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***"Addressing the Communication Needs of a Developing Nation:  
A Journalism Education Case Study from Divine Word University"***

**by**

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## ***“Addressing the Communication Needs of a Developing Nation: A Journalism Education Case Study from Divine Word University”***

This paper discusses how *journalism education* can best address the *information needs* of a *developing nation* in Asia Pacific. It takes as a case study the review of the Communication Arts Department Curriculum at Divine Word University and looks at its different components (media literacy, general education, academic and practical courses) and how they meet Papua New Guinea’s needs for information. It examines the way in which the curriculum has developed since the Department began offering courses in 1979, discussing both the *practical* and *ideological* influences that have shaped its construction.

The current curriculum based on a *western vocational journalism model* trains students to work in the mainstream media. The paper will argue that focusing on meeting the needs of the mainstream media in PNG has prevented the Department from looking at the wider information needs of the people and civil society organizations. This calls for a stronger communication & development component, which can prepare graduates to address the communication needs of a developing country and contribute to the development of a civil society. By expanding the curriculum beyond the craft elements of journalism the university will, hopefully, help the students to achieve their professional and intellectual potential as well, so that they might become appropriate leaders and active contributors to development in PNG.

### ***I. Papua New Guinea Context***

Papua New Guinea’s context is unique. An Australian protectorate until 1975, it has an extremely diverse society with a staggering number of distinctive cultures and more than 800 spoken languages. The majority of the population, estimated at 5 million, lives in rural areas, largely dependent on subsistence agriculture. Half of the adult population is non-literate and the many disadvantaged populations do not speak English, the main language of education and administration (Rooney, Papoutsaki & Pamba, 2004).

In spite of being the biggest and richest island in natural resources in the Pacific, PNG ranks below all its Pacific neighbours in many areas (UNDP, 1999). The country faces serious development challenges, most notably a weak institutional environment with poor control of government spending and a serious law and order problem. A difficult geographical terrain and weak transportation services isolate whole regions with little access to basic services such as education and health (The Joint Country Strategy, 2003). Isolation, linguistic and cultural diversity and a highly expensive and differential implementation of official policies have made nation-building a difficult task.

The distribution of newspapers is extremely limited outside urban centres. High rates of illiteracy make newspapers inaccessible to many people, not to mention that the cost of a daily newspaper is not affordable for poor people. Television ownership is limited by the extent of electricity coverage throughout the country and by its prohibitive cost. Radio is the most common form of modern communication in PNG. Regarding information and communication technologies, PNG has some of the lowest levels in the developing world (UNDP, 1998; AusAID, 2004).

It is not only access to information that is problematic, but the content as well. Foreign ownership, colonial legacies in journalism attitudes and training, lack of interest from government and civil society in public information, poor communication amongst civil society and media organizations and dominance of Western news values have all contributed to the production of news content that is not reflecting the needs of the people. As Pamba argues (2003), PNG is a developing country and the media

ought to give more focus to the ordinary people and how their lives are being affected by various factors including decisions and actions of governments.

Taking into account the country's distinctiveness, one needs to ask what purpose Higher Education specializations such as journalism and communication serve and how they can best contribute to the development of the country. In response to the aspirations outlined in the National Goals and Directive Principles, Higher Education regards itself as a major determinant of the nation's future (Robins, 2000: ix). The country's Higher Education Institutes are called to contribute to national capacity building by improving the quality of their programs and their relevance to PNG's development needs and to labour market needs. They are expected to demonstrate intellectual leadership, engaging themselves in the vigorous exercise of critical enquiry and the dissemination of knowledge (ibid: 12, 13). Does journalism education prepare the graduates of this specialization for the needs of the country and can they demonstrate leadership beyond their vocational training?

