

## **Faculty Handbook for Teaching in Jamaica**

### Faculty Handbook for Teaching in Jamaica

Purpose: The purpose of this handbook is to orient a faculty member who is teaching in Jamaica for the first time and to transmit policies and processes for all faculty members teaching in Jamaica.

#### I. Background

Western Carolina University (WCU) has a long standing relationship with the Jamaican Ministry of Education. The relationship began in 1970 with the placement of selected WCU student teachers in Kingston, Jamaica. In tandem with this program was the offering of Master's level courses in Educational Administration to professional educators in Jamaica. The success of these initial programs prompted the Ministry of Education, Jamaica, to invite WCU's College of Education and Allied Professions to prepare and deliver a course of study for the purpose of developing a cadre of educators with an enhanced knowledge in the area of Guidance and Counseling.

From that time forward WCU, with the continuous input from the Ministry of Education, provided offerings that led to Baccalaureate and Master's degrees in Education for a wide range of Jamaican professionals. Students, qualified based upon their successful training at one of the several Jamaican teacher colleges, enter the WCU program where they are provided their course work at one of several sites in Jamaica: Kingston, Mandeville, Montego Bay, and/or Discovery Bay.

Faculty members are encouraged to read the entire faculty handbook prior to agreeing to teach in Jamaica.

#### II. Faculty Activity Checklist for Teaching in Jamaica.

After you have been approved by CEAP Director of Jamaican Programs\_CEAP to teach in Jamaica (Please see the timeline and approval process Attachment 3), follow the process below to make sure travel and other arrangements can be made. This process should begin four months prior to a teaching assignment in Jamaica.

The following is a guide. Academic and employment questions should be directed to your program coordinator. Logistics questions should be directed to Educational Outreach.

**Passport:** You will need a valid passport to teach in Jamaica. Lead time for securing a passport has been greatly extended now that passports are required for travel to Mexico and Canada. Please plan accordingly.

**Work Permit-Ministry of Labour and Social Security Application:** Currently a work permit is not required unless you are in the country more than 30 days.

**VISA application:** A VISA application is presently NOT required.

**Travel Arrangements:** A travel approval form will be completed by Educational Outreach for your trip to Jamaica. In order to process this form, submit your travel dates on the Jamaican Teaching Agreement (Exhibit 1). T

- You make your own flight arrangements. You must pay for the airline ticket and submit a paid receipt to Lois Stiles, Educational Outreach. She will submit a reimbursement form and a check will be mailed to you in about a week. (Booking receipts cannot be used for reimbursement from the WCU travel office)
- Itineraries must be submitted to Lois Stiles five weeks prior to your departure date for Jamaica. Include information regarding any guest(s) accompanying you. Travel expenses including airfare, ground transportation, and parking will be reimbursed for Faculty only. Western Carolina University is not responsible for any expenses or risks for guest traveling with faculty members.
- Hotel, per diem and transportation are covered in Jamaica through Iva Bailey's office for faculty. Breakfast is included at each hotel.
- While Dr. Bailey will make arrangements for a room appropriate for you and your guest, the additional charges will be charged to you. If you need to know the amounts of those charges before departure for Jamaica, please contact the hotel directly. Please pay those charges when you depart the hotel.
- When your flight arrives in Jamaica, you will need the address of your hotel and the days of stay to complete customs information before exiting the plane. Please see the pocket card supplied for you.
- Once you process through customs, a driver will be waiting to take you to the hotel. Drivers will either be inside the airport with a WCU sign or outside with a WCU sign or WCU sign in the taxi. The airports in Jamaica can be very hectic with resorts picking up guests. Don't panic, a driver will find you.
- If your flight itinerary changes or you encounter any problems, please call Iva Bailey as soon as possible. (Cell phone, 876-383-4287). Remember your driver will be expecting you at the original time and Dr. Bailey will need to notify them of any changes so they will be at the airport when you arrive.
- Upon arriving in Jamaica, you will receive Jamaican dollars to pay for meals and incidentals while in Jamaica. Upon your return, you will be reimbursed only for travel within the U.S. In Jamaica, you will receive the equivalent of \$57.50 per day U. S. dollars for meals and incidentals.
- Our drivers are extremely helpful and are a great source of local information. The drivers will pick you up daily and take you to class. Additionally, the drivers will take you to dinner or other sites within a reasonable distance as you would use a taxi attending an international conference.
- Professors may check out of their weeknight accommodations for travel to interesting destinations on the weekends. By doing this, the bill to WCU is reduced, and the money saved can be put toward the cost of the weekend lodging—but cannot exceed the cost of the original lodging. Dr. Bailey can help make these arrangements.

