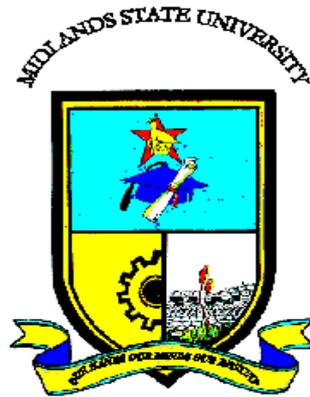


MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY



RESEARCH BOARD

RESEARCH POLICY

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The University Research Board

Research at the Midlands State University comes under the auspices of the University Research Board that was established in May 2000. The activities of the Research Board are regulated by the Research Board Procedures and Guidelines which, in turn, fall within the framework of the Research Act of 1986 as amended.

The Research Board's Terms of Reference include assisting the prosecution of Research in the Midlands State University and to act as a channel of communication for research matters. It is also responsible for the initial administration of, and, where appropriate, the allocation of general funds having to do with the research activities of the University and support of research projects of members of the academic staff, research students and research fellows. The Board also caters for external travel concerned with research and participation at national and international conferences. Membership of the Board comprises a Chairperson who is an academic staff elected by the Research Board, Vice Chairperson who is also an academic staff elected by the Research Board, a member of the University Council appointed by council, a representative of each of the five faculties of the University, the University's Librarian, the University's Bursar who is secretary of the Board, and the Vice Chancellor and Pro-Vice Chancellor who are both ex-officio members.

1.2 Contents

The policy document gives a brief overview of each of the major research themes. For all the themes, the format followed is that of a brief description of each major theme that includes a breakdown of the sub themes, and highlighting research focus. The document proceeds to proffer some strategies/action plan for the realization of the research objectives/goals. It then addresses the management of research projects.

Thus, Section 3.1 deals with Agriculture, the Environment and Sustainable development. Agriculture and the Environment constitute the basis of human survival and prosperity in Zimbabwe. Development is promoted by sustainable exploitation of natural resources to meet human needs and, therefore, no research policy can afford to ignore the natural resource base, which forms the basis for all development in the country. Section 3.2's Democracy and the Human Factor in Development addresses the human factor in as far as it advances the overall debate, and the theoretical and empirical knowledge of human rights and democracy in Zimbabwe. Education is discussed next followed by Entrepreneurship and Economic Development. The Policy

document also underscores the crucial role of science and technology in the Socio-economic development of Zimbabwe. This is in view of the fact that the level of development of any nation includes a measure of how much science and technology has been exploited and is being applied in providing goods and services. These and other issues on science and technology are addressed in Section 3.5 of the document.

It is also noted that Zimbabwe cannot, by itself, develop all the manpower, technical, scientific and entrepreneurship skills that it needs. Therefore there is need to tap some assistance from the rest of the world. Accordingly, the policy document gives due attention to the need to establish and maintain international links. It is clear, therefore, that national development presupposes a well co-ordinated interplay of research and scientific, technical, human and financial resources for a sustainable exploitation of Zimbabwe's natural resources. The Research policy document also allows for a periodic review of research priorities in the main sectors of the economy.

2.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY DOCUMENT

- 2.1 The objective of the Midlands State University's research policy is to promote national development and self-sufficiency by:
 - 2.1.1 Encouraging respect for human rights and democracy
 - 2.1.2 Enhancing rapid and sustainable industrialization
 - 2.1.3 Ensuring adequate food production and a good health delivery system
 - 2.1.4 Promoting environmentally-friendly development programs
 - 2.1.5 Promoting employment creation

In order to achieve the above- stated, there is need to:

- 2.2 Encourage the creation of an enabling environment for adoption of proper macro- and micro- economic policies that promote trade and investment incentives.
- 2.3 Stimulate research on crucial developmental issues in all sectors of the economy, and promote financing mechanisms that ensure adequate support for research of national importance.
- 2.4 Disseminate research information/results to the government, quasi-government, and institutions of higher learning, the research community and the wider public.
- 2.5 Strengthen institutions for manpower training in all sectors of the economy in order to attain a high level of qualified personnel.