## ***II. The Communication Arts Program at Divine Word University: an Investigation of its Relevance to the Communication Needs of Papua New Guinea***

DWU is a private Christian university and one of the newest tertiary institutions in PNG. It began as a Catholic co-educational high school in the 1960s. In 1979 students began enrolling in diploma programs in Business and Communication, and Divine Word Institute was incorporated by an act of Parliament in 1980. A number of other programmes were added in the following years. The institute was established as a University in 1996 and a major reorganisation began in 2003 with the formation of six faculties (Arts, Education, Theology, Business and Management, Flexible Learning and Health Sciences). Today, DWU offers courses leading to diplomas and degrees in ten Departments including the Department of Communication Arts that offers a full-time journalism program (DWU website).

DWU gathers itself from many contexts (Christian catholic, western, vocational, postcolonial) (Papoutsaki & Rooney, 2004). It faces the uncertainties of a developing university in a developing country, constantly seeking to realign itself with new partners in the hope of sustaining itself in the face of uncertain Government support and balance the constantly changing demands for practical courses - utilitarian formation - with the demands for an academic education and the demands for a synthesis between culture and faith (Stollenwerk, 2004).

DWU states in its promotional material that 'areas of study have been selected for their long-term benefit to Papua New Guinea and where there is strong industry demand. Students work with industry and business throughout their training and are encouraged to develop and participate in programs that help build community resources and social capital' (DWU website). Journalism was identified from the beginning as an important component of the University's goal of contributing to the democratic development of the nation and has been attracting strong support by international organizations with placements of teaching and administrative staff and funds for developing an electronic training centre. The links with the industry are very strong and have helped shape the content of the journalism program to the extent that the training given is based on the western model that the country's media follow. The graduates are popular with the media industry and enjoy high employment rates.

Students are selected for Communication Arts on the basis of high marks in Year 12 English, a professed interest in journalism and good references. Most of the students in CA come straight from high school, with women outnumbering men by a ratio of two to one. Some mature age students are also enrolled after working in the media, business, education or public relations. At the diploma level, journalism has been treated as a craft to be learned by hands-on practice (DWU, 2002:56), so emphasis is put on the practical skills required in the workplace. The degree level also has been essentially vocational but increasing emphasis is now being placed on academic courses and research.

The earlier program based on the development communication model developed by Chris Maslog from the Philippines in the late 1980s was considered at the time an appropriate approach to the communication needs of the country, offering courses such as communication for political and community development, educational broadcasting and rural development, communication policies and planning, community newspaper management and production (Maslog, 1988). In spite of its strengths, especially its plan to educate students away from the western hegemonic model of media and place a lot more emphasis on communication for the people, the program was not driven by the realities of communication in PNG (McManus, 2004: 18). It lacked the support of the media sector in PNG which wanted journalists trained in the western model and it was not given sufficient time to be adapted to the needs of the country. Its expatriate designers remained only a short time in the country, leaving no person qualified to continue the program. Graduates of this program recalled that they enjoyed the course but they could not relate to the constant references to studies conducted in the Philippines and had difficulties applying this knowledge in the PNG context. With the benefit of hindsight, we suggest that the course could have become quite relevant and sustainable in PNG if given enough time (ibid).

Following a curriculum review in 1998 undertaken by former BBC editorial executive John Jefferson, the Maslog program was criticised as unhelpful for students who were to take up work in the existing PNG media. One of the recommendations was that the practical skills of journalism, including writing and speaking in English, needed to be re-emphasised (Jefferson, 1998:1) as the industry complained that the graduates had little practical skills. Jefferson's new program came directly from the model used for newspaper training in England (Rooney, 2003:77). Jefferson recommended that DWU should rekindle its relationship with professional media associations including the Media Council and the Journalists Association. He saw an urgent need for interaction between people in the media industry and the students and staff at DWU, in order to raise the university's profile as a trainer of journalists, and to give students practical experience of the media in action. Jefferson called for the staff to recognise the real "handicaps" that PNG students bring with them to the university, particularly under-developed English language skills, lack of knowledge of current affairs and little media familiarity (Jefferson, 1998:1). Many PNG school students are taught English by fellow fourth language English speakers in an oral culture with little access to books and with little opportunity for immersion in the language (McLaughlin, 1997:92). The units now studied by students in their first, or "foundation", semester are designed to address these handicaps. Following Jefferson's judgement that DWU was being left far behind in the field of education in technology, students are now taught how to use modern electronic media equipment.