### **Books Materials and Equipment:**

**Computers:** Faculty members are discouraged from taking WCU computers to Jamaica due to "Export Control" regulations. A laptop computer and project is available at each instructional site for your use. Please plan to bring instructional materials on a flash drive if needed. The Mac computer is loaded with the Mac OS X software and is internet accessible. Please make sure all items are placed back in the laptop case for the next person's use. If you have problems with the machine, please contact Iva Bailey at 876-383-4287. Below is the log-in information

Username: Jamaica  
Password: Faculty

**Textbooks:** The title, author, publisher, edition, and ISBN number of your textbook should be sent to Lois Stiles, Educational Outreach, four months prior to the beginning of your class. Textbooks are ordered through the campus book store, delivered to Educational Outreach, and then shipped to Jamaica. Textbooks and syllabi are distributed in Jamaica one month prior to the start of courses. All materials (books, syllabi, handouts) are sent to Jamaica 6-weeks prior to the start of the class to allow for distribution. For students to have adequate time to complete pre-work, class materials must arrive by the last day of the prior class

**Cell Phones:** A cell phones is available for your use in country. Your driver should have the cell phone and you will return it to the driver upon departure. The cell phone should have adequate minutes for your stay. Should you bring your phone, you may be able to use it in country. Be sure to contact your provider for international access. All calls are on roaming and can be costly.

**Syllabus:** A copy of your syllabus will be given out along with the textbook to the students. The syllabus must be in the format required by the accrediting body in Jamaica. Contact the Director of Jamaican Programs\_CEAP for the format. A copy must be kept on file in the EO office. Email the syllabus to Lois Stiles

**Handouts/copies:** You are responsible for emailing class handouts to Lois Stiles and Iva Bailey. Materials cannot be shipped to Jamaica. Only textbooks can be shipped. Handouts should be sent 4 weeks prior to class.

**Course Materials:** Due to customs regulations we are not able to ship course materials into Jamaica without incurring significant duty charges. Should materials be required, we will need to explore purchases in country. Lead time of four months is required. All course materials are returned to Dr. Bailey at the end of class.

### **Class Rosters:**

- **Class List:** Students are registered prior to the course and you have a blackboard shell which is created at the same time your contract is sent to CEAP. Blackboard will be open to students seven days prior to the start date of your class.
- **Taking Roll:** You should check roll the first night and report any discrepancy to by emailing Lois Stiles. You are responsible for confirming your class roll on My Cat. Contact Dr. Susan Fouts if the course is not showing in the system or if a student is not registered.
- **Course End Date:** Grades must be submitted in MyCat by the course end date on your contract. Adjunct faculty will lose MyCat access at midnight on the last date

of the contract. Adjunct faculty also loses access to Blackboard on the last day of class.

### **Course Evaluations**

You will be provided with course evaluations specific for Jamaica (Exhibit 2) and an envelope or a link to the online version to put into your course. On the last night of class, have students complete the evaluations and seal the envelope. Give the envelope to the Jamaican coordinator or designee to be returned to WCU.

### **Covering WCU Classes**

Work with your department head to cover campus classes during your absence. Tests or guest speakers should be scheduled for class sessions you cannot attend. Teaching in Jamaica is an opportunity to enrich both the professional perspectives of faculty as well as those of students remaining on campus. Be sure to plan good educational experiences for your students while you are gone. Before you leave, complete a Course Coverage Information Sheet and submit it to your Dean's Office.

### **End-of Class Celebration –**

When the course in Jamaica ends, students feel a tremendous relief and they want to mark this time with a small celebration. Students want to express their appreciation to the professor and relax with their visitor and teacher. Often the students sing and have cake and refreshments for the whole class. This is also a time when students may want you to sign their class book. Many students like a comment or two, along with an autograph, to help them remember the professor and the happy moments in class.

