

Big drop in number of evening applicants

UWI lowers entry criteria

Anna Ramdass
anna.ramdass@trinidadexpress.com

THE University of the West Indies (The UWI) has taken a decision to lower the entry requirements for the Faculty of Social Sciences given a drastic drop in the number of applicants.

The Express understands that with only 186 students having been offered places in its evening programmes to date, the Faculty of Social Sciences decided to cut its matriculation standards for entry and sought the approval of the Academic Board of the Campus to do this.

The decline in student applications was noticeable after Government took a policy decision to limit the Government Assistance for Tuition Expenses (GATE) and apply a means test for students who require financial assistance for tertiary education.

Calls to Education Minister Anthony Garcia's phone yesterday went unanswered.

This green light was given at an Academic Board meeting on July 20 with approval from The UWI principal Prof

Brian Copeland and Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Prof Ann Marie Bissessar.

A decision was also taken to discontinue its Evening University programmes for the Social Sciences faculty and the university administration is going to formally write to all students who were offered places for the academic year 2017/2018 to consider taking up their places as full-time students or have their applications placed on hold for consideration in the future.

No more GATE

It was also agreed that no new programmes will be offered in the South (Naparima College) while the Certificate in Public Administration will continue to be offered at evening but only to students in the North St Augustine Campus.

Sources told the Express that the policy change was made as a knee-jerk reaction to the dismal figures that it has received for applications to its programmes that are offered to its Evening University students.

Sources said that other

lower-level matriculation requirements are also being drastically changed.

Before the policy change, only students with five O-Levels, including Mathematics and English, could enter.

Now the Faculty of Social Sciences wants to permit students with three O-Levels with Mathematics and English to be able to enter university.

It was also proposed and agreed that anyone whose qualifications fell below that level should be allowed to be interviewed by a panel that the Faculty of Social Sciences will set up to allow such students to enter without these lower-level matriculation requirements.

The most drastic change has been made to the BSc (Psychology) programme, which has lowered its points for entry from nine points to six points and also lowered its GPA from 3.5 to 2.5 for entry.

From the new academic year, all undergraduate students will be required to pay fees as the GATE programme has now been completely withdrawn for them.

CORNER

PICTURE



MINISTER ON THE SCENE: Minister of Works and Transport Rohan Struman, right, and a technical team visited residents in Maroon, Santa Cruz and Maracas yesterday following weekend rains which caused floods and landslides in these areas. Roads were power-washed and a back-hoe was used to remove dirt and debris from the waterway and off the road, the ministry said in a media release yesterday. —Photo courtesy Ministry of Works and Transport

The Express understands that no one knows what those fees will be yet and that will have a big impact on whether those who are offered places in these programmes with these lower entry requirements will take them up once they know what

they have to pay.

Efforts to contact both Copeland and Bissessar proved futile.

Adviser to Copeland, Dr Marlene Attz, when contacted, advised that questions be sent to Copeland via e-mail.