While staff members agree that this program has helped the students to develop their language skills, there are concerns that the other skills he emphasises bear no relation to the needs of the majority of people in PNG. For example, the course directs students of community reporting to concentrate on official sources, meetings, major events, telephone interviews and important speeches for their stories. Clearly this approach does not recognise that the needs of PNG communities are vastly different from the needs of communities in Britain. The ordinary people in PNG are not seen as capable of generating material for stories in community reporting. The course on feature writing included travel, leisure and pleasure topics, television and cinema reviews, all of which are far removed from the world of the ordinary PNG person (McManus, 2004: 20). Jefferson claimed that there was an international consensus about what should be taught to potential journalists and that journalism was essentially vocational rather than academic (Jefferson, 1998, p.1).

In 2004, in response to the University's decision to strengthen the academic component of its programs, the CA Department undertook a more comprehensive curriculum review, taking into consideration not only the needs of the media industry but also the needs of ordinary people in PNG regarding information and the educational needs of the our students and career prospects of our graduates.

### ***III. Which Model for Journalism Education in PNG: Journalism Theory versus Practice and the Development Communication Approach***

The dilemma we encountered during the revision process was also reflected in the different approaches that had so far influenced the journalism program. Is journalism a vocational profession and if so how do we incorporate general education and academic skills, essential for expanding the employment opportunities of graduates who operate in a small market? Are there international standards in journalism, as Jefferson argued, that are universal to all, or should developing countries develop their own model that responds better to their needs, and what are these needs? While the Maslog curriculum aimed to produce 'well-educated' people who would be trained in the technical skills after they joined the workforce, Jefferson recommended that the technical skills should be well taught first in a profession that is essentially vocational. Both models have had their strengths and weaknesses but neither addressed fully the realities of the PNG context.

Much has been written on whether the emphasis should be on the theoretical or the practical in journalism education (Adam, 2001; Adam, 2004; Bromley, 2001; Burns, 2001; Day 2002; Oakham, 1998). Vigorous debate has taken place in academic circles concerning the theoretical foundations of journalism. Journalism educators understand that serious divisions exist between theory and practice (Bromley, 2001: 251), with the journalism theorists pitted against the practitioners. There is a schism within academia about what is the best preparation for journalism (Day, 2002:1), although there is some recognition that journalism needs to build connections with academic culture (Adam, 2001:324) and a broader education. Adam (2004) suggests that reporting and writing should form the spine of any journalism course. Attached to this spine should be media studies, general education studies and one area of specialisation. He argues that there should be a focus on the intellectual development of students so that they will understand the complex forms of thinking and expressing used in the profession (ibid:13).

Even if we solve the vocational versus academic dilemma, we still have to consider the development context for communication practices in PNG. Relevant theories assume that communication is a vital element in the development process (Goonasekera, 1987:64). The latest approach to development communication, aiming to inform instead of persuading people to change what they do or educating them in order to change social values, believes in empowering people to change by increasing knowledge. The emphasis is on reducing inequality by targeting the poorest segments of the society, involving people in their own environment, giving them independence from central authority (see Melkote, 1991; MacBride, 1980; Jayaweera & Amunugama, 1987). Social change is central to development journalism's mission. Western journalism's so-called "commitment to objectivity" is replaced by a commitment to the local community. Communicators are not neutral observers but rather participants in community affairs (Bowd, 2003:126). They can become agents for sustainable development.

Our intention to move away from the strictly craft model of journalism education is supported by Wickham who suggests that communication courses should not only be more academic, but much more firmly situated in the local context: "The key is a fully-fledged communication programme to facilitate high levels of study and research. The programme would need to be firmly grounded in a philosophy that recognises the uniqueness of our people..." (Wickham, 2004:3).

Since the mainstream media can be seen as having failed as agencies of information for empowerment, one needs to ask what are the alternatives in reaching the ordinary people of PNG and how best can one train communicators. There is a general perception among staff and students that the needs of PNG

centre on issues of governance, participation and organization within the general context of development.