### **Graduation –**

Jamaicans are known for their delight in celebration. Graduations are important events in their lives, especially college graduations. Students take it upon themselves to organize a graduation celebration to go along with the formal ceremonies that occur either on our campus or in Kingston, Mandeville, or Montego Bay.

### **Contacts:**

Educational Outreach M-F 8am- 5 pm 828-227-7397

Susan Fouts, Educational Outreach, 828-227-3688(cell 828-421- 2871) [sfouts@wcu.edu](mailto:sfouts@wcu.edu)

Lois Stiles, Educational Outreach, 828-227-3065, [lstyles@email.wcu.edu](mailto:lstyles@email.wcu.edu)

Iva Bailey, Jamaica Office, 876-906-4404, cell phone, 876-383-4287,

[ibailey@email.wcu.edu](mailto:ibailey@email.wcu.edu)

### III -- Jamaican Schools and Culture

#### A. Culture:

Western Carolina University's Jamaica program has the same fundamental mission as the teacher education program on campus -- to improve the educational experiences of young people in schools. In Cullowhee we primarily serve the teachers and children of the Southeast region of the United States, particularly North Carolina. In Jamaica, we serve the teachers and children of this Caribbean nation.

The differences between the two nations, their cultures, and their educational systems create differences in the ways we approach our mission. Jamaican classrooms are usually equipped with student desks and a chalk board. The school may have a computer lab or a computer for use by teachers. Teachers typically have class rosters of fifty to sixty children. Classrooms, however, are no larger than in the U.S. Student attendance may be sporadic. Teacher attendance may also be sporadic; and, although the Ministry of Education has standards for teacher certification, a shortage of teachers forces many schools to hire a large number of "pre-trained teachers" -- high school graduates who do not have a teacher's college diploma.

Many Jamaican children grow up speaking *Patois* in their homes. All instruction in Jamaican schools is delivered in Standard English. The intonation may be different. One goal of Jamaican schools is to increase literacy.

An understanding of these cultural differences is important for professors as they try to find ways to help Jamaican teachers become more effective with their students. Consequently, while teaching in Jamaica, professors are expected to set aside at least one-half day to visit a Jamaican K-12 school. The best way to arrange such a visit is to ask the on-site WCU program coordinator to schedule a visit to a school. The purpose of the visit is to become a student of Jamaican schools.

Finally, this program is designed to involve several types of experiences for the Jamaican students. Ten days of classes during a two-week stay in Jamaica is one part of the course. Two other parts are those experiences required before you arrive in Jamaica and the assignments required after the two-week class is finished. Students are expected to read material before the professor arrives and to complete course requirements after the professor leaves the island. If professors plan adequately during the semester prior to the teaching assignment, these can be valuable learning experiences that complement in-class experiences.

Music -- Music is an important part of the Jamaican culture. Jamaican teachers use songs and music to teach concepts in math, social studies, etc. Every year Jamaican students compete in music and dance competitions that start in the schools, go up to the parishes, and end in a national competition. These competitions are part of the National

Independence Celebration. When Jamaicans think about having a good time, they have to have music along with the food.

Holidays -- Jamaicans take off work and school to celebrate the following national holidays:

1. New Year's Day (January 1)
2. Ash Wednesday
3. Good Friday
4. Easter Monday
5. Labor Day (Last Monday in May)
6. Emancipation Day (August 1)
7. Independence Day (August 6)
8. National Heroes Day (Third Monday in October)
9. Christmas (December 25)
10. Boxing Day (December 26)

## B. Schools

Depending on their family economic condition, aptitudes and career goals, Jamaican children progress through the following schools:

- Kindergarten or Infant School for ages 2.5 to 6.
- Preparatory Schools for ages 3-12.
- Primary School for ages 6-12.
- All-Age Schools for ages 6-15.
- Traditional High School ages 12-18
- New High School (formerly secondary schools) ages 12-18
  
- Junior High Schools for ages 13-17.
- Comprehensive High School (Vocational and academic) for ages 13-18.
- Technical High School for ages 13-18.

