

UNIMA Bulletin



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Excellence Everywhere

In the dictionary, ecstasy and excitement are not very far from excellence. As an academic institution, we are always excited when our academics excel through publishing books, book chapters, and journal articles. Our excitement is immeasurable when our students excel in various competitions or travel to take part in various activities within and outside the country. In the same way, we are excited to have been named the overall winner of the Public University Staff Sports Association (PUSSAM) games in September this year.

Our members of staff worked hard - or is it played hard? - to bring home the gold, with numerous silver and bronze medals as the icing on the cake. These athletes showed that aside from being excellent professionals in running the University, they are also excellent sportsmen and sportswomen. The crowning of UNIMA as the overall winners of the PUSSAM games indeed speaks volumes about what kind of university we are. It is a testament to the fact that we are a well-rounded university which upholds the old adage, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull

boy". Our excellence is not just about being indisputably the top university in Malawi academically, but also reflected in the observation that we do not just talk about academics here. Isn't that what a top university like ours should look like?

And, while we are at it, we should take time to encourage more members of staff to join and bring out their various skills so that we can create formidable teams in various sports disciplines. It is through our united effort that we shall maintain our claim to both academic prowess and sportsmanship. After all, there is a whole host of indoor and outdoor games one can participate in. Other than the common disciplines that require a lot of physical activity, there are also games such as *bawo* and chess which require much less physical exertion. Staff participation in these sporting activities not only promotes networking and socialisation, but also ensures that we live healthy lives. Such activities provide an opportunity for members of staff to unwind and refresh which also increases productivity.

As the year comes to an end, we can all look back to see how much 'gold' we have won in this year. As it has already been alluded to, some of us have bagged a number of achievements which in turn contribute to the excellence this great institution is known for. Let us then plan for next year to continue being outstanding, for when we talk about connecting with excellence, surely UNIMA itself is excellence personified.

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UNIMA officials engaged in discussions with leaders of Mozambican academic institutions.

UNIMA holds collaboration talks with Mozambican academic delegation

The University of Malawi continues to make significant efforts in fostering international relationships with various universities both within and outside Africa. Recently, on 18th September 2024, the university management hosted a delegation from Mozambique, which met with the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Samson Sajidu, and other university officials at the University Office Boardroom. The delegation, led by Eng. Virgílio F. Ferrao, Chairperson of the Polytechnic of Tete, included representatives from various education institutions in Mozambique.

During the meeting, Professor Sajidu welcomed the visitors and expressed his gratitude to the presidents of Malawi and Mozambique for fostering academic collaboration. He noted that, during one of the meetings held when both presidents visited UNIMA last month, they exchanged ideas and recognized many commonalities between the two nations, which will also strengthen socio-economic ties.

Professor Sajidu delivered a presentation providing an overview of UNIMA's history, its strategic objectives, and international partnerships the university has already established with universities in Mozambique including Rovuma University, Universidade Púnguè and Universidade Joaquim Chissano, among others.

Following Professor Sajidu's presentation, the visitors engaged in discussions with UNIMA representatives on the programmes offered by the university and potential areas for collaboration. They expressed their satisfaction with the Vice Chancellor's insights and conveyed their eagerness to partner with UNIMA.

The meeting was a success and paved the way for further academic collaborations between higher learning institutions of the two neighboring countries. One of the prominent issues discussed was the exchange of students and staff between UNIMA and Mozambican universities.

The Mozambican delegation expressed

significant interest in sending their academic staff to UNIMA, both to learn English and to further their qualifications by pursuing Master's and PhD programmes in specialized areas.

The collaboration extends beyond academic programmes, also focusing on how the partners can best support each other in terms of student welfare, particularly regarding accommodation.

The visitors also toured various departments of the University of Malawi, including the Economics Department, where they admired world-class facilities present there. They also visited the Biological Sciences, Geography, and Chemistry laboratories, and toured the new administration block under construction, appreciating its architectural beauty.

These collaborations will continue to strengthen the relationship that exists between the two nations by bringing their people together through academic activities and collaborative research.



Dr Mimi Stith and Professor Samson Sajidu signing the MoU.

University of Malawi Partners with Pula Group to Boost Mineral Exploration

As part of its continued efforts to enhance collaboration with the industry, the University of Malawi recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Pula Group, an American company focused on mineral exploration. The event, held on 28th October 2024, at the University's boardroom, was graced by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Samson Sajidu. Also present were the President of the Pula Group, Dr. Mimi Stith; the University of Malawi Registrar, Mr. Martin Matululu; Dean of Natural and Applied Sciences, Professor Cosmo Ngongondo; and other staff members.

Prof. Sajidu welcomed the guests and expressed appreciation for the new partnership. In his remarks, he highlighted that the MoU aims to address the lack of comprehensive data on the country's mineral resources, such as the locations, types, quantities, and economic value of minerals. "The Pula Group brings expertise and equipment, while UNIMA provides the human resources. Our academic staff

and students will benefit from hands-on experience as part of their lab work," he said. He further emphasized that this exploration effort would generate valuable data, assisting potential investors by providing access to critical information on Malawi's mineral assets. "Exploration and research are critical before undertaking any significant projects, as lack of proper data can lead to wasted energy and financial resources."