#### ***IV. The current review process***

Addressing the communication needs of the country has to go hand in hand with addressing the needs of the students. Teaching units within the Communication Arts Department at DWU has given us some appreciation of the difficulties Papua New Guinean students face when they enter higher education institutions to study journalism. These difficulties include low general literacy skills, very little media literacy, lack of general education knowledge and, more specifically, a lack of knowledge about their country's socio-cultural and economic issues, as well as a lack of critical skills.

While acknowledging the benefits of learning practical skills, students and ex-students, staff, academics and employers have expressed concerns about the present curriculum on the grounds that it does not adequately prepare graduates for work in the communication sector in PNG. Its overspecialised program based on a western vocational model has already produced more graduates than the small media industry can absorb. The university depends on maintaining a certain number of students in order to qualify for financial support from the National Department of Education, but we are likely to see rising unemployment levels among our graduates. The vocational and overspecialised training has given them only a limited academic and general education background, reducing not only their employment opportunities but also their intellectual growth (Papoutsaki & Rooney, 2004: 11).

A media executive, while interviewed by one of the authors as part of the curriculum review, argued that 'people coming into journalism nowadays must have a detailed knowledge of Politics, Business, Law and History. A Diploma in Journalism is no longer sufficient'. He added that he would prefer to hire a graduate of the above disciplines and give in-house training than hire a journalism graduate because they lack general education and critical skills that come with academic training. This is evident in the content of the country's main print media, which is full of descriptive hard news reporting without in-depth analysis. A journalism academic even argued that as the DWU journalism program comes directly from the English trade school model, it is quite irrelevant for Communication Arts students in PNG. A senior CA student added to the discontent regarding the established way of teaching journalism by questioning why can't journalists learn how to write about the ordinary people of PNG instead of just the (expletive) bigshots? An experienced CA staff member commented that he doesn't know why we are teaching the students how to be journalists, as very few of them will work in the mainstream media.

These comments highlighted our dilemma in terms of who we should satisfy - the market or the people, and are the needs of the market different from those of the people? Finding out how the stakeholders (students, graduates, media executives, workplace supervisors, communications academics, DWU staff, heads of Departments and the Dean of the Arts Faculty) perceive the quality of the program being offered was imperative.

In order to further examine issues that have arisen while considering this question, the following three specific questions were developed: How relevant is today's journalism education program at DWU for students preparing to work in the communications field in PNG? What are the strengths of the current CA curriculum? How could the program be improved? These three questions were used as the basis of the curriculum review. For the first time we surveyed former students, asking them to reflect on their study time at Divine Word in the light of their employment experiences.

From our students of 2004, seventy-one out of 95 completed questionnaires. They were quite accustomed to filling in questionnaires administered during course evaluations. Their residential status

ensured that it was possible to have informal chats with them whenever there was a need to clarify some points for this study. The CA4 students formed one of the pilot groups in this study. All the current staff members of the CA Department were interviewed, as well as former lecturers. Student evaluations of their workplace experience from 2002 and 2004, as well as supervisors' comments on students' performance, also provided useful data. Initial surveys of first year students entering the course in 1999 made interesting reading in the light of their subsequent work history. Questionnaires were posted to approximately 60 CA graduates whose workplaces were known. Of these, 30 returned completed surveys with much thoughtfully presented information.

In-depth interviews gave participants the opportunity to articulate their ideas without being constrained by the specific lines of enquiry which characterised the questionnaires. Two focus groups of students - one from the final year degree and one from the diploma course - were interviewed in July and August. Both groups proved to be intensely interested in the major research question, as they were applying for work at that time and questioning whether their acquired skills and knowledge would indeed be relevant for the workplace.

