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Maritime Mondiale

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# The World Maritime University L'Université Maritime Mondiale

*SUMMARY. Established in 1983 the World Maritime University is a fine example of international co-operation fostered by IMO.*

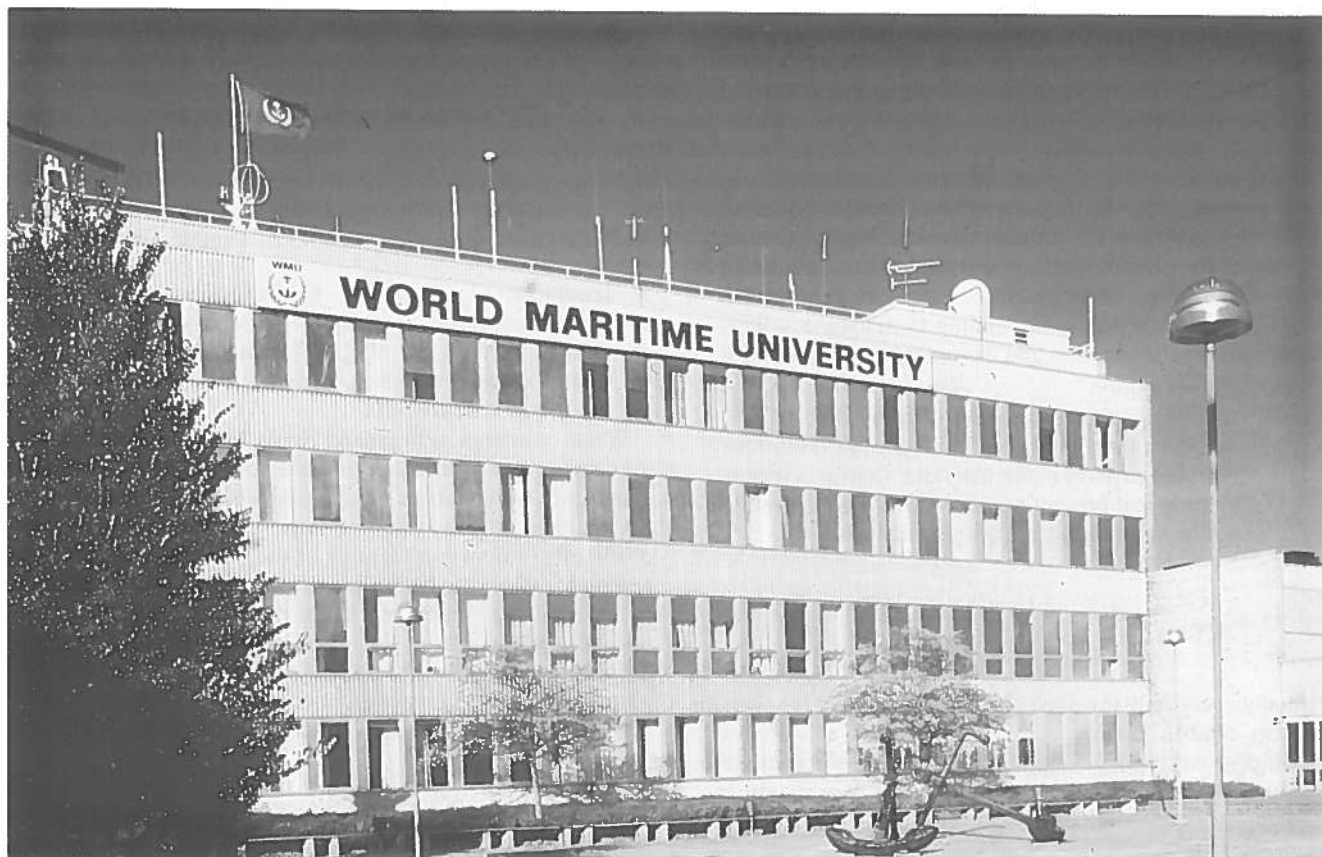
*Courses are based on IMO Conventions and global shipping standards for the building and safe operations of ships at sea and in ports.*

*A French translation of this article will appear in a future edition of The IALA Bulletin.*

*RÉSUMÉ. Créée en 1983, l'Université Maritime Mondiale est un bel exemple de coopération internationale menée par l'OMI.*

*Les cours portent sur les textes officiels de l'OMI et les normes appliquées dans le monde pour la construction et la conduite des navires, en mer et dans les ports.*

*Une version française de cet article paraîtra dans un prochain numéro du Bulletin de l'AISM.*



*University building — made available to WMU by the City of Malmö — for free!*

The World Maritime University, based in Malmö, Sweden, was officially opened on 4th July, 1983, and is one of the most exciting and ambitious projects ever undertaken by the International Maritime Organisation.

