INTRODUCTION:

Students' Administration can be looked at in two folds - academic administration and general welfare administration. The Student Affairs Department is responsible mainly for the general welfare administration of the students. The Student Affairs Department maintains an active partnership with students in the development of new welfare programmes and the arrangement of those already in operation. The activities of the Students Union and all other students' Clubs and Societies are co-ordinated through the Department. The objective is to provide an enriching, cultural, physical, social and morally uplifting environment for the student as a rewarding complement to his academic work.

In the Federal University of Technology, Owerri, in particular, the Student Affairs Department is responsible to the Vice-Chancellor for students' welfare, discipline, non-academic affairs generally and for liaising with the Students' Union. The Department is also responsible for providing Secretaries for the Students' Catering Committee, Students' Welfare Committee, Food Tenders Committee, Advisory Committee on Students' Discipline and the Sub-Committee on Students' Sports. There are various Sections of the Student Affairs Department that are concerned with the above objectives/duties of the Department.

1. **GENERAL STUDENT AFFAIRS - OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS/STUDENT AFFAIRS OFFICER**:
   
   (a) The Head of this office is responsible to the Vice-Chancellor and is a member (or in-attendance) in certain Committees, e.g. Security Committee, Admissions Committee,
Students' Welfare Committee, Students' Catering Committee, 
Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee, Junior Staff Matters 
Committee, Food Tenders Committee, Health Services Committee, 
Sports Sub-Committee, etc.

(b) In consultation with the Vice-Chancellor/appropriate 
Committees, this office formulates and implements 
regulations concerning students on non-academic affairs and 
initiates actions on the constitution of the Students' 
Union matters.

(c) This office is also involved in all areas of responsibilities 
assigned to all other senior/junior staff members in the 
Department as and when necessary.

(d) It is also in-charge of the regulations on students' 
social activities.

1. CAREERS AND COUNSELLING OFFICE:
This office is responsible to the Dean of Student Affairs/ 
Student Affairs Officer and carries out the following 
other functions:

(a) Advising students on career opportunities in various areas 
of the economy.

(b) Counselling students on non-academic matters and advising 
them on how to obtain counselling on academic matters.

(c) Establishing close contacts with major industries, 
establishments and research units in Nigeria.

(d) Responsible for NYSC matters concerning students.

(e) Running a career resource library or occupational library 
which will give relevant information on careers employment 
opportunities and how to attend interviews.

(f) In liaison with the Dean of Student Affairs/Student 
Affairs Officer and Publications Section is responsible 
for the publication of the Students' Handbook.
3. **STUDENTS' RECORDS/SCHOLARSHIP OFFICE:**
   (a) This office attends to all scholarship/bursary/loan matters of students after registration.
   (b) Liaises with various Governments of the Federation and any other Scholarship Bodies over students' scholarship awards.
   (c) Assists indigent students for financial aids if available.
   (d) Makes all passports and vacation travel arrangements for students.
   (e) Keeps accurate records of all students on scholarship.
   (f) Keeps all students non-academic records.
   (g) Analyses all non-academic records of students.
   (h) Liaises with the Academic Registrar over admission quotas and reception arrangements over registration of students.
   (i) Helps (in consultation with the Dean of Student Affairs/Student Affairs Officer) in all matters relating to the constitution of the Students' Union and the general Union matters.

4. **ACCOMMODATION MATTERS OFFICE:**
   (a) This office is responsible for the allocation of students to Halls of Residence.
   (b) Co-ordination of administration of students residence (excluding catering).
   (c) Students' off-campus accommodation.
   (d) Liaises with Hall Masters/Mistresses in connection with Hall Matters.
   (e) Arranges students' mails.
   (f) Liaises with University Health Services over Students Health matters.
   (g) Makes full and accurate inventory of all Hall equipment (beds, bedding, toiletries, etc).
   (h) Keeps custody of all Hall/Common Rooms equipment.
(i) Ensures that Hall regulations as they pertain to Halls of Residence are enforced.

(j) Receives and distributes cleaning materials to students.

(k) Takes full responsibility for the cleanliness of the Halls and facilities and strict supervision of the Cleaners.