Jamaican children of the same age attend different types of schools because Jamaican schools have different missions. The difference between a kindergarten and a preparatory school is that many affluent Jamaicans send their children to preparatory schools--government subsidized schools run by churches and private groups. The preparatory school's mission is to prepare students to score well on the national exam, which determines the kind of secondary school the student can attend. On the other hand, children of less affluent families often attend a basic school and then move to a Primary School.

An All-Age School enrolls children in Grades 1-6 and 7-9. Its purpose is to prepare students for a second opportunity to take the national exams, through which children gain access to secondary education.

#### Standardized Exams

At the end of grade 11, the Caribbean Examination Council requires students to take a common exam known as the CXC. Employers and higher education institutions use these scores in making admission and hiring decisions. At the end of grades 12 and 13, the CAPE (Caribbean Advance Proficiency Exam) is given.

Children at the end of grade 6 take a standardized GSAT (Grade Six Achievement Test). The GSAT places the student in high schools based on their scores. Students who score high are sent to the traditional high schools. Students with lower scores are sent to new high schools and technical and comprehensive high schools. Students who have very low scores are kept in all age schools and the junior high schools for remediation. These students are channeled into the new high school after completing grade 9.

The differences among the high schools are reflected in their missions. The Comprehensive High School curriculum has both academic and vocational courses of study. The Technical High School curriculum emphasizes vocational preparation for the work force. Both types of schools encourage students to pursue tertiary education.

Jamaica has both government schools and private schools. Public schools, like ours, educate children from all social classes. No child can be turned away from a government school. Private schools, even those that receive public funds from the Ministry of Education, can deny admission to students they believe will not be successful in their school. Most private schools are funded through a combination of tuition payments and government subsidies. Admission is often based on scores from national exams.

### C. Guidance, Leadership and Special Education in Jamaican Schools

#### Leadership in Jamaican Schools:

Jamaican Schools are led by principals hired by local boards of education. Sometimes the hiring decision is heavily influenced by other factors. Principals receive housing and a car allowance in addition to a salary. School principals are seen as community leaders. They are expected to link the school to the community. In Jamaican schools, the senior teachers and department heads often function as the instructional leaders while the principal plays a community relations role. Similar to U.S. schools, assistant principals are often responsible for maintenance of the campus and supervision of the teachers and instructional programs.

Although Jamaican educators recognize the need for special education programming, their system does not have the resources needed to meet the needs of exceptional

students. Special Education in Jamaica is a matter of trying to address the special needs of students in classrooms that have very few resources.

D. A Look inside Jamaican Schools:

1. Classes tend to be very large. Most classrooms are far too small for 50-60 students. Teachers are lobbying for class maximums of 45 students.
2. Educational materials are lacking. Libraries have few resources. Many schools will have one government funded computer lab, but computer access is limited or non-existent in most classrooms.
3. Education policies are enforced unevenly.
4. Science labs and equipment are virtually non-existent in primary schools. Similarly other resources such as maps, reference books may not be available to the average classroom teacher.
5. Parent involvement will be different in different schools. As you visit schools, you may want to ask about parental involvement.
6. There is no school bus system in Jamaica. Students arrive by taxis or parents bring them. Roads outside of major cities are narrow and may be gravel.
7. Students will be wearing uniforms.
8. Some schools will be on a half-day schedule. A set of teachers and students will meet during the morning. A second group of teachers and students will meet in the afternoon to alleviate overcrowding. Teachers who teach half-day schedules are required to meet the same educational goals as those on full-day schedules.
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#### IV. Professors and Students Working Together

A. Adult Students in our Jamaican Program

Unlike traditional age students in our residence undergraduate teacher education programs, the Jamaican students are experienced educators in their own right. Many of them have years of dedicated service to the children of their communities, and they are well-respected educators in their nation.

Jamaican teachers often attain additional professional responsibilities as they prove themselves to be effective educators and leaders within their schools. Accordingly, a professional hierarchy exists in Jamaican schools, and we enroll professionals in all but the first category:

- (1) Pre-trained Teachers are high school graduates hired to fill vacancies when the school cannot find a teacher college graduate to fill a position on a limited scale.
- (2) Trained Teachers are those who hold a teachers' college diploma.