- 2.6 Promote mechanisms for the provision of better conditions of service in the various sectors of the economy in order to arrest the brain drain.
- 2.7 Promote gender sensitive development strategies and bring to the spotlight the disadvantaged communities.
- 2.8 Building relationships with other research organizations in Zimbabwe, the Sub Region and further a field, and also to avoid duplication.
- 2.9 Encourage co-operation with regional and international organizations.
- 2.10 Ensure proper co-ordination and channelling of funding to research areas identifiable with national goals.
- 2.11 Strengthen the institutional arrangements for effective monitoring, co-ordination and direction of research among the academic community of the university, and ensure access of research findings to key policy makers and the general public.
- 2.12 Maintain a close but constructive and critical interaction with the government, quasi-government, private sector and other interested groups.
- 2.13 Disseminate research findings through publications and participation at Workshops, Conferences and Seminars, etc.

3.0 MAJOR RESEARCH THEMES

3.1 AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The research thrust is the development of technologies and information, which enable sustainable development in Agriculture, Tourism and the Environment.

3.1.1 RESEARCH FOCUS

- 3.1.1.1 Current Issues (Wildlife Management and Environment issues) and their linkages to economic development
- 3.1.1.2 Sustainable Tourism in Development
- 3.1.1.3 Cultural Tourism and Development
- 3.1.1.4 Improvement of Wildlife production through better management techniques that minimize environmental degradation.
- 3.1.1.5 Appropriate ways for Wildlife harvesting and post-harvesting management
- 3.1.1.6 Development of models for intensive, integrated farming systems

3.1.1.7 Expanded research on sustainable Agriculture and food security

3.2 DEMOCRACY AND THE HUMAN FACTOR IN DEVELOPMENT

The Midlands State University is committed to the advancement of an understanding of the nature and globalization of human rights and democracy. Thus, the policy document stands at the cutting edge of international and national controversy over suitable and desirable land and labor policies, tolerant political systems, gender conscious development strategies as well as respect of human rights and democracy in Zimbabwe.

3.2.1 RESEARCH FOCUS

Main issues to be addressed under this theme include the following:

3.2.1.1 Race, class and ethnicity

3.2.1.2 Gender issues

3.2.1.3 Growth and Development of the child

3.2.1.4 Health and Nutrition Education

3.2.1.5 Population Education

3.2.1.6 HIV-AIDS Education

3.2.1.7 Research on the disadvantaged groups of our society who include:

- (a) Farm workers
- (b) Domestic and Mine workers
- (c) The elderly/aged
- (d) Vendors
- (e) 'Street Kids'
- (f) People in informal settlements
- (g) AIDS Victims

3.2.1.8 Citizenship and Human Rights.

3.2.1.9 The media and democracy to address issues of flow and flow of information, intellectual property and economic and cultural rights, as well as media law and democracy

3.2.1.10 Political violence, including detentions

3.2.1.11 Religious tolerance

3.2.1.12 Equitable utilization of resources

3.2.1.13 Corruption and transparency

3.2.1.14 Impact of Natural Disasters on education

3.2.1.15 The law courts

3.2.1.16 The role of Non-Governmental Organizations and civil society.

3.3 EDUCATION

This theme seeks to expose the problems and deficiencies of the current education system in Zimbabwe, in relation to its role in the development and training of human resources for national requirements, in order to address critical contemporary, socio-economic and political challenges facing the country.

3.4 RESEARCH FOCUS

Main issues to be addressed include access to quality education, efficiency of education systems as well as relevance of education offered. The policy document also underscores the need to address the challenges and potential problems likely to be encountered at the transitional stages of the various levels of the education systems. Accordingly, the policy document seeks to promote research in curriculum issues, under the following sub-themes:

3.3.1.1 Curriculum and life skills

3.3.1.2 HIV-AIDS Education

3.3.1.3 Curriculum and its relevance to the country's needs

3.3.1.4 Curriculum and achievement

3.3.1.5 Curriculum continuity between the various levels of education

3.3.1.6 Curriculum and behavior change

Research will also be pursued in issues of educational management and practices.

3.3.1.7 Management of devolution and decentralization of academic institutions

3.3.1.8 Management of educational institutions

3.3.1.9 Management of financial, human and material resources

3.3.1.10 Management in special education

Collaborative and comparative research will be carried out at regional and international levels on topical issues in education.

3.3.1.11 Access to education

3.3.1.12 Quality of education

3.3.1.13 Equity in education

3.3.1.14 Efficiency of educational systems

3.3.1.15 Relevance of the education offered

3.4. ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The policy thrust is to achieve an excellent research capacity that contributes effectively to the social and economic development of the country.

