

**Concept Note on Pedagogical Leadership in Africa (PedaL):  
University of Ibadan, Cascade Training  
International Conference Centre, May 20-28, 2019**

## 1. Background

The Partnership for Pedagogical Leadership in Africa (PedaL) is a formal partnership of eight institutions that aims to embed and catalyse systemic change in teaching and learning practices and to maximize learning outcomes through strategic interventions in graduate social science programmes.

PedaL is one of nine partnerships supported by the Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education Innovation and Reform (SPHEIR) grant scheme to catalyse systemic change in teaching and learning in African universities. SPHEIR partnerships seek to transform the quality, relevance, access and affordability of higher education to achieve sustainable, systemic change. SPHEIR has been established by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) to deliver systemic and sustainable change within higher education systems, enabling them to meet labour market needs and generate the job-ready, entrepreneurial graduates needed to accelerate development, build inclusive societies and promote strong economic growth.

The Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR) is working with seven partners to develop and roll out PedaL in graduate social science programmes. The partnership comprises Alliance for Research Universities in Africa (ARUA), Institute of Development Studies (IDS) of the University of Sussex - UK as well as five implementing partner universities: Ibadan in Nigeria; Egerton in Kenya; Ghana in Ghana; Dar es Salaam in Tanzania; and, Uganda Martyrs in Uganda. Grounded in the rationale elaborated in Appendix 1, the eight PedaL partners share a common interest in transforming teaching and learning practices with a view to enhancing the learning outcomes of university programmes. It is envisaged that PedaL will be replicated across universities on the continent commencing with network members of the collaborative Master of Research and Public Policy (MRPP) and ARUA and all other universities that express interest in pedagogical transformation. The PedaL initiative is organized around a series of interlinked activities with the following specific objectives:

- Design and implement features and processes that drive PedaL pedagogy in selected social science graduate programmes;
- Develop the capacity of lead course instructors to catalyse systemic change in teaching and learning methods/pedagogy;
- Create and sustain an active community of practice around PedaL pedagogy;
- Support delivery of graduate social science programmes using PedaL pedagogy and share lessons across the partnership;
- Facilitate the institutionalisation of PedaL in partner universities.

Pursuant to the first strategic objective, the PedaL training programme was collaboratively designed in June 2018. Teaching staff from 13 African universities were assisted by higher education stakeholders and a rich mix of experienced resource persons from within and outside the continent to design the programme whose details are provided in Appendix 2. The



programme was successfully piloted with a similar audience in July 2018 and the results confirmed that PedaL is demand driven, of high quality and relevant.

In August 2018, effort was directed towards developing the capacity of lead course instructors to drive innovation in teaching and learning practices across university programmes. A total of 149 teaching staff (47 female and 102 male) were trained in a centrally organized PedaL training workshop in Nairobi, Kenya on August, 7 -13, 2018. During the training, work commenced on redesigning 76 courses spread across the social sciences, as well as arts and humanities. Feedback from the participants confirmed that PedaL training is demand driven, novel, robust and exciting.

It is noteworthy that plans to launch university specific PedaL workshops in 2020 had to be frontloaded as the demand for PedaL training soared. In January 2019, a total of 23 MRPP teaching staff (8 female and 15 male) of the University of Nairobi were trained in PedaL. This was closely followed in March by the Entebbe hub training of 110 teaching staff (54 female and 56 male) from seven universities in Uganda: Uganda Martyrs, Uganda Christian, Makerere, Kisubi, Kyambogo, Gulu and African Rural University.

Building on this momentum, 71 managers (27 female and 44 male) of postgraduate programmes of the University of Ibadan were trained in curriculum design in April 2019. PedaL has realized unprecedented success in its first year and this cascade workshop earmarked for an estimated 250 teaching staff marks a watershed in the growth of PedaL.

## 2. Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR)

The Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR) is an independent, non-partisan pan-African not-for-profit organisation established in 2011 and located in Nairobi, Kenya. Currently engaged in more than 12 African countries, PASGR works to enhance research excellence in governance and public policy that contributes to the overall wellbeing of citizens. In partnership with individual academics and researchers, higher education institutions, research think tanks, civil society organisations, business and policy communities both in the region and internationally, PASGR supports the production and dissemination of policy relevant research; designs and delivers suites of short professional development courses for researchers and policy actors; and facilitates the development of collaborative higher education programmes.

