

MINUTES OF THE WACCBIP MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON
MAY 4, 2020

1.0 Background

The WACCBIP Management Committee had the first quarterly meeting of 2020 on May 4, 2020 from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm. The meeting was organized via Zoom.

2.0 Attendance

Present

No.	Name	Designation
1	Prof. Gordon Awandare	Director / Centre Leader
2	Rev. Dr W.S.K Gbewonyo	Mentorship Coordinator
3	Dr Osbourne Quaye	Head, Monitoring and Evaluation
4	Dr Lydia Mosi	Logistics Coordinator
5	Prof. Neils Ben Quashie	Representative for College of Health Sciences
6	Dr Patrick Arthur	Head, Training and Research
7	Dr Yaw Bediako	Science Ambassador and Head of Advancement
8	Dr Therasa Manful Gwira	Graduate Admissions and Examinations Coordinator
9	Dr Lucas Amenga-Etego	Research Fellow
10	Mr Barfi-Adomako Owusu	Co-Head, ICT (Electronic Resources)
11	Mr Francis Boachie	Co-Head, ICT (Physical Resources)
12	Mr Collins Misita Morang'a	Representative for Graduate Students

In Attendance

No.	Name	Designation
13	Ms Sika Menka	Grants Manager
14	Mr Felix Kyei	Centre Administrator
15	Ms Emeffa Adzadu	Senior Accounts Officer
16	Mr Vincent Appiah	HPC Manager
17	Mr Solomon Katachie	Communications Manager
18	Ms Marian Namle Nanor	Accounts Officer
19	Ms Kyerewa Akuamoah Boateng	Public Engagement Officer
20	Mr Theophilus Dugah	ICT Technician
21	Mr B. S. Srinivasan	Laboratory Technologist
22	Ms Sarah Ofori Ntim	Procurement Officer
23	Mr Anthony Gassinu	Assistant Accounts Officer
24	Mr Eric Afful	Logistics Assistant
25	Mr Stefan Danquah	M&E Officer

Absent

No.	Name	Designation
1	Prof. Dorothy Yeboah-Manu	Postdoctoral Programme Coordinator
2	Prof. Kwadwo Koram	Deputy Centre Leader
3	Prof. Daniel B. Sarpong*	Representative from College of Basic and Applied Sciences
4	Prof. Isaac Asante	Representative for Vice Chancellor
5	Mr Anthony Hofe	Financial Manager
6	Dr Winfred-Peck Dorleku	Industrial Liaison
7	Mrs. Constance Kocke	Representative from Procurement Unit

* Absent with apologies

3.0 Opening Remarks, Review and adoption of previous minutes

The meeting commenced at 2:14 pm with introductory remarks from Prof. Awandare. Mr Francis Dzabeng was introduced to the Committee as the new Data Manager at WACCBIP. The minutes of the previous meeting was reviewed and accepted as an accurate reflection of the meeting. Rev (Dr) Gbewonyo moved for the acceptance of the minutes and was seconded by Dr Arthur.

4.0 New Business

Prof. Awandare informed the Committee that the meeting would be slightly different from previous meetings. Members of the committee were informed that they can raise issues or concerns they had while reviewing the Head of Units reports and then those concerns would be addressed by the respective Unit Head.

- Mr Danquah informed the Committee that the Unit is still developing the Framework policy. He mentioned that information acquired from the Heads of Units have been put into the framework to create a base line for the Framework. This will help measure the performance of the Centre in future years. He added that the Unit aims to improve the quality of the data it collects for the framework as the information gathered for the 2019 report was scanty. He also mentioned that the Unit is looking at how to efficiently incorporate all projects at the centre into the comprehensive framework.
[Prof. Awandare mentioned that the total expenditure in the report may not be accurate. He recommended that the M&E Unit liaises with the Accounts Unit to rectify the amounts.](#)
- Dr Arthur mentioned that delays in the procurement of reagents for students in MPhil year 2 has slowed down their research work and as such made it difficult for these students to meet their thesis submission deadlines. It was suggested to the students to inform the School of Graduate Studies and the Pro Vice-Chancellor (ASA) of this issue so as to be given an extension without penalties.
Prof. Awandare informed the committee that some consumables are being shipped through DHL from collaborating institutions and this can help clear some of the backlog of and assist some of the students to complete their work. He added that the Centre was asked during a Deans and Directors meeting to formally request for an extension for WACCBIP MPhil and PhD students as well as other students in the College of Basic and Applied Sciences to submit their thesis in October and December respectively.
Dr Quaye then informed the Committee that he has also written to the School of Graduate Studies stating the challenges being faced by the students amidst the COVID-19 and the challenges with procuring reagents. He has requested for a no-cost extension for the students but is yet to receive a response from the School of Graduate Studies.
- Mr Boachie mentioned that estimates for cleaning the sewer room would be submitted for review soon.
Prof. Awandare inquired on the status of the outstanding upgrade of the bandwidth for 2 laboratories in the Department. Mr Baafi mentioned that he is waiting for a full inventory from the WACCBIP ICT Unit to help facilitate this process.
Mr Appiah also informed the Committee that a server was received from The Francis Crick Institute for the upgrading of the HPC. However, an additional device (infinite band) is required