3.4.1 RESEARCH FOCUS

The broad areas of focus include:

3.4.1.1 Expanded research on Banking, finance and monetary policy

3.4.1.2 Business Linkages and Entrepreneurship Development

3.4.1.3 Accounting in Dynamic Economic environments

3.4.1.4 Rural development and government policy

3.4.1.5 Government policy appraisal

3.4.1.6 Economic reform analysis, privatisation and indigenisation

3.4.1.7 Manufacturing and Industrial review

3.4.1.8 Spatial Analysis of provincial economic development

3.4.1.9 Globalization and its effect on third world markets (labor, financial, money, goods, etc).

3.4.1.10 Micro-finance, SMEs and the Informal sector

3.4.1.11 Employment and Unemployment Dynamics

3.4.1.12 Fiscal and Monetary Policies on Growth and Development

3.5 SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRIALIZATION POLICY

The university takes cognisance of the crucial roles that are played by scientific and technological research in economic and social development. Therefore the Policy thrust under this domain is to come up with research that effectively contributes to academia and Zimbabwe's Industrialization process.

3.5.1 RESEARCH FOCUS

The University focuses on the following areas:

3.5.1.1 Technology and Industrial development

3.5.1.2 Training of Science and Technology manpower for the Industrial Sector

3.5.1.3 Informatics and Computing Sciences

3.5.1.4 Geomatic Sciences

3.5.1.5 Agro-meteorology

3.5.1.6 Physical and Chemical Sciences

4.0 ACTION PLAN

To realize its broad goals and objectives, the University will:

4.1 In the long-term establish semi-autonomous research units in the various Departments.

4.2 Identify and develop research proposals at Department level

4.3 Encourage individual academic staff to identify and develop research proposals.

4.4 Link with relevant stakeholders and enlist help in establishing computer laboratories for the various Departments.

4.5 Network and establish links with other Universities, Government, parastatals, NGOs, Embassies and other statutory bodies.

4.6 Establish links with research organizations (like AERC, IRD, SISERA, SIRDC, ICRISAT, CODESRIA, IDEP, SIDA, SAPES etc) and encourage the Private sector to fund academic and policy focused research.

4.7 Arrange and conduct Seminars, Conferences and Workshops on contemporary Socio-Economic issues.

4.8 Publish Research Series Papers.

5.0 MANAGEMENT OF RESEARCH PROJECTS

- 5.1 All projects coordinated at faculty/departmental level shall operate under a common faculty/departmental research theme.
- 5.2 Individual members of staff can originate research proposals within the framework of the broader faculty research theme and combine their research proposals into a common departmental research theme.
- 5.3 Alternatively, members of a department/faculty can come together to originate a combined research project.
- 5.4 There shall be a coordinator for a research project involving at least two principal researchers.
- 5.5 The person who originates a proposal shall be his/her own coordinator on the ground, but reporting to the project coordinator, where applicable.
- 5.6 Members are free to source funding for individual research projects, but should inform the Chairperson of department and the faculty Dean, of such developments.
- 5.7 All project proposals to the University Research shall follow the format laid down in the Research Board Procedures and Guidelines.
- 5.8 All project proposals to the Research Board shall be submitted to the Secretary of the Board at the times and dates stipulated by the Board, for further submission to the Research Board.
- 5.9 All donor-funded proposals shall be submitted to the project co-coordinator (where applicable), for further submission to the donor.
- 5.10 The financial management of all projects shall be done by the project coordinator in consultation with the Chairperson of the department (where applicable) both of whom shall be responsible to the Bursar's department, which in turn shall manage the research funds.
- 5.11 Requisitions for research funds from the Bursar's department, for approved projects, shall be authorised by the Chairperson of the department in consultation with the project coordinator (where the latter applies).
- 5.12 All accounting for funded projects shall be submitted to the Chairperson of department for approval, in consultation with the coordinator (where applicable), and submission to the Bursar.
- 5.13 At the times specified by the funding institution. Project Progress Reports shall be prepared in accordance with the provided guidelines and submitted to the project coordinator (where applicable) for further

submission to the funding institution.

- 5.14 Project Reports should comment briefly on the overall progress of the project compared to the project plan.
- 5.15 Project Progress Reports should be accompanied by research results such as seminar papers published articles, monographs, theses and books.
- 5.16 At the times specified by the funding institution, the researcher and/or project coordinator shall prepare a financial report for submission to the funding institution.
- 5.17 The financial report shall outline expenditure and the outstanding balance.