The room was filled with excitement from both parties, celebrating the collaboration. Dr. Mimi Stith, President of Pula Group, highlighted that their company invests in democratically stable countries across Sub-Saharan Africa, with a current priority on critical minerals. She expressed the point that their partnership with UNIMA is a source of great enthusiasm throughout the company, with everyone eagerly anticipating the progress they will make at both the university and national levels.

She further stated that Malawi is rich

in minerals, and the exploration of this critical resource is an essential endeavor, as it creates the pipeline for mining projects and builds capacity for exploration. She emphasized that understanding how exploration can generate revenue is a crucial aspect of this development. She also commended UNIMA as a valuable partner due to its unique strengths, such as its specialty in mineral exploration, which plays a vital role in advancing the mining sector, along with its multidisciplinary team.

"Exploration involves the technical work of understanding all deposits, conducting engineering and test work, as well as analyzing the project's economic and environmental impact. The multidisciplinary nature of the UNIMA team sets a high standard," she remarked.

UNIMA is also establishing a Department of Mining, which will focus on mineral exploration, geology, and earth sciences.



The Vice-Chancellor presents a UNIMA-branded tote bag to the Commissioner.

Collaboration for Safety: UNIMA and Police Strengthen Security Efforts

The University of Malawi prioritizes the well-being of its students, both those residing on campus and those living off-campus. On 20th September 2024, the university management hosted the Commissioner of Police for the Eastern Region, Barbra Mchenga Tsiga, and the Deputy Commissioner of Police for the Eastern Region, Gladson Chipumphula, for a meeting with the university leadership. Present at the meeting were the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Samson Sajidu; the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Sunduzwayo Madise; the University Registrar, Mr. Martin Matululu; the Director of Student

Affairs, Dr. Jonas Mwatseteza; and the Assistant Registrar (Students and Welfare), Mrs. Eluby Kafumbata.

During the meeting, Commissioner Tsiga stated that the motivation for the visit was the recognition of the university as one of Zomba City's key stakeholders, and that the role of the Police heavily involves engaging with such stakeholders. She further explained that the visit was also aimed at understanding the challenges the university is facing, particularly regarding the security of students, in order to better serve them.

In his remarks, Professor Sajidu expressed his appreciation to the commissioners, emphasizing that the collaboration is crucial for ensuring the safety and security of students. Dr. Mwatseteza extended his gratitude to the commissioners for the prompt assistance the university consistently receives from the Police whenever it is needed. He further requested the appointment of dedicated desk officers with whom the university could maintain daily communication to address various issues.

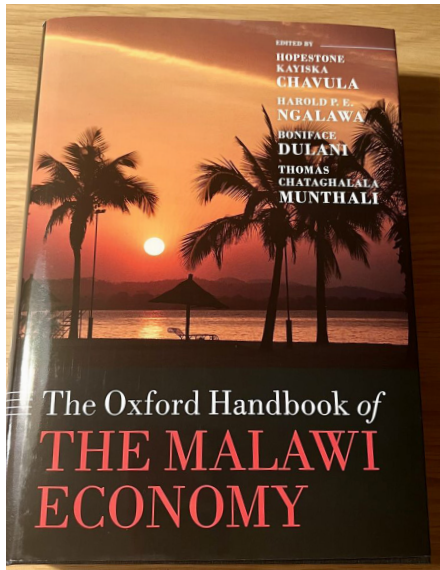
Additionally, the university leadership proposed the establishment of a police station on campus, citing the need for enhanced security given the university's population of over 10,000 students. They further suggested that a campus police station would assist in improving security matters and requested assistance in facilitating this arrangement.

As part of its efforts to equip police officers in the country with the necessary skills and knowledge for their service, the University of Malawi, in collaboration with the Malawi Police Service, introduced the Law Enforcement, Management, and Leadership Bachelor's degree programme. The first cohort of graduates graduated from this programme in August, 2024.



Discussions of the UNIMA-Malawi Police Service collaboration underway.

UNIMA Expertise Shines in Groundbreaking Book on Malawi's Economy



The front cover of the book.

The University of Malawi is one of the regions in the country where people come to acquire expert knowledge on a variety of fields. One of these is the area

of Economics, and indeed organisations such as the Reserve Bank of Malawi and the World Bank often interact with staff and students at the institution, as a way of keeping a pulse on all matters Economics in Malawi.

One of the ways to provide such expert knowledge is through publications featuring ideas from the institution's academics. *The Oxford Handbook of the Malawi Economy*, a new publication, is one such example. It has been edited by Hopestone Kayiska Chavula, Harold P. E. Ngalawa, Boniface Dulani, and Thomas Chataghalala Munthali. This is a monumental publication that serves as a valuable reference point for various matters pertaining to Malawi's economy. As the publisher's website states, "This volume is the first ever publication to try to assess the performance of the Malawi economy since independence in 1964, by examining how the underpinning political and economic history and the associated policies and strategies have affected the country's long-

term socio-economic development".