- (3) Graduate Teachers are those who have a bachelor's degree or a post-graduate degree, but not a diploma from a Jamaican Teachers' college.
- (4) A Graduate-Trained teacher is a teacher with a bachelor's degree and a diploma from a Jamaican Teachers' College or University of the West Indies.
- (5) Senior Teachers and Heads of Departments are teachers who share leadership and management responsibilities with their principals and assistant principals.
- (6) Assistant Principals and Principals perform roles similar to those in American schools. More than in our country, Jamaican principals are considered leaders in their communities.
- (7) Some teachers become Education Officers working in the Ministry of Education.

Furthermore, some of our students are administrators and staff members in Jamaican social service agencies.

The WCU program enrolls professionals with varying backgrounds. Our program in Jamaica has become an opportunity for many to realize a life-long dream--a bachelor's degree from an American university.

Jamaican teachers are also motivated to earn this degree because a bachelor's degree places them higher on the salary scale. Just like in our country, teachers are paid according to their educational level.

Students in your class may travel up to 2 hours by taxi to attend class after teaching and travel 2 hours home after class. As you prepare your course, you will want to consider the ability of the students to complete homework for the next day. Pre-work may be a method of delivering content while being mindful of the adult student.

#### A. Important Phone Numbers

Educational Outreach - 828-227-7397

Dr. Iva Bailey, Representative in Jamaica  
Holy Childhood School Dr. Iva Bailey  
876-906-4404 (office)  
944-0280 (home)  
876-383-4287 (cell),  
E-mail: [ibailey@email.wcu.edu](mailto:ibailey@email.wcu.edu)

- American Embassy in Jamaica (contact Mr. Bailey)
- Physician contact at each site (contact Mr. Bailey)
- Driver Contact at each site (contact Mr. Bailey)

**Hotels**

Liguanea Club, Kingston, 876-926-8144, fax 5501  
Mandeville Hotel, Mandeville, 876-962-9764, fax 0700  
El Greco, Montego Bay, 876-940-6116, fax 6115  
HART Hotel, Runaway Bay, 876-973-6671

In an emergency, instructors may call the Educational Outreach Office collect (828-227-7397).

C. Library of Jamaican Travel Information

Lois Stiles can provide you with a compact disk about the WCU Jamaican Program.  
Information about Jamaica may also be accessed via the web sites  
[www.lanic.utexas.edu/la/cb/jamaica/](http://www.lanic.utexas.edu/la/cb/jamaica/) and [www.jamaica-gleaner.com/](http://www.jamaica-gleaner.com/)

Exhibit I- Travel Pre-Approval

Please help us to improve our instruction. Answer the following questions and return them to your instructor in a sealed envelope. Your instructor will return them to the Administration when they return to the United States. The evaluations are anonymous and your instructor will only see an aggregated score AFTER grades are submitted.

Quality Indicator	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Organization and Clarity					
1. My instructor is well prepared for class meetings					
2. My instructor explains the subject matter clearly					
3. My instructor clearly communicates goals and objectives					
4. My instructor answers questions appropriately					
Enthusiasm and Intellectual Stimulation					
5. My instructor is enthusiastic about teaching this course					
6. My instructor presents the subject in an interesting manner					
7. My instructor stimulates my thinking					
8. My instructor motivates me to do my best work					
Rapport and Respect					
9. My instructor helps students sufficiently with course-related issues					
10. My instructor is regularly available for consultation					
11. My instructor is impartial in dealing with students					
12. My instructor respects opinions different from his/her own					
Feedback and Accessibility					
13. Assessment methods accurately assess what I have learned in this course					
14. Grades are assigned fairly					
15. The basis for assigning grades is clearly explained					
16. The instructor provides feedback on my progress in the course on a regular basis					
Student Perceptions of Learning					
17. My instructor advances my knowledge of course content					
18. My instructor promotes my understanding of important conceptual themes					
19. My instructor enhances my capacity to communicate effectively about the course subject matter					
20. My instructor encourages me to value new viewpoints related to the course					
21. Information presented was relevant to Jamaican education					

22. What were the best aspects of this course?

23. What changes could be made to improve the course?

24. Describe the aspects of the instructor's teaching that were most effective.

25. Describe the aspects of the instructor's teaching that could be