5. SPORTS MATTERS OFFICE:

(a) Coaching of students.

(b) Organising of Sports and University team in conjunction with the Students' Union.

(c) Preparation, care and custody of University Sports facilities and equipment.

(d) Responsible for the supervision, training and general administration of Sports staff, in liaison with the Dean of Student Affairs/Student Affairs Officer and in conjunction with the Establishment Section.

6. CATERING MATTERS OFFICE:

(a) Preparation and service of students' meals.

(b) Arranging for the purchase and supply of food stuffs and other items needed for the students catering services under arrangements approved from time to time by the Catering/Food Tenders Committees.

(c) Arranging for the cleaning of Students' Dining Hall and Kitchen.

(d) Preparation of students' Menu in liaison with the appropriate authorities (Health Services, Students' Union, Welfare Officer, Bursary Department) for approval by the Catering Committee.

(e) Carrying out market research on food items on weekly/monthly basis to serve as a guide line for the Food Tenders Committee in fixing of food prices for food contractors.

(f) Advising the Catering Committee on the control of costs of catering services to students.
(g) Keeping custody of Kitchen equipment.
(h) Preparation of job orders and supervision of receipts of food items.

7. STUDENTS' ACCOUNTS OFFICE:
(a) This office is in charge of Students Accounts including cost controls of food and other purchases.
(b) Liaising with Bursary Department in all technical/professional matters relating to accounting procedures.
(c) Reports the financial position of the Students Accounts to the Dean of Student Affairs/Student Affairs Officer.
(d) Advising the Dean of Student Affairs/Student Affairs Officer on cost controls on food and other purchases.
(e) Prepares all payment vouchers in respect of all claims and bills from the Department including food contractors bills.
(f) Responsible for the procurement and sale of students meal tickets.
(g) Collects all fees payable by students.

GENERAL - THE DEMAND AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDENT AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

As can be seen from the above major functions of the Student Affairs Department, it is clear that the department deals with the most sensitive area of University Administration as any little mistake in the department would invariably affect all the other arms of the University. Students occupy very strategic and central position in the University for without them Administrators, Lecturers and other service workers would not be here. This is why the Student Affairs Department that deals with activities that bear on the Students' Welfare has the great task of dealing with one of the most "difficult" groups of human beings - managing a large group of adolescents who constitute the student population.
As we know university students are at war always with their society — they are never satisfied with anything before them — they are always resentful of the authority and always claim to be of a special class in the community. Therefore anybody dealing with them must try to possess a lot of tact, have a good sympathetic understanding of human nature and weakness and must be prepared to take insults and abuses whether rightly or wrongly. However, these are some of the qualities of a good administrator but unlike other areas of Administration, officials of the Student Affairs Department are seen by the students as errand boys/girls who must always dance to their tune — students always assume that the duty to see to their welfare implies subservience on the part of the officials and as such claim unlimited right and access in respect of every demand of theirs and this is not the case with Administrators in other sectors of the Administration.

Finally, it may be necessary to mention another peculiar aspect of students' administration under the Student Affairs Department. There are two categories of personnel carrying out all the necessary jobs in the Student Affairs Department. The first set of personnel are purely administrators while the second set are professionals. The professionals include the officers in-charge of the day-to-day administration of the Students' Catering services and sports services. Since the personnel in-charge of the catering services are professionals, in order to keep the administrative aspect going, normally an Administrative Staff is assigned to carry out some of the purely administrative duties in the Kitchen.
Such an officer takes care of all the relevant duties related to catering services such as Students’ Catering Committee and the Food Tenders Committee while the professionals take care of the other aspect of the Kitchen administration. This should also be the same case with the Sports Matters Services. However, as at now because of lack of funds, there is no administrative staff assigned duties in that section, but on the long run we plan to deploy an Administrative Staff to the Sports matters Office so that such staff will take care of the purely administrative aspects of that office and this will include taking care of all the Committees related to Sports, e.g. Students’ Sports Sub-Committee, etc.

A. I. EKWEMALOR,
STUDENT AFFAIRS OFFICER.