

OFFICE OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR



LAUNCH OF UNIVERSITY OF GHANA GENDER POLICY

ADDRESS BY:

**PROFESSOR NANA ABA APPIAH AMFO
VICE - CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**

**TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 2023
GREAT HALL, UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**



Chancellor of the University of Ghana and Chairperson for this ceremony, Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse,
Chair of the University Council, Her Ladyship Justice Sophia A.B Akuffo,
Pro Vice Chancellors,
Registrar,
Provosts and Deans,
Director, Center for Gender Studies, Dr. Deborah Atobrah and other Directors and Heads of Department present,
Faculty, staff and students
Executives of various Staff and Student Associations
Invited Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen from the media;
Distinguished ladies and gentlemen;

It is my pleasure to host the launch of the University of Ghana Gender Policy, which is a giant step in our quest to promote a congenial work environment for all persons.

As aptly captured in the preamble of the 21-paged policy document, the University recognizes the presence of systemic inequalities between men and women in various segments of society including the University space; the most vulnerable group, women, are often under-represented in decision making processes.

The Gender Policy is therefore very important to promote equity, remove gender stereotyping and set a level-playing field for all sexes to fairly compete for available resources and opportunities and to attain their potentials.

The Policy which will soon be launched broadly covers the University's gender principles which include issues concerning staff (appointments, promotion, etc.) and students (enrolment and retention). Office holders and individuals with responsibilities have been outlined as well as grievance procedures and processes for redress and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms among others.

As an institution committed to the realization of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 which focuses on Gender Equality and

guided by the Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, we generally eschew any form of discrimination on grounds of gender. This is affirmed under the University's fourth strategic priority on *Gender and Diversity*. It is on this basis that the University aims to create a just and equal teaching, learning and work environment for all members of the University community.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, over the years, the University of Ghana has been working diligently at creating an environment which is free from bias, stereotypes, and discrimination. It may interest you to know that the University of Ghana is the first university in Ghana to set up a Gender Center (now the Centre for Gender Studies and Advocacy) way back in 2005. UG is also the first university in Ghana to develop a Sexual Harassment Policy, and today, the University is leading the charge as the first public University in Ghana to develop a Gender Policy. At the University of Ghana, every undergraduate student takes a compulsory 3-week module in Introduction to Gender.

The UG community believes in creating room for competent individuals irrespective of gender to thrive in our work

environment. As testament to this and first time in the history of the University, we have an all-female set of principal officers who are women of substance and value, who bring so much knowledge and resourcefulness to their position.

I am happy to announce that as a result of consistent application of our affirmative action policy, our overall female student population is 50.15%. This feat needs to be sustained, but more importantly, we now need to be more targeted in our approach and improve the participation of females in programmes such as IT, mathematical sciences and engineering.

While we pride ourselves in our modest achievements in tackling gender disparities, we recognize that there is still more work to be done. This has necessitated the production of this policy which provides requisite information to all stakeholders of the University.

It is crucial, that, the University has a policy that further enhances women's rights and continues to provide a clear framework for addressing inequalities deeply rooted in our society. However, while promoting the empowerment of women and girls because they are usually vulnerable, we are not oblivious of the fact that

unfortunately, some males suffer silently, one form of discrimination or the other.

The University has and will take steps to consciously sensitize members of the University community to ensure that we create a community free of gender bias, a community where everyone's right is respected, a community where women will have no power to oppress men, and men will have no power to oppress women. A community where no potential is stifled on the bases of sex. All hands are needed on deck to make this a reality.

As we introduce the UG Gender Policy, let us work together to forge a path that ensures women and men, boys and girls, the marginalized and vulnerable all have an equal opportunity to attain their full potentials.

Thank you.

Prof. Nana Aba Appiah Amfo

Vice-Chancellor

March 14, 2023