The primary purpose of the University is to provide higher education and training for senior personnel from developing countries who are involved in various maritime activities. Institutional training of this type is a novel concept and there is no comparable institution anywhere else in the world.

The WMU, therefore, fills an important gap in maritime education and training, and in the years to come will have a marked and beneficial effect on the two areas of greatest concern to the Organisation — the improvement of maritime safety, and the prevention of marine pollution from ships. IMO recognises that the improvement of personnel standards — on shore and at sea — is crucial if its global standards are to be effectively implemented.

The WMU is the first international effort to provide education and training opportunities for personnel who have already reached positions of some authority — personnel, in fact who are responsible for the effective implementation of IMO standards.

A remarkable feature of the WMU project was the speed with which it was brought into being. The idea did not receive formal approval from the IMO Assembly until November 1981. During the next year financial support was secured, physical facilities provided, a Board of Governors named, academic and administrative staff appointed, curricula worked out and a Charter prepared.

The World Maritime University opened in Malmö, Sweden, on 4th July, 1983, with 72 students from 42 countries. The number of students who have enrolled has since grown to over 500 from 97 countries (as of May 1988).

## AIMS

These can best be stated by quoting the charter of the WMU, which says:

“The World Maritime University shall be the international maritime training institution for the training of senior specialist maritime personnel in various aspects of shipping and related fields concerning the improvement of maritime safety, the protection of the marine environment and the efficiency of international shipping, in furtherance of the purposes and objectives of the International Maritime Organisation as a Specialised Agency of the United Nations”.

In order to achieve the objectives, the charter says that the university shall:

“provide interested countries, and in particular developing countries, with the most modern and up-to-date facilities for the training of their high-level maritime personnel in all areas of shipping and related maritime activity”.

The university will also:

“help to establish an internationally recognised cadre of experts in the major aspects of shipping, including visiting professors, lecturers, consultants and other experts to provide suitable knowledge and assistance to developing countries and other governments as appropriate, on problems relating to maritime safety, efficiency of navigation and the prevention and control of marine pollution”.

Finally, says the charter, the university will:

“help in developing a uniform international system for the training of experts in the maritime field as a means of facilitating and promoting international co-operation in shipping and related maritime activities”.

## WHO WILL BENEFIT?

Virtually everybody involved in shipping can expect to benefit from its establishment.

- ★ Shipowners will gain because the level of expertise in shipping operations in the developing world will rise steadily as the graduates of the university take up senior posts at home.
- ★ Port operations will become more efficient and faster, helping shipowners and shippers to save time and cut costs.
- ★ Safety standard will rise: The university puts primary emphasis on the proper implementation of IMO and other safety measures.
- ★ Crew standards will improve: The university runs special courses for teachers in maritime training academies and nautical schools. This will result in standards in merchant marine academies around the world rising in the years to come.
- ★ The environment will benefit: The university emphasises the importance of IMO anti-pollution measures. It also runs special short courses on tanker safety, pollution control and other aspects.
- ★ Governments will gain: As the administrative capabilities of newly-emerging shipowning countries improve so will it become easier to establish and maintain effective co-operation between governments.
- ★ Business will gain: Delays in ports and administration will be reduced, enabling business to deliver and receive goods more quickly and with less cost.

## COURSES OFFERED

The World Maritime University now offers only two-year courses, leading to Master of Science Degree.

Courses run from early February to mid-December, with a December-February break.

MSc Degrees are offered in the following courses:

General Maritime Administration  
Port and Shipping Administration  
Maritime Safety Administration (Nautical)  
Maritime Safety Administration (Marine Engineering)  
Maritime Education and Training (Nautical)  
Maritime Education and Training (Marine Engineering)  
Technical Management of Shipping Companies

All instruction at the WMU is in English, and for students who need to up-grade their proficiency in that language two special intensive courses of 18 weeks and 10 weeks duration respectively are held prior to the regular maritime courses.