## ***V. Results and Discussion***

In the responses to the questionnaires circulated in June 2004, 73% of students noted that the curriculum was appropriate to their needs and 95% said they enjoyed the practical activities. Many students noted that the teaching of practical skills was a good feature of the curriculum: "I think the strength of the curriculum lies in the practical subjects like Community Reporting, Layout and Design and Radio;" "One strength I find is that the curriculum is a hands-on one"; "Basic Reporting and Community Reporting are helpful in building confidence". Some students noted other strengths: "The strengths include the ethics that are taught, how we should go about collecting news and how we should behave".

Responses from ex-students also indicated their appreciation of the practical skills, from their point of view in the workplace: "The course taught me how to write and produce articles, take good pix, produce newsletters and write for radio. The course improved my writing and built my confidence".

It has been observed that students have been enthusiastic about the practical work in the program. They are proud of their achievements when they see their articles published in *Liklik Diwai* (the Department's training newspaper), and in the national dailies (*The National* and the *Post Courier*). Knowing that they can actually produce worthwhile publishable material motivates them to improve their work. One student wrote: "I enjoy writing. Being able to write something is good and having it published thrills me even more." When students on work experience were able to put into practice the skills learned during the course, they could see that their efforts were worthwhile.

Several students noted the limitations of the hands-on craft approach to teaching that has characterised the Diploma course: "The course prepares us to enter the workforce. It teaches us the basic skills. But it is not challenging"; "The new course on Media and Society helps us to critically analyse what we read and helps us write better articles"<sup>1</sup>. One student appreciated the new direction the course is taking: "The biggest strength would be the move away from traditional journalism training to a more multi-skilled approach, with subjects like Human Resource Management and International Relations".

Although there is a general acceptance of the benefits of learning practical skills, more than 93% of our present students indicated that the curriculum should offer a wider range of subjects. The current

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<sup>1</sup> Media and Society was introduced as a pilot course in the second semester of 2004 at both diploma and degree levels as a way of assessing the usefulness of an academic course in the curriculum and which level would be more suitable for.

Diploma students say they experience a genuine lack of background knowledge about PNG when they are covering stories for community reporting or making radio programmes. Their natural reluctance to ask questions, and even their fear to do so, is exacerbated by what they perceive as an inability to ask questions of substance. They say that having more knowledge would give them more confidence to control interviews and to more equally engage with interviewees. They feel that interviewees can too easily give answers that contain less than the whole truth. “When we go for an interview, we want to ask probing questions, but often we don't have the confidence or the knowledge to find out good information”.

The question of confidence arises in many situations involving our students. Many are naturally shy and compliant, characteristics that have helped them to achieve the grades necessary to enter university. But these same traits are a hindrance to their developing the confidence necessary to carry out the journalism activities that are integral to the Communication Arts course (Moore, 1995: 68). Their lack of confidence seems to be a source of frustration to themselves, as indicated by these students: “Students are too shy to ask questions. They have this mentality that if they ask questions they will be regarded as stupid”.

Students say that if they knew more about the established institutions that form the country's infrastructure, they would be more confident in their interviews with officials: “We often have to interview people from the health sector, education, the law and the courts, local level government and the provincial government, but we don't know enough about these things”. However, an experienced senior journalist had this to say about journalists' reluctance to ask questions: “We Melanesians are generally not used to confronting people. This is the way we are made”.

This statement is echoed by several of our perceptive diploma students who argue that the confrontational approach to journalism that is generally accepted in western countries is not appropriate in PNG. Confrontational journalism can do more harm than good (Kolma, 2001:3). Strong cultural pressures on journalists (Rooney, 2003b:79) need to be recognised. The students would like to see a more collaborative model proposed for journalism in the country. However, they say, this new model will not emerge until truly indigenous forms of media are operating in PNG. These comments do cause us to reflect on how much pressure we should put on students to ask searching questions. The senior journalist added: “Being able to ask questions is a good skill, but I think other skills are equally important, such as learning how to identify "spin" in a press release. Journalists can write good articles if they know that skill”.

Following the 1988 review, the curriculum aimed to produce "well-educated" people who would be trained in the technical skills after they joined the workforce. However the 1998 review recommended that the technical skills should be well taught first. When asked which approach we should adopt in our 2004 revised curriculum, experienced senior journalists said: “Both.”