The book is structured into several main sections focusing on different areas: the political economy of Malawi's development, macroeconomic policy and the country's growth performance, social development and long-term growth, agriculture as an engine of the country's long-term growth, and industrialization and structural transformation. Unsurprisingly, the book features chapter contributions from some of UNIMA's renowned scholars such as Levison Chiwaula, Symon Winiko, Gowokani Chijere Chirwa, Happy Kayuni, Michael Chasukwa and Bertha Chipo Bangara

The book has been published by Oxford University Press and is available for purchase on the publisher's website and on many other major online book selling platforms.

LEG staff gather for networking function



The Executive Dean of SLEG, Prof. Happy Kayuni, welcomes staff to the event.

The School of Law, Economics, and Government organized a social gathering for all its staff members, which was held at the Economics Cafeteria on 16th October 2024. The function was graced by the Executive Dean of the School, Professor Happy Kayuni, and attended by heads of departments, as well as other academic and non-academic staff.

In his remarks, Prof. Kayuni mentioned

that the gathering was organized to help staff members get to know each other. He observed that it was particularly important for those who had recently joined the school. He further encouraged the members to collaborate on writing projects and urged them to go beyond teaching by engaging in more research and publications.

There was indeed a high level of interaction

during the function. One of the member of staff, Mrs. Emmillian Mtekatoka, a lecturer in the Department of Economics, expressed gratitude for the get-together as it was her first time attending such an event since she joined the university in 2023. She further stated that the gathering helped her become familiar with many staff members within the school and allowed her to learn about their diverse interests and various roles.

Established in 2022, the School of LEG offers exceptional academic undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in various disciplines such as Law, Economics and Political Science, among others. The school currently has five departments: Private Law, Public Law and Clinical Legal Education, Economics, Management and Leadership Studies, and Politics and Government.

During the event, various activities took place, including a musical performance by Mr. Ernest Kaponden, a staff member, and Mr. Andrew Kholowa, a Master's student in the school. The performance was a captivating display of melodious guitar artistry.

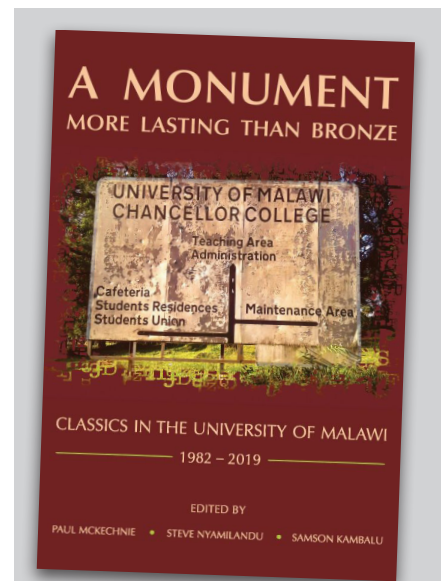
A Monument More Lasting than Bronze: New Book Explores UNIMA's Classics Journey

The Roman poet Horace once prophesied that the impact of the artistic works produced during his time would continue to be felt centuries after their publication. The truth of this opinion is captured in many ways, one of which is the continued study of Classics at many universities across the world. It is only fitting, therefore, that one of the most recent books to emerge from UNIMA academics takes its title from a poem by Horace. *A Monument More Lasting than Bronze: Classics in the University of Malawi, 1982 - 2019* is a recently published book that focuses on the study of Classics in Malawi, specifically in the Department of Classics at the University of Malawi. It has been edited by Paul McKechnie (Macquarie University), Steve Nyamilandu (UNIMA), and Samson Kambalu (University of Oxford).

As many people who have studied at UNIMA may know, the first president of the country, Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda, was a fond admirer of Classical Studies, and insisted on including the subject

as an essential ingredient of university education. It is no surprise, therefore, that the Department of Classics is one of the oldest at UNIMA, and that Classics is also taught in the form of Greek and Latin languages and literature at the Kamuzu Academy. As the book publisher's website states, "the book analyzes President Banda's motives for this surreal intervention and the political goals it served, and also sketches out the shape the enterprise he called into being has taken—all in the context of worldwide transformations of Classics".