PASGR's vision is a vibrant African social science community addressing the continent's public policy issues. Its three core programmes (Research; Higher Education; and the Professional Development and Training) bring together the right mix of universities, research institutions, government, policy actors, researchers and academics to advance its mission. PASGR is the lead partner in PedaL and is responsible for managing the grant while providing strategic and intellectual guidance for developing, broadening and sustaining the partnership as well as its activities implemented in a number of universities on the continent.



### 3. University of Ibadan

The University of Ibadan is arguably a leader on the African higher education landscape. It remains one of the most interconnected universities in Africa attracting a number of leading universities in the world as well as varied bilateral and multi-lateral support. The University maintains active partnerships with several universities in more than 13 African countries, examples are Consortium for Advanced Research Training in Africa (CARTA), African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) and INDEPTH (Capacity Strengthening and Training for Longitudinal Data Harmonization, Management and Analysis). PASGR has a long standing relationship with the University of Ibadan; their collaboration on the Master of Research and Public Policy (MRPP) programme has thrived and is providing a solid foundation for a doctoral programme in public policy.

That the University of Ibadan has established itself as a training hub for various capacity building initiatives cannot be overemphasised. As a founder member of PedaL, the University is well positioned to drive pedagogical innovations on the continent. In April 2019 (last month), PASGR worked closely with The Postgraduate College, University of Ibadan to train 71 university managers in curriculum design. The training served as a launching pad for the ambitious redesign, renewal and enhancement of all postgraduate programmes. The present cascade training will further anchor PedaL for delivery of programmes at the University. Taking cognisance of its leadership of ARUA as well as the multiple partnerships in which it is participating, the University will undoubtedly provide strategic entry points for pedagogical innovations into a variety of programmes in many other universities on the continent. PedaL is therefore leveraging the leadership acumen of the University of Ibadan to upscale its activities and strengthen its impact.

### 4. PedaL Cascade Workshop, University of Ibadan

The workshop which is being supported collaboratively by the University of Ibadan, PedaL and PASGR will be held in Ibadan, Nigeria on May 20-28, 2019. It will bring together an estimated 300 participants including government officials, education policy actors drawn from various national and regional organizations; university leaders and managers; research organizations; university teaching staff and students; the media; resource persons; and, PASGR staff. The training workshop will fulfil the four main objectives highlighted below:

- To share information on the rationale, essence, content and processes of PedaL with key stakeholders;
- To equip 250 teaching staff with knowledge, skills and experiences in PedaL pedagogy;
- To expand the talent pool for delivery of PedaL;
- To broaden the scope of university programmes using PedaL pedagogy.

The workshop is organized around two key activities, engagement of policy actors and the PedaL training.



## 4.1 Stakeholder Engagement

Government dignitaries led by the Minister of Education in Nigeria are among a wide array of stakeholders expected to grace the opening session of the PedaL training. The session will therefore focus on raising awareness on PedaL as a key driver of quality and relevance that can also stimulate increased access and high retention rates in higher education. This session is expected to stem important conversations with policy actors at the university as well as national level. The conversations are critical for an in-depth understanding of PedaL as well as the enabling policy environment for embedding and sustaining innovations in teaching and learning across university programmes. Engagement of policy actors would help to secure the broad based ownership necessary for uptake and replication of PedaL across programmes in the University of Ibadan and in other universities in Nigeria. Further, this event will be widely publicized and is expected to draw attention and generate debate and interest in PedaL within Nigeria and beyond. Ultimately, the PedaL training workshop will raise the profile of the University of Ibadan as a leader in pedagogical innovations on the continent.

## 4.2 PedaL Training

PedaL training immerses participants in a process of self-reflection and discovery. The training empowers teaching staff to question their assumptions about teaching and learning and to draw on their new knowledge, skills and experiences to construct, reconstruct or reinforce their set of coherent rational beliefs that guide their practice. The training helps to influence the teachers' ability to articulate or interpret course objectives, organize content and determine the stimuli that moves students towards attainment of expected learning outcomes.

The cascade workshop is designed around the six PedaL modules (PedaL design provided in Annex 2). It will be delivered by 40 resource persons in a complex schedule of six parallel sessions incorporating an estimated 45 participants each. The modules to be delivered are summarized below:

- Pedagogical models and strategies - flipped classroom, case study teaching, simulation, role plays, guest speaker, Threshold Concepts tools, group work and reflective practice.
- Educational foundations and learning theories - personal teaching philosophy, theories of learning, and, education and society.
- Technology enhanced learning
- Transformative curriculum and learning design - constructive alignment, learning design, threshold concepts, hidden curriculum and engendering curriculum
- Leadership in pedagogical practice
- Innovative assessment - innovative assessment strategies as well as e-Portfolios.