for this upgrade. Prof Awandare added that the severe was donated to the Centre by the Francis Crick Institute through the Crick African Network.

- Dr Gwira informed the Committee that the PhD Yr 1 students have submitted their comprehensive exams proposals. She added that the written and oral exams have been postponed due to the pandemic. This would be reviewed in July to get new dates for the exams.

5.0 COVID-19 Impact and Implications on the Centre's Activities

Prof. Awandare informed the Committee that the Centre remained in operation during the pandemic. Arrangements were made to assist the administrative staff to report to work to ensure the Centre stayed in operation.

Prof. Awandare suggested that the respective lab heads create a schedule which would allow the students to visit the labs in smaller groups.

Prof. Awandare mentioned that the Centre reached out to funders informing them of the impact of the pandemic on the Centre and discussed possible extensions for the projects. He added that some funders asked for the Centre to provide estimates for cost extensions for the projects.

He explained that if cost extensions are given then the Centre would continue to receive funds after the initial end date of the project. However, if no-cost extensions are given then the Centre would depend on internally generated funds to complete projects by the new end dates.

Prof. Awandare informed the committee that the Centre originally planned to ask for a no-cost extension for the DELTAS project to assist the PhD students to complete their programmes. However, the Centre now plans to ask for a cost extension due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Centre is still waiting for a response from AESA after submitting the preliminary applications for the DELTAS II. A response is expected from them before the end of the month and if the application was successful a new timeline would be provided to submit the full proposal.

WACCBIP staff on short term contracts would not have their contracts renewed until after the COVID pandemic. These contracts would be reviewed before they are renewed.

The first set of results for the ACE Impact Project have been submitted and approved by the World Bank. A new disbursement process would be applied under the ACE Impact Project. The Centre is expected to receive the first disbursement under the project to for the verified results.

6.0 Updates on upcoming WACCBIP events

- The WACCBIP International Advisory Board suggested that the 2020 WACCBIP Research Conference should be cancelled and postponed to 2021. The Committee accepted the suggestion to postpone the Research Conference to 2021.
- The 2020 WACCBIP International Advisory Board Meeting would be held via Zoom on July 16, 2020.
- Dr Mosi enquired if an applicant would be required to undergo full admission process if he/she applied in the next year.

It was agreed that if the applicant in the old admissions procedures made it to the interview (final) stage, then he/she would be considered to skip the written exams and shortlisted for the interviews in the new application.

7.0 AOB

- Prof Awandare extended the Centre's appreciation to all WACCBIP faculty, staff and students who contributed to the successful sequence of the COVID-19. He added that the analysis was done locally by WACCBIP students using the HPC (Zuputo)
- Rev. (Dr) Gbewonyo suggested that the Centre should make accommodation arrangements for students to assist them continue their research work.
- Dr Quaye mentioned that he met with the Director of the West African Genetic Medicine Centre to discuss sponsorship opportunities for post graduate students to study at the Department of Biochemistry, Cell and Molecular Biology
- It was decided that the graduate interns should continue to work from home until the University resumes its regular operation. Supervisors were asked to confirm which interns were actually working from home during the period.

8.0 Closing

- The meeting ended at 4:20 pm. Dr Mosi moved for the closure of the meeting and was seconded by Rev (Dr) Gbewonyo.