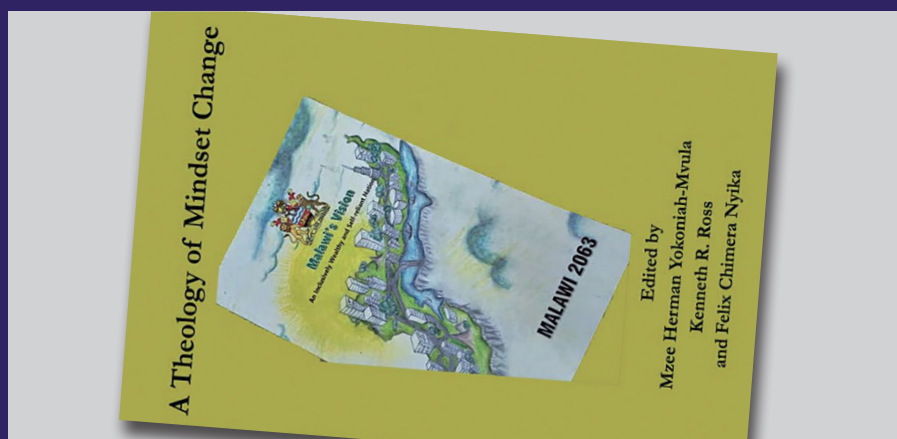
The chapters in the book are the product of a variety of thinkers on Classics. These include past and present lecturers from the University of Malawi, most of whom have some affiliation with the Department of Classics, some of them having served as visiting academics. The chapters touch on a range of topics highlighting issues such as Banda's influence, the purpose of Classical studies in Malawi, and evaluation of Classics Studies at UNIMA, among others.



The front cover of the book.

The book has been published by Harvard University Press, and is available for purchase on the publisher's website and on many other major online book selling platforms.

From Theory to Action: New Book Tackles Mindset Change Through Theology



A Theology of Mindset Change.

In the past few years, the topic of mindset change has been a popular one in Malawi. It is a catchphrase that is often tossed around in various circles, academic and political. However, it often remains a vague notion, with unclear instructions on how to implement such mindset change, turning ideas into actionable points. One recent publication, *A Theology of Mindset Change*, seeks to fill this gap. The book,

edited by Mzee Hermann Yokoniah-Mvula (UNIMA), Kenneth R. Ross (Zomba Theological University) and Felix Chimera Nyika (Kairos Leadership Institute), argues that theoretical principles can reshape the collective consciousness of a people.

In essence, the contributors in the books articulate the role of theology for mindset change. The idea of mindset change is

recognized as an enabler in MW2063, but the writers in this book have shown how theology is a key component for this issue. Indeed, as the first chapter of the book argues, theology ought to be recognized as a "prerequisite, backbone, and catalyst for mindset change". Central to the contributions is the recognition that that mindset change should be accompanied by attention to integrity, innovation and communal responsibility.

Chapter contributions in the book are drawn from presentations made at the Theological Society of Malawi's annual National Conference, held in September, 2023. They are on a diverse range of topics, from essays that focus on debates on sexuality, secondary school education, to arguments that highlight the intersection of the church, the state and the youth.

The book has been published by TSM Press, and is available at Kachere House in Zomba, and on all major online book selling platforms.



Ms. Mwasigala makes a presentation to the students.

DIC Empowers UNIMA Economics students with financial insights

As part of its efforts to equip students with the essential skills and knowledge required in the industry, the University of Malawi (UNIMA) fosters engagement between students and various stakeholders, offering opportunities for practical learning and skill development. Recently, on 18th October, 2024, UNIMA students, particularly members of the Economics Society, attended an awareness workshop hosted by the Deposit Insurance Corporation (DIC) at the Amaryllis International Hotel in Blantyre. The workshop aimed to deepen students' understanding of the role of Deposit Insurance Corporation in safeguarding Malawi's financial system.

The Deposit Insurance Corporation, a newly established parastatal, facilitated the event with various insightful presentations. Among them, the Director General of the DIC, Mr. Chitani Chigumula, delivered a key presentation that emphasized the importance of the Deposit Insurance Act of 2022. His session emphasized critical aspects of the Act and its role in promoting financial stability in Malawi. Following Mr. Chigumula's address, the Operations Manager, Ms. Lowina Mwasigala, provided a comprehensive presentation on how the DIC has evolved into a crucial institution, ensuring that Malawi's financial sector remains robust and resilient, especially during times of economic uncertainty.

The president of the Economics Society, Mr. Emmanuel George Banda, expressed his gratitude to the DIC for the valuable opportunity to learn from the corporation. He highlighted the vital role Economics students can play in supporting the DIC's mission. "Collaboration between academia and financial institutions is important in enhancing economic literacy and contributing to the sustainable development of our nation's financial

sector," he remarked.

Eighty-five students attended the workshop, and DIC officials were impressed by the students' participation and attentive engagement throughout the session. The Economics Society continues to organize various events to broaden students' knowledge and prepare them for the demands of the industry.



Students pose for a picture with DIC staff.



Students pose with the wife of the Moroccan Ambassador at the conference.

UNIMAWES Champions Climate Solutions at Youth Conference

University of Malawi are taking action to address these challenges. One of the dynamic student societies at UNIMA, the Wildlife and Environmental Society (UNIMAWES), comprises of such students who take issues of the environment to heart.

The society recently had the opportunity to attend the Local Conference of Youth (LCOY) on 12th October, 2024. The conference which took place at the embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco in Lilongwe, was graced by Her Worship, Esther Sagawa, Lilongwe City Council Mayor, and it attracted a number of organizations, innovators and environmental enthusiasts. Some of the notable individuals who were present at the conference included the wife of the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco to Malawi, and Dr Japhet Bakuwa, Director of Standards and Quality Audits at the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), who is also the founder and former patron of UNIMAWES. This year's conference took on the theme: "Innovate, Adapt, and Thrive: Youth-Driven Solutions for Climate Action".