The training is interactive and hands-on with a range of the pedagogical strategies outlined infused in all the modules. By the end of the cascade training, the teaching staff should be able to:

- Articulate and implement a personal teaching philosophy and employ reflective processes to improve practice;
- Analyse and employ effective teaching and learning strategies using applied, authentic and learner-centred practices informed by relevant theories, models and empirical evidence;
- Design and deliver inclusive teaching and learning experiences that address the diverse needs of learners and are responsive to emerging trends locally, nationally and internationally;
- Select and use appropriate teaching and learning materials, and monitor and adapt technology to facilitate learning;
- Construct and implement effective assessment practices for assessing learner progress and achievement in a range of learning experiences;
- Demonstrate pedagogical leadership in distinct contexts by identifying and sharing good practices across their universities and beyond.

To date, all PedaL trainings have been very successful and participants have perceived the training as an “eye opener” and “a project for the future”.

Some of the observations made on past PedaL trainings are captured below:

*“I believe that a combination of all these skills that I have acquired here will make me a better teacher, one who is more conscious of the needs, capabilities and capacities of the learner while at the same time improving my knowledge base and life-wide learning opportunities.”*

*“The workshop has opened up a new world for me for experiential learning. On day one, I thought the training was unnecessary but at the end, I realized my students have been missing out on many interesting and engaging ways of sharing knowledge, rather ‘impacting knowledge.’”*

## 5. Conclusion

The PedaL training programme embraces teaching and learning as an art to be orchestrated in classrooms through thoughtful preparation of university teaching staff. This is consistent with the perspective expressed in The Chronicle of Higher Education that:

*‘...teaching is a craft, learned not just in a single class, practicum, or workshop. Rather, it’s a recursive process, developed through trial and error — and yes, by “fire” — but also through conversation with others: a mentor, a cohort, your peers<sup>1</sup>.’*

<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth Alsop, 2018: Who’s Teaching the Teachers? In *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 11, 2018

<https://www.chronicle.com/article/Who-s-Teaching-the-Teachers-/242488>



With its emphasis on exceptional learning moments, PedaL training empowers university teaching staff to change classroom dynamics and maximize learning outcomes among students. Ultimately, it aims at producing holistically grounded graduates who are prepared not only to meet the demands of the labour market but are also capable of creating opportunities for themselves and for others to spearhead economic development and social transformation. PedaL is a social, technological and business innovation with unlimited potential to flower present and future generations of students, and to raise the profile of teaching and learning in participating universities.



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## Appendix 1: Rationale for PedaL

Several actors on the African higher education landscape lament the quality, relevance and sustainability of the education system. The Association of African Universities notes that the greatest conundrum confronting African universities is how to become relevant to local needs and social realities while simultaneously responding adequately to the opportunities and risks of globalization. As globalization continues to challenge the content and delivery of education programmes, blur boundaries and complicate education spaces, most institutions in the West are adapting while African universities are left struggling behind.

This situation is compounded by: a) Resource deficiencies and infrastructural challenges that constrain the teaching and learning environment; b) Massification of higher education which has led to phenomenal increase in student enrolment at undergraduate and poor preparation of students for post graduate studies; c) Heavy teaching loads which translate into an emphasis on content and surface learning rather than deep learning; d) The old adage of ‘publish or perish’ which has shifted attention from classroom content and teaching and learning dynamics to research. Systemic weaknesses have therefore conspired to entrench a transmission model of teaching and learning that legitimizes some form of content tyranny across programmes.

PedaL is premised on the need to catalyse systemic change in teaching and learning in African universities. African university lecturers are highly qualified in their disciplines, yet may lack appropriate pedagogical skills. This affects their ability to deliver effectively in the teaching and learning process, and to sustain holistic development of student competencies; the mismatch between skills and labour market needs cannot be underrated. While this situation can be attributed to the many known underlying factors, it is also true that pedagogical competency is not a requirement for teaching at African universities.

There has been hue and cry over eroding standards of higher education and failure to effectively equip graduates with the skills needed in a rapidly changing and complex knowledge-driven society. By developing and sharing PedaL pedagogies, the PedaL partnership aims to enhance the teaching capacity of university teaching staff to improve student learning outcomes, thereby to produce high quality social science graduates who are employable; and creatively able to use their education to sustain opportunities that stimulate economic growth and social transformation. It has been argued that even gains from the best designed curriculum are often lost without competent teachers to interpret the objectives, organize the content and determine the stimulus that meets the prescribed objectives. Academics must constantly resolve the tension between ‘what should be learned’ and ‘how it should be organized’ to achieve exceptional learning moments for optimization of learning outcomes. The problem is that teachers’ dispositions, needs and motivation that could help them stimulate active learning among students have not received the right attention. This brings into sharp focus an urgent need not only to reform the curriculum but also to address conditions that facilitate desirable shifts in pedagogical practices.