Students are realistic about how much they can learn in a 2-year diploma beyond the practical skills of journalism. They know that they will spend a good portion of their working lives simply learning more about PNG, but they say that they would like to begin that learning process while they are completing their diploma in a university environment. One CA Diploma graduate who continued his studies at DWU for a further two years to complete a Diploma in Arts (PNG Studies) commented: “After my first Diploma I felt that I needed to learn more about PNG. Having a good background, especially about cultural issues, is essential for good story writing”. The revised curriculum has taken into consideration these suggestions, as there is sufficient evidence to suggest that these units will help to provide a solid academic base for the study of communication arts in PNG<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> The suggestions made by our present students for units to be added to the curriculum include: Law, History, Psychology, Literature, Economics, Business Management, Accounting, Maths, International Relations, Politics,

A graduate responded to the question about how the course could have been improved: "More emphasis should have been given to theory. DWU has always been practical about its journalism. I reckon a balanced input on theory would be good". Other graduates wrote: "Let students do more research into what journalism really is"; "More research theories and methodologies should have been included."

Most of the current 2004 students (80%) reported that their 3-week work experience placement was a valuable and enjoyable part of the curriculum. One student wrote: "I enjoyed being treated as a professional journalist. When my boss edited my stories, she pointed out my mistakes and that gave me an idea where I needed to improve. Working with her was challenging but also very educational".

In 2004, 21 students chose to work in the mainstream media, while the remaining 16 worked with NGOs, media units and information offices. There is an increasing tendency to choose work in the NGO sector. A student wrote: "I did my experience with an NGO because I did not want to be in the mainstream media". The student learned that the organisation was committed to delivering a high level of service to the community and found working there rewarding: "Day in and day out local villagers entered the office to speak to someone about their problems, to use the phone, to photocopy, to do some typing or just to chat. It was surprising to see that they felt free and at ease to do this".

The final section of the questionnaires asked the students about their preferences for future employment. Only 18% expressed a strong desire to work in the mainstream media, whereas 63% expressed a strong desire to work outside it. These figures tend to confirm our belief that we should be broadening the scope of the course to better prepare students for work in the wider communications sector in the country. The focus groups were not surprised by these figures. They readily listed what they saw as personally unattractive aspects of the mainstream media. These included low wages, high expectations, a lack of incentives, long hours, limited opportunities for career advancement and further training, threats, risks, limited time for family obligations and a high divorce rate.

An ex-student was quite pessimistic about the chances of our graduates finding work in the mainstream media: "I'd say journalism graduates in PNG have a bleak future because opportunities are becoming less and less every year. CA should broaden its objectives to provide effective courses which are not only journalism but also corporate communications and linguistics etc".

Another ex-student was quite critical of the print media's role in PNG from an ideological point of view: "Journalism in this country is failing everyone. News content is selected by a very small group of people. The news only strengthens the stereotypes and pushes the readers' heads down until they think there is no hope for PNG".

Our Diploma students also offered incisive comments on the real effects of the media on PNG society: "The media is not serving the information needs of all sectors of society"; "The media reflects the interests of a small elite of PNG society - politicians, businessmen, city residents, expatriates and English speakers"; "The voice of the average Papua New Guinean is rarely heard. So the media is actually a barrier to development in the country"; "The media forces us to believe that the Western cultures are superior to our traditional lifestyles".

A media executive accepted many of these criticisms, but pointed out that business decisions had to be made on financial grounds rather than ideological ones: "The business people run the work culture in the

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Geography, Human Resource Management, Marketing, Public Relations, Community Relations, Shorthand, Research Skills, Foreign languages such as Japanese and Advertising.

media. Newsrooms are seen as revenue users, not revenue raisers"; "We are always dealing with inexperienced staff with varied levels of general knowledge, comprehension and concentration". Many students (79%) noted on the questionnaires that they were interested in working in development communication to help isolated communities. However, the members of the focus groups tended (with a few exceptions) to contradict these noble aspirations by placing comfortable jobs, good wages and opportunities for career enhancement higher on their priority list than such things as giving service to the community and living in an isolated place. It is, therefore, a challenge for us to interrupt our students' plans for their own upward social mobility, and to promote the values of PNG village cosmology through the study of development communication.