Mr. Henry Supedi, UNIMAWES President and 4th year student enrolled in the

Bachelor of Science in Actuarial Sciences programme, had an opportunity to present on the progress of UNIMAWES before the audience. Mr Supedi shared some of the notable achievements and contributions that the society has made towards issues of climate and environment. Since its formation in 2020, the society has taken a keen interest and participated in different environmental activities both at community level and national level. Just last year, the society led a tree planting exercise at UNIMA where 2000 trees were planted around the catchment area at Mulunguzi Dam. The society has also participated in community outreach activities, environmental and wildlife advocacy and cleaning exercises around the city of Zomba. The society is also in the process of creating a small recreation center behind Chikowi Lecture Theatre as one way of providing students with a pleasant environment for interaction and group discussions.

Attending the conference was a huge milestone for the society, as Mr Suwedi explained: "The conference has enabled the society to forge new networks and partnerships, and in addition to that, the feedback we received has helped us to gain

insights as to where to improve and fill our gaps to effectively serve our communities and the country as a whole when it comes to issues of the environment."

He added that LCOY Malawi 2024 was a momentous event where enthusiastic young leaders, innovators, and organizations has the opportunity to share their insights on tackling issues about climate change. The event provided a great experience to the participants who are passionate about the environment and climate change issues.

As the world continues to find solutions to the pressing issue of climate change, UNIMA continues supporting its students in integrating technology to reduce climate change impacts. Through academic research, innovations and academic excellence UNIMA continues to play an important role in shaping the minds of the students to play a significant role in the country.

CONTRIBUTOR:
Henry Supedi (Final Year
Actuarial Sciences)



Ms. Thokozani Kujingo (L) adjusts her daughter's graduation gear.

A story of unwavering support: How a mother's commitment led to her daughter's success

Meet Ms. Thokozani Kujingo, the proud mother of Evelyn Kujingo, a recent Bachelor of Arts in Humanities graduate from the University of Malawi. Evelyn, who has special needs and uses a wheelchair for mobility, began her studies at UNIMA in September 2019. Ms. Kujingo recalls the delight of witnessing her daughter achieve this significant milestone, despite the unique challenges they faced.

"Seeing my daughter achieve this after all her hard work and determination brought me immense joy, relief, and excitement," she said.

However, their journey was not without obstacles. In addition to common challenges like financial constraints, finding food, and tuition, Evelyn also struggled with the physical and academic demands of university life. Her mobility issues made it difficult to access certain resources such as some sections of the library, and being in a wheelchair all day was exhausting. Emotional support was also critical, as the pressure of college life

weighed heavily on her.

Determined to help her daughter succeed, Ms. Kujingo provided constant support throughout Evelyn's studies. She assisted with academic guidance by helping Evelyn develop study strategies, celebrated every milestone to boost her confidence, and offered emotional support through encouragement during stressful times. Ms. Kujingo also provided financial assistance and continually reminded Evelyn to trust in God.

To ensure Evelyn received the support she needed, Ms. Kujingo spent much of her time on campus, almost living like a fellow student. She would seek some part-time jobs and other casual work to finance her daughter's education, while also staying close by to offer assistance.

UNIMA, being the one of the public universities with support services for students with special needs, provided Evelyn with specialist assistants who helped her attend classes every day and arranged transportation to and from home

each semester. The institution also offered her a room to stay on campus.

Reflecting on this journey, Ms. Kujingo advised other mothers in similar situations to show love and encouragement to their children with disabilities, urging them to work hard in their studies.

When asked about what Evelyn's graduation meant to her family, Ms. Kujingo said, "This achievement fills us with pride and joy. It's a testament to Evelyn's perseverance and marks the beginning of new opportunities for her future. Her wheelchair may give her mobility, but her spirit gives her unstoppable momentum. Truly, disability is not inability."

As the saying goes, "a mother's love fuels the pursuit of knowledge, making every academic success possible," we take a moment to salute the sacrifices and love that Ms. Kujingo and other women like her show their children to help them realize their academic goals.



Seminar attendees pose for a picture.

Tackling Sexual Violence: Law Scholars Explore Legal Gaps and Accountability

The Department of Private Law and the Department of Public Law and Legal Clinic Education at the School of Law, Economics, and Government recently hosted an insightful staff-student seminar titled “Addressing Sexual Violence in Malawi: Legal Frameworks and Institutional Accountability.” This important event, which took place on 10th October, 2024, attracted participants from various sectors of the legal field and provided a platform for a meaningful discussion on pressing issues related to sexual violence.

The seminar featured presentations from two students and a faculty member, each addressing different dimensions of the topic. One notable presentation focused on cybercrime, specifically addressing recent concerns regarding the spread of pornographic materials online. This discussion not only highlighted the legal implications but also engaged participants in a broader conversation about the application of the law in these contexts.