Taking cognisance of the neglect and under investment in social sciences as African countries and development partners put STEM at the heart of their development strategies; PedaL deliberately privileged the social sciences. The goal is to gradually replicate PedaL across other university programmes so as to catalyse systemic change.



## Appendix 2: PedaL Training Programme

### Programme Architecture

The programme architecture assumes a blended approach with face-to-face sessions interspersed with online engagement and practical application of skills in the classroom. The programme is offered over a period of one year in a flexible mode.

### Face to Face Sessions

Sessions are delivered in a centralized location or in individual universities depending on the context. The training is facilitated by a core team of female and male trainers from across the continent and beyond notably, the Open University, UK; IDS, University of Sussex and University of Minnesota, US. As aforementioned; the PedaL training programme is organized around six building blocks: Pedagogical models and strategies; Educational foundations; Technology Enhanced Learning; Transformative curriculum and learning design; Leadership in pedagogical practice; and, Innovative assessment.

The programme imparts pedagogical knowledge and skills through practical application of tools and technologies that facilitate exceptional learning moments that contribute to holistic development of competencies. The training is interactive, draws on the teachers' experience to extend and modify the teachers' pedagogical strategies by applying pedagogical tools such as case studies, flipped classroom, simulations, role plays and threshold concept tools. Particular attention is paid to gender dynamics in the content of modules, selection of teaching and learning materials as well as classroom interactions.

Best practices on inclusivity such as equitable class participation and seeking the voices of the marginalized groups to bring issues that affect them at the centre of learning are also a critical feature of PedaL training. By the end of the face-to-face training session, the teaching staff should attain the six learning outcomes described in the fore attesting to their readiness to create and implement innovations in their teaching practices.

### Online Engagement

The face-to-face teaching and learning experiences are reinforced by synchronous and asynchronous learning experiences on a virtual platform. Online engagement facilitates intra and inter staff interactions within their institutions and in the wider community of practice around PedaL. The PedaL virtual platform actively supports reflective practice, knowledge transfer and mentorship.

### Reflective Practice

As part of the training, teaching staff formulate a personal teaching philosophy as well as pedagogical goals that shape their teaching and learning strategies. The goals are pursued over the academic year through application of the knowledge, skills and experiences in selected graduate social science courses. Teaching staff are expected to capture and share a summary of reflections on their pedagogical experiences periodically.

### Annual convening

Teaching staff are provided an opportunity to share their experiences and lessons learnt with peers implementing PedaL pedagogy in graduate social science courses in a 3-day annual convening at the end of the year. The convening is held either centrally or hosted in participating





universities. During the convening, teachers share the feedback from students, peers, resource persons, university administration as well as their personal reflections on teaching and learning experiences in their classrooms. Important learning points are fed forward into a continuous process of improvement of the PedaL training programme. The annual convening also serves to strengthen PedaL network effects as well as linkage to relevant stakeholders.

### Certification and Recognition

There are three levels of certification for completion of distinct training activities:

- Upon successful completion of the face-to-face session and online engagement activities, participants are awarded a certificate of accomplishment;
- Upon completion of all training, reflective practice and pedagogical leadership activities participants attain a PedaL fellow status attesting outstanding competence;
- Once the full PedaL programme is accredited by participating universities<sup>2</sup>; participants who pursue various training programmes at the universities will obtain respective degrees: post graduate certificate; post graduate diploma; or master's degree in pedagogical practice and leadership.

### PedaL Pedagogy

It is a suite of intentional and integrated interventions in design, context, processes and content of teaching and learning through strategies such as use of case studies, flipped classroom, role plays, and a range of problem based learning activities aimed at maximizing learning outcomes among students. PedaL pedagogy places the responsibility on teaching staff as facilitators to create the appropriate environment for a holistic teaching and learning experience that integrates the student, content and a variety of learning materials to make learning interesting and effective both inside and outside the classroom.

