

Georgetown, Guyana

UG Council grants the Vice-Chancellor's request to forgo leave

At a duly constituted meeting of the University Council held on April 15, 2019 the subject of the treatment of the Vice-Chancellor's leave was considered and the Council agreed that the Vice-Chancellor should be formally requested to proceed on leave with effect from May 13, 2019.

Subsequently, on May 2, Vice-Chancellor Professor Ivelaw Griffith, wrote to the Pro-Chancellor requesting reconsideration of the Council's decision of April 15, 2019, citing among other things that, "extenuating circumstances" oblige him to forgo proceeding on leave effective from that date and requested to be paid for "30 of the 35 days' due to him.

Following the Vice-Chancellor's request, Pro-Chancellor Major General (ret'd) Joseph Singh, who is also Interim Chairman of the University Council, requested a review of the Council's decision by round robin of all members of the Council and members were also asked to indicate their support or otherwise of the Vice-Chancellor's request for payment of a portion of his leave entitlement. According to Pro-Chancellor, "It is my understanding that the round robin practice has been in place over the years and has been utilised by Council and other Statutory Organs of the University, therefore, it should not be interpreted as a special dispensation for the incumbent Vice-Chancellor".

Thirteen Council members participated in the process, with seven members supporting the Vice-Chancellor's request, four members felt that the matter should be deliberated upon at an Extra Ordinary Meeting of the Council, one member was opposed to the Vice-Chancellor's request and one member felt that a meeting of the Council should be duly convened, while three members did not participate as of May 10, 2019.

The Vice-Chancellor and Council members were duly informed by the Secretary of the Council on May 10 that a clear majority of members had approved his request of May 2, 2019. Council members were also informed that the amount of pay in lieu of leave the Vice-Chancellor was entitled to would be based on the advice of the Bursar and Personnel Officer.

The Unions have since issued threats of possible industrial action arising out of the round robin process. The Pro-Chancellor urges all members of the university community to, "Be responsible and ensure that the administration of our final examinations is not disrupted. I urge that our students, the primary stakeholders, be accorded the highest priority in this season of Examinations."

The University Administration wishes the thousands of students writing their final examinations best wishes for success in their endeavours.

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UG IN BRIEF

With a current enrollment of some 8,000 students, The University of Guyana (UG) has graduated more than 20,000 students who have gone on to successful careers locally, regionally and internationally. The University is also a major contributor to the national economy and to business and industry. Established in 1963 on a part-time basis with shared space at Queens College, UG moved to its own campus at Turkeyen in 1970 and expanded in 2000 with the addition of the Tain Campus. It now offers more than 120 Under-graduate and Post-graduate Programmes including the Natural Sciences, Engineering, Environmental Studies, Forestry, Urban Planning and Management, Tourism Studies, Education, Creative Arts, Economics, Law, Medicine, Optometry and Nursing. Several online programmes are available and The UG also offers extra-mural classes at four locations through its Institute of Distance and Continuing Education (IDCE). The UG also offers the opportunity for student engagement in debating, sports, and cultural, religious and professional activities.

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May 14, 2019