Additionally, the seminar focused on enhancing institutional accountability in cases of sexual violence, emphasizing the need for robust frameworks that ensure justice for victims.

Dr. Ngcimezile Mweso, Head of the Department of Public Law and Clinical

Education, pointed out that this was part of a series of seminars organised per fortnight aimed at bringing together staff members who have conducted research and students who are passionate about similar topics. These sessions not only encourage academic growth but also strengthen the university’s commitment to addressing critical societal issues. The department occasionally invites

industry experts, enriching the discussions with diverse perspectives and expertise.

The seminar demonstrated the university’s commitment to creating a safe and informed community, actively addressing issues of sexual violence and preparing future legal professionals to make a positive impact in the country and beyond.



Dr. Ngcimezile Mweso, Head of the Department of Public Law and Clinical Education.



Students discovering their creative sides at the event.

Sip and Paint Success: Fine Art Society Welcomes Fresh Talent to UNIMA

On 4th October, 2024, the Fine Art Society from the School of Arts, Communication and Design hosted a Sip and Paint event at the Open Theatre. The President of the Society, Mr. Mwayi Kaufulu, stated that the event was organized as an initiation ceremony for first-year students who had recently joined the Fine Art Department. Additionally, it served as a practical lesson for all members of the society, particularly the first-year students, to learn how to organize artistic events, including public painting sessions, exhibitions, and general art marketing.

“The function was also designed to raise funds for the society, similar to previous events, while offering individuals passionate about art an opportunity to explore its exciting world,” he said.

The event attracted around 60 participants, including students, staff members, and guests from outside the university. “This semester’s turnout was much better,” Kaufulu said. “It’s safe to say we are making significant progress in expanding the impact of art at UNIMA. It was also a pleasure to have some staff members join us. By coincidence, we were fortunate enough to also engage secondary school students who were visiting the campus and had a chance to stop by.”

The Fine Art Society provided the materials for the event, and participants were only required to pay a fee of MK6,000 to join.

During the event, many participants used acrylic paint on canvas and paper, while a few opted for charcoal pencils on paper. The artworks featured beautiful portraits, landscapes, and images of objects such as flowers and animals, with an overall expression of joy.

First-year students expressed their excitement, as this was their first time participating in such an event. Ms. Theresa Lupakisho Mwakiseghile, a Bachelor of Arts in Fine Arts student, commented, “The event was very interesting and made me appreciate art on a deeper level. University life can be demanding, and Sip and Paint events offer students a social and enjoyable way to unwind. Engaging in artistic activities helps alleviate anxiety and promotes mental well-being.”

She further noted, “Before joining UNIMA, I wasn’t particularly interested in art, but after gaining skills and knowledge from the classes I’ve attended, I’ve discovered many aspects of art that were previously unknown to me. The lectures have broadened my understanding of the great opportunities in the art industry and what it has to offer.”

The Open Theatre was adorned with various paintings created by the students, and each participant was allowed to take their artwork home, serving as a reminder of the day and a way to reflect on their artistic progress for future Sip and Paint events. Mr. Kaufulu mentioned that the society plans to continue organizing such events, with more to be expected in the future.



Rendering nature on canvas while sipping on Yonse Bo.



Ms. Silvia Albrizio makes her presentation at the Wadonda Lecture Theatre.

Connecting Theory to Reality: IMF Interacts with UNIMA Students on Structural Reforms

The University of Malawi in partnership with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), hosted the launch of the October 2024 World Economic Outlook on October 29, 2024, at the Wadonda Lecture Theatre. The event, themed “Understanding the Social Acceptability of Structural Reforms,” featured Senior Economist Ms. Silvia Albrizio from the IMF Research Department and attracted over 100 students, both undergraduate and postgraduate. In attendance were Dr. Gowokani Chirwa, Head of the Economics Department, and Mr. Nelnan Koumtingwe, the IMF Resident Representative for Malawi, among others.

Ms. Albrizio delivered an insightful presentation, providing students with detailed knowledge about the IMF. In her presentation, she addressed several topics, including the social acceptability of reforms, financial systems and state-owned enterprises, strategies for building consensus around these reforms, and attitudes toward reforms, among others. She remarked that Malawi is in a low-growth environment, experiencing the lowest growth in decades, and urged policymakers to take action by implementing structural reforms to make the economy more productive and boost potential growth.

She further stated that the IMF encounters significant resistance and delays in the reform process. She went on to highlight some of the challenges the IMF faces, particularly social resistance, which often leads to reform reversals. As an example, she noted that some reforms discussed in other sectors never materialize. She also shared that, after analyzing case studies and historical evidence, it was clear that people’s attitudes towards reforms are driven primarily by their beliefs and perceptions about the necessity and impact of these reforms. She remarked, “What is important is to inform people not just through an advertisement campaign on what the reform entails but to truly engage in a two-way dialogue. This interaction helps in understanding people’s knowledge and perspectives about these reforms.”

