills enhancement and management/administration of research-related activities shall be sourced from internally generated funds, grants and returns on consultancy activities undertaken by staff, students, and affiliates in the University. DRIPS shall regularly furnish faculty with information on calls for research grants and contracts. DRIPS shall be the sole entity in the University with the mandate for registering the University on all external research-funding platforms. DRIPS shall approach external agencies such as development partners, the Government of Ghana and private organisations/individuals to attract research funds.

4. Implementation of the Policy

a. UDS is responsible for ensuring that research carried out by its staff, students, or affiliates in its name is appropriately managed and administered. The DRIPS and Directorate of Finance are responsible for effectively supervising, administering, and managing all internally and externally funded research activities.

b. Within the University, it is the responsibility of the DRIPS, Faculty Research Officers and Departmental Research Officers to ensure that a conducive climate is created to support the conduct of research.
c. The University should have a Research Management and Administration Handbook containing all research-related policies, guidelines and protocols.
d. DRIPS has the oversight responsibility of monitoring and enforcing the implementation of the Research Policy in the UDS.
e. The Policy shall become operational as soon as it is approved by the Academic Board and University Council on the advice of the Vice-Chancellor.
f. This Policy shall be implemented in a manner consistent with the University's mandate, mission, vision and strategic plan.
g. Faculty members who fail to comply with the provisions outlined in this Policy or are unable to deliver as per the terms of a contractual agreement shall be referred to the Disciplinary Committee of the Academic Board of the University for investigation and application of the relevant sanctions if found guilty.

5. Review and Amendment of the Policy

In consultation with all relevant stakeholders, the DRIPS shall be responsible for reviewing the Policy after every five years. Specifically, the Board of DRIPS, in consultation with the Vice-Chancellor, shall set up a committee to review the Policy periodically. Any amendment to the Policy shall be through the Academic Board of the University and by the approval of the University Council on the advice of the Vice-Chancellor.

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