## COURSE ORGANISATION

The teaching methods used at the World Maritime University have been carefully designed to meet the special requirements of its students and to take full advantage of modern technologies and teaching methods. Courses include:

- |   |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| ★ Lectures  | ★ Tutorials             |
| ★ Demonstrations  | ★ Case studies          |
| ★ Projects  | ★ Industrial experience |
| ★ Field studies (field training/on-the-job training and field trips/excursions) |                         |

While students will spend most of their time at the university, arrangements are made for them to extend their experience by field trips to other cities and institutions within Sweden and in many other countries. These visits form one of the most important features of the whole project and one reason for choosing Malmö as the site for the university was its location near many centres of maritime activities. Visits normally begin during the students second semester at the university and generally consist of relatively short visits to ports, industries and other organisations involved in shipping. The third semester is mainly dedicated to field (on-the-job) training.

It cannot be emphasised too strongly that the World Maritime University is an essentially practical institution designed for students who have already proved their abilities and have been selected for further promotion. While courses include a considerable amount of traditional class-room work, the practical content is much greater and more varied than in normal postgraduate studies.

## BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The university is supervised by a Board of Governors, the Chairman of which is Mr. C. P. Srivastava, the Secretary General of IMO, who is also the Chancellor of the WMU. The members of the board have been chosen for their pre-eminence in shipping and related areas and have also been chosen to give a wide representation to both developed and developing maritime nations.

## ACADEMIC STAFF

The academic and administrative work of the university is directed by a Rector. He is assisted by the Vice-Rector and seven full-time professors, each responsible for a specific course, and seven assistant professors plus three professors of English.

In addition to the full-time academic staff, the university benefits from visiting professors and lecturers who cover

certain specialised subjects during visits which last from a few days up to several weeks. The combination of full-time staff and visiting lecturers thus allows the university to provide a comprehensive coverage of each subject as well as to give the students access to the leading experts in their respective professions.

It has been a particularly encouraging feature that so many renowned persons in maritime transport have served the university free of charge as visiting professors or lecturers.

### LIBRARY

The library officially opened one year after the inauguration of the university. It began with a collection of textbooks, a few donations and several periodical subscriptions. Today the library contains 5,000 volumes, subscribes to 250 periodicals, and has a growing collection of back issues of essential maritime related periodicals. The library is a member of the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) network which electronically links the university to over 6,000 libraries around the world.

### ACCOMMODATION

Students at the university are provided with their own individual apartments in the Henrik Smith House. The building contains 160 flats, each with cooking and bathroom facilities, together with a restaurant, recreation and television rooms and other amenities. Plans are underway for extending these facilities in order to accommodate the growing number of students.

### SOCIAL FACILITIES

The Malmö authorities have arranged for university students to be allowed to use a modern recreation center, situated only a few hundred yards from the World Maritime University itself. The building contains an indoor swimming pool, ice rink, bowling alley, squash, badminton and tennis courts, a restaurant and other facilities. Contacts with families in the Malmö region are being encouraged.

### ADMISSION

At present all applicants to the university are expected to be nominated by governments. Any candidate interested in attending the university should therefore contact the appropriate government department in his/her home country. This does not apply, however, to students from developed countries who can contact WMU directly. Only ten per cent of the student body may be recruited from developed nations.

### FIVE YEARS OF PROGRESS

The university inaugural class numbered 72 students from 42 different countries — an indication of the wide appeal of this university concept. This increase has continued: in 1984 65 students enrolled, a further 81 enrolled, in 1985, 85 in 1986 and 102 each in 1987 and 1988, including six from developed countries.

But while the students have come from many different countries and have varied backgrounds and experience their quality has been one of the university's strongest assets.

The report of the Board of Governors to the IMO Council in 1985 states: "Perhaps the greatest strength of the university is the excellence of its student body. The general evaluation by resident and visiting professors, as well as by the organisations and persons visited by WMU students in field trips and on-the-job training clearly shows a high-quality student body approaching their work at the university with seriousness and diligence".

Most of the graduates, at the request of their professors, have provided information on their occupations which showed that many of them had immediately been appointed to highly responsible positions in their home countries. Regular contacts are being maintained with graduates through an alumni association and WMU is also regularly publishing a newsletter.

### FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The present annual budget of the World Maritime University of approximately US\$6 million has been kept to much less than what it costs to build even a medium-sized cargo ship today. The income of the university comes entirely from voluntary contributions. Over half the annual budget comes from recurring contributions from: Sweden (one third of the budgeted costs); the United Nations Development Programme