Ms. Albrizio was impressed with the student turnout and noted that students represent a population that should understand the IMF’s mission and its role in supporting sound reforms and effective policies for countries. She emphasized the importance of students contributing to research and gaining insight into how governments and authorities can improve their interactions with the public.

The presentation was followed by an interactive session, where students engaged in a question-and-answer session with the IMF officials. Dr. Gowokani Chirwa, Head of Economics Department, noted that the presentation was invaluable for students, as they study the IMF and other institutions, primarily from a theoretical perspective. “Hosting IMF officials on campus allows students to connect classroom learning with real-world practices,” he said. He added that such sessions help students understand various public perceptions about the IMF and equip them to address misconceptions. The officials provided students with an accurate view of the IMF’s role, helping them gain a practical understanding of its activities and impact.

Emmanuel George Banda, a fourth-year Bachelor of Social Sciences student majoring in Economics and Demography, expressed his satisfaction with the speaker’s caliber and the presentation, noting that he gained insights into various topics covered in his coursework. He added that he could see how theoretical concepts from class apply to real-world challenges and opportunities.



Purposeful pints: Students donating blood at the Sports Complex.

UNIMA Clubs Host Life-Saving Blood Drive

Students at the University of Malawi belong to various clubs, many of which engage in activities that give back to the community in diverse ways. Recently, on October 24, 2024, the UNIMA Leo Club and the Rotaract Club of Zomba organized a blood drive that attracted over 100 students and various other people from the surrounding community.

The UNIMA Leo Club fosters leadership development in young people through service activities that benefit the community, while the Rotaract Club focuses on a global network, leadership skills development, and community service projects, among other objectives. This event aimed to encourage blood donations, addressing the critical need for blood in local hospitals. Beyond merely collecting donations, the drive also provided an opportunity for young people to develop and exercise their leadership skills through planning and executing an impactful community service activity.

The two clubs used the Sports Complex as the central location for the donations to be carried out. The organizers were impressed by the enthusiastic turnout of students who donated blood. The

President of the UNIMA Leo Club, Mr. Ulemu Mpekansambo, noted that in a previous blood drive, they collected only 72 donations. The President of the Rotaract Club, Mr. Leonard Kayuni, expressed gratitude to all the students who sacrificed their time to make this significant contribution. “This time, the Malawi Blood Transfusion Service managed to collect 119 donations, representing a 63% increase,” Kayuni said.

“While the UNIMA Leo Club has hosted several blood drives individually, we recognized that by working together, we could achieve even more,” said Mpekansambo. “By leveraging our networks and resources, we aimed to make a more substantial impact on our community.”

The collection of blood was conducted by the Malawi Blood Transfusion Service Blantyre team. They gathered blood of various types, including A (positive and negative), O (positive and negative), B (positive and negative), and AB positive. The sports complex was filled with both male and female students interested in donating blood. Only students weighing 50 kg and above were allowed to participate in

the blood donation, with 450 ml collected from each. For students weighing below 50 kg, 350 ml was collected. During the donation, drinks and biscuits were provided to all students who donated blood to boost their energy and fluid levels, as well as to increase body fluids, which help in the formation of blood cells.

The motivation behind the blood drive stemmed from a shared desire to make a positive difference. Both clubs understand the critical need for blood among various patients, including children, pregnant mothers, and accident victims, and they recognize that timely donations can save lives. By organizing the drive close to campus, they hoped to encourage more students to participate.

One of the students who donated blood for the first time, Mr. Rodney Tewesa, a fourth-year student, said he was motivated by the fact that donating blood saves lives. As a student, he believes he has a role to play in his community by donating blood, advocating for donations, and volunteering. He urged his fellow students who have not yet donated to do so in order to help save lives.



UNIMA athletes pose at Mikuyu Young Offenders Rehabilitation Centre.

UMSSA participates in a fun walk and community outreach

On 26th October 2024, various staff members from different departments at the University of Malawi participated in a fun walk organized by the University of Malawi Staff Sports Association (UMSSA). The walk, led by University Registrar Mr. Martin Matululu, also featured Village Group Headman Chikanda. The event aimed to foster connections among staff members, promote physical activity to enhance fitness, and give to the community. Over 40 staff members took part, covering a distance of 22 kilometers from the University Office to Pirimiti.

The association donated items valued at over one million kwacha to Pirimiti Hospital and Mikuyu II Prison. 350 packages were distributed and each package contained assorted items, including a pack of sugar, salt, a washing tablet, and a bottle of Vaseline. Mr. Matululu expressed gratitude to the hospital management for allowing the association to donate items and he further thanked the association for organizing the walk and making a valuable contribution to the community. He further stated that corporate social responsibility aligns with the University's strategic plan and mentioned that students and other stakeholders would be involved in future events of this nature.