### ***Conclusions***

The strength of the Communication Arts Diploma curriculum is its teaching of practical communication skills. Students, graduates, employers and workplace supervisors all acknowledge the benefits of learning these skills. This aspect of the curriculum should be maintained, with students and staff becoming increasingly aware of how the skills are transferable to all sectors of the communications industry.

There has been an overwhelming response from all stakeholders in favour of including more academic units of study in the Diploma course. The 2004 students feel that they need to take such units. Graduates are almost unanimous that History and Politics should be included in the curriculum (see table 1 for the general education component of the curriculum). Media executives and workplace supervisors say that graduates should have more general knowledge about PNG. Staff members are also convinced that CA graduates should have a more solid academic education beyond the practical skills in communications. It is hoped that an academic education can provide them with life-long critical thinking skills that can apply in any working environment. Students will also be encouraged to develop in-depth knowledge in an area of their choice through the electives system. Taking courses, for instance, on PNG and regional politics and organizations from the PNG Studies Department can help produce better informed political reporters.

Many students come to DWU from areas where the influence of the media is minimal. When students take up the Communication Arts course, they therefore need to develop media literacy skills, understand the concept of information and study how the media impact upon both traditional and modern societies. These issues need to be addressed in the new units - "Introduction to Journalism Studies" and "Media & Society" - and in the redesigned units - "News and Current Affairs Awareness, I, II."

In order to understand the wider communication needs of the country, students need to be involved in the issue of communication and development. This is expected to happen in three ways. Firstly a special unit titled "Communication and Development" will be added to the new curriculum supported by an updated Asia Pacific Development Issues course. Secondly the issue will be included as a topic for discussion in all the journalism units throughout the course. For example, in Introduction to Journalism special sessions will be devoted to the role of the journalist in a developing country. Thirdly the students will investigate the community needs in the Madang area, as they will be preparing articles for the *Liklik Diwai* (the training publication). In this way they will become actively involved in the practical aspects of communication and development, by engaging with the local community and giving the people an opportunity to air their aspirations and concerns. It is hoped that *Liklik Diwai* with its new *tok pisin* supplement - *Setelmen Nius* - will be widely read in Madang and create a public forum for the local community that does not exist at the moment.

**Table 1. Revised DWU/CA Curriculum 2004**

<b>General Education</b>	<b>Communication Arts Core Curriculum</b>	<b>University Requirements Electives</b>
1. Communication Skills 2. End-User Computing 4. Introduction to Politics 5. PNG Infrastructure 6. PNG Colonial History 7. Any Literature 8. Tok Pisin 9. Asia-Pacific Development Issues	<u><b>Diploma</b></u> 1. Introduction to Journalism 2. Basic Reporting 3/4 News & Currents Affairs Awareness I, II 5/6. Community Reporting I, II 7. Layout and Design 8/9 Broadcast Journalism I, II 10. Media Law and Ethics 11. Media and Society 12. Work Experience <u><b>Degree</b></u> 13. Creative Writing 14. In-depth Reporting 15. Publishing 16. TV News 17. Radio News 18. Radio Programs 19. Internet for journalists 20. News Management 21. Communication & Development 22. Communication Skills for NGO Workers 23. Applied Research for Social Science 24. Research Seminars & Dissertation	1. Personal Development (1,2,3,4) 2. Christian Ethics 3. Family and Social Issues ----- 5 Elective Courses taken at students' choice from other Departments or CA specialized courses when on offer.

In addition, we would like our second year students to produce radio programs concerning current issues affecting the people of Madang. Under an agreement with station FM100, these programs will be put to air on a regular basis. Hopefully these practical exercises in communication will help our students learn how to empower the marginalized in the name of human development (Ramirez, 1987:227) and demonstrate how communications specialists can become agents for development.

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