

Surveying and Geoinformatics Curriculum Development in Nigeria

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Key words:

ABSTRACT

Digital technology and communications have revolutionised the practice of Surveying and Geoinformatics in Nigeria. Hitherto, surveyors were engaged in the act of collection of data on the earth's surface that are used for development, monitoring of activities on the earth's surface and determination of the shape and size of the earth. Today, data management, digital data conversion and data sharing have become very important issues. This has made what used to be accepted as surveying curriculum inadequate. It has therefore become necessary to modernise surveying curricula in Nigeria in order to meet the demands of the current situation.

In 1999, the National Board for Technical Education held a workshop on modernisation of curriculum of surveying courses in Colleges of Technology and Polytechnics. This has brought in courses like GIS, environmental management, knowledge-based systems, digital surveying and Internet technology into their program. It was also agreed during the workshop that all surveying courses in the colleges of Technology and Polytechnics should change their names to Surveying and Geoinformatics. The National University Commission has also directed all institutions offering surveying to modernise their curricula in line with the technological development. The Department of Surveying, University of Lagos led the campaign for a change in the academic curricula and name at the university level. The Department is now called the Department of Surveying and Geoinformatics and courses similar to the ones at the colleges of Technology and Polytechnics were introduced. These include but not limited to GIS, Digital Surveying, Coastal Management, Environmental Management and Internet Technology among our courses.

This development has led to an increase in the number of students seeking admission into undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Besides, the normal postgraduate courses at M.Sc., M. Phil. And Ph.D. levels, the department has introduced a professional Masters of Geoinformatics program which admits a wide range of candidates from different backgrounds. This has improved the interest in the programs at the University of Lagos. As a result of the modernisation of the curricula, the Department of Surveying and Geoinformatics, University of Lagos has attracted financial and material support from the oil companies and government. This has facilitated training and research.

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