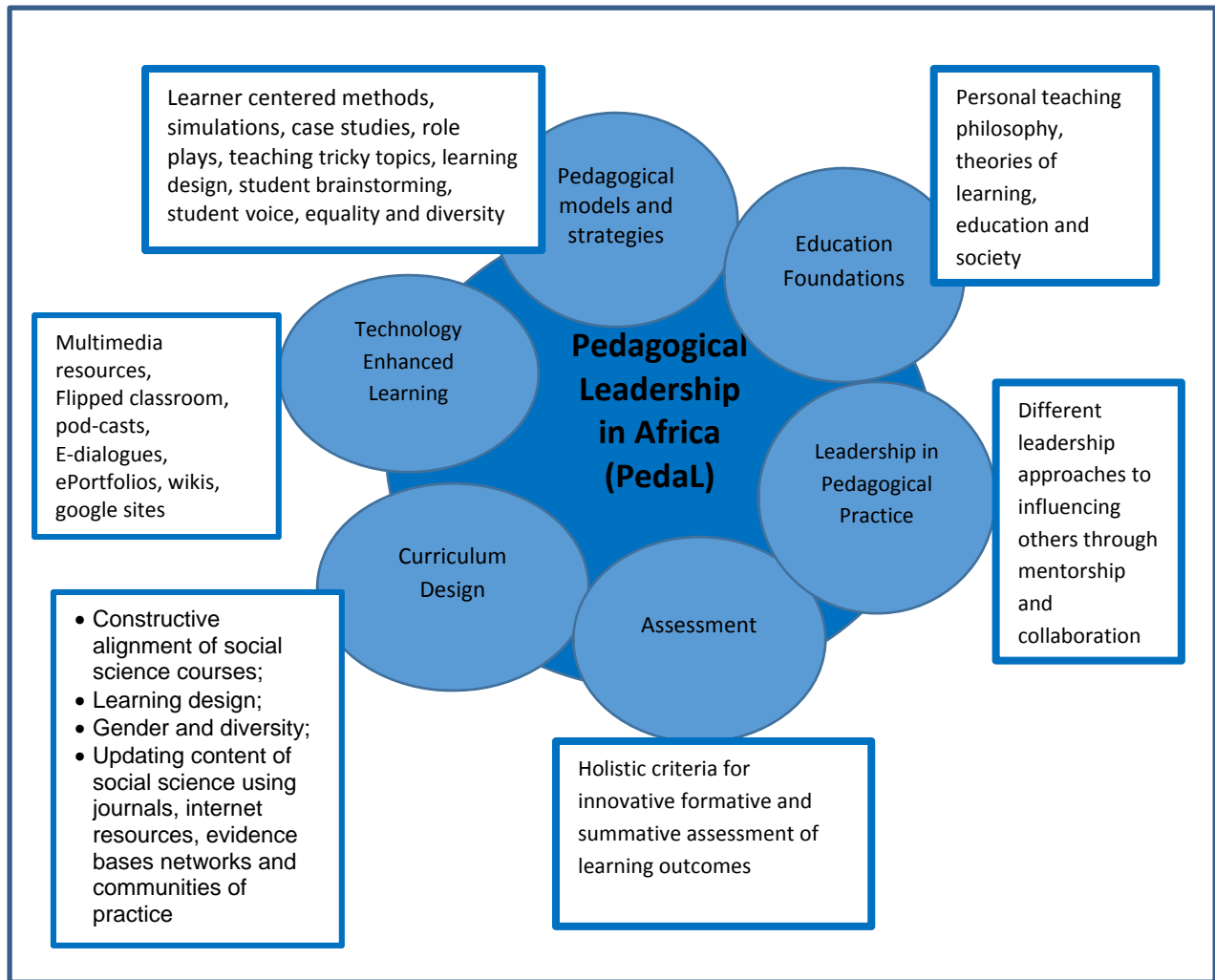
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<sup>2</sup> Egerton University has launched the accreditation process for a post graduate diploma while Uganda Martyrs University is developing a master's programme in PedaL



### Schematic Representation of PedaL Pedagogy

PedaL pedagogy comprises the six building blocks/modules illustrated in the Table below: pedagogical models and strategies; educational foundations; Technology Enhanced Learning; curriculum and learning design; leadership in pedagogical practice; and, assessment.



### Structure and Duration of PedaL Training Programme

PedaL training is offered in a flexible and blended mode that combines face-to-face with online engagement as illustrated in the diagram below:

	May-July 2019	Aug-Oct 2019	Nov-Jan 2020	Feb-April 2019	Duration
Face to Face sessions					42 hours
Online engagement					36 hours
Reflective practice					Continuous
Pedagogical leadership					Continuous
Annual convening					24 hours

### Schematic Representation of PedaL Programme Implementation