In his remarks, the Public Relations Officer of the Association, Mr. Thoko Bodza Mbewe, mentioned that apart from regularly participating in sporting activities with various public universities

and other teams, they also give back to the community as part of their corporate social responsibility. He noted that they have donated items to various groups on multiple occasions and also thanked the management for their consistent financial support. "Some members of the association also contributed, and the idea of corporate social responsibility arose because, as an association, we engage with people, regardless of their beliefs and interests."

Items were distributed in several wards, including the maternity ward, children's ward, and outpatients, among others, with 50 people receiving donations. Nursing and Midwife Technician Mrs. Maligalita Mtemula extended her appreciation to both the organizers and everyone involved in the donation, mentioning that patients often lack basic necessities, and this donation arrived at an opportune time to provide essential assistance.

The team then proceeded to Mikuyu II Prison, where they donated 300 packs to inmates aged 18 to 22. The inmates welcomed the team warmly, singing songs that had the staff members singing and dancing along with them. The Station Officer at Mikuyu Young Offenders Rehabilitation Centre, Superintendent Kondwani Mzumara, also expressed gratitude to the association for the donation, noting that many of the items fulfilled essential needs for the inmates.

He further commended the members for the encouragement they offered to the inmates. The event featured a variety of activities, including a comedy performance and verse recitations by the inmates, which added a lively touch to the day.

The fun walk ended with drinks and a braai at the university office, where members continued to interact.



The Registrar (2nd Left) joins staff on the walk.



More medals and trophies: UNIMA Management celebrates with sportsmen and women.

Vice-Chancellor Salutes UMSSA for Interspersary Games Victory

The University of Malawi Staff Sports Association (UMSSA) recently presented the trophies they won during the 4th Public Universities Staff Sports Association of Malawi (PUSSAM) games, in which all public universities in Malawi participated. The trophy presentation ceremony was held in the University Boardroom on 20th September, 2024 and was graced by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Samson Sajidu.

During the event, the Public Relations Officer of the University Staff Sports Association, Mr. Thokozani Bodza-Mbewe, expressed gratitude to Professor Sajidu and the university leadership for their financial support and presence during the PUSSAM games, acknowledging their role in the association's achievements.

Captains from various sporting disciplines were also present at the ceremony. Mr. Raymond Mphuha, representing all the captains, extended his gratitude to the university management for their continued assistance and commended all the athletes who participated in the games. "Sports is very important as it brings us together, shapes our personalities, and keeps our bodies strong, healthy, and fit," he said. He also congratulated all the teams for winning trophies at the interspersary sports games.

In his remarks, Professor Sajidu congratulated the team members on their achievements. He noted that the trophies won were a testament to the teamwork, discipline, and dedication of the athletes. "Sports play a vital role in promoting unity, fostering a healthy work-life balance, and enhancing the overall well-being of our staff," he pointed out. "The success reminds us all of the importance of physical fitness and the value of participating in activities that bring us together as colleagues. Your excitement, happiness, energy, and the strong sense of community displayed during the games are a reflection of a vibrant university spirit. You made me a proud Vice-Chancellor, and I look forward to even greater achievements in the future."

The University of Malawi emerged as the overall winner of the Interspersary Games, having secured four gold, two silver, one bronze, and several other medals at the event held on 7th September, 2024 at the Kamuzu University of Health Sciences (KUHES) in Blantyre. The ceremony concluded with the presentation of the trophies, during which Mr. Bodza-Mbewe outlined future plans for the University of Malawi Staff Sports Association, including the organization of fun walks and participation in corporate social responsibility activities within Zomba city.



UNIMA Vice-Chancellor, Professor Samson Sajidu (3rd Left) welcomes the athletes.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



As we close another two-month period, we would like to take note of some of the events that have occurred involving our members of staff.

Let us start by conveying our congratulations to Dr Martin Lipenga of the Department of Academic Skills and Careers on his obtaining of a PhD in Language Education from the University of Malawi. Congratulations on this milestone and may your academic career continue to soar.

The University has also registered some tragic events during this period.

In September, the UNIMA community bid tearful farewells to Mr. Arnold Manda, who sustained fatal injuries in a vehicle accident. We can still feel his absence and will always warmly remember his friendly personality. May he rest in peace.

The University also mourns the passing of Mr Vincent Nyirenda, a student in the Bachelor of Education (Chemistry) programme, who passed away in September. May his soul rest in peace.

Many at the university have also lost their loved ones in the past two months.

Our prayers go to the family of Ms. Ulemu Kanyongolo, on the passing of her mother, Associate Professor Ngeyi Kanyongolo. May her soul rest in peace.

We offer condolences to Ms. Patricia Nkhoma of the Special Needs Section, whose father passed away.

We also offer words of prayer to Mr Frank Chilaya of the Human Ecology Department, on the passing of his father.

To Dr. Blackwell Manda of the Geography and Earth Sciences Department, may the Good Lord bring peace to your family, on the passing of your mother.

We offer condolences to the family of Mr. Innocent Majonanga, of the Office of the University Registrar, on the passing of his father.

Our condolences also go to Mr. Sam Manthalu of the Centre for Social Research, on the passing of his wife. May she rest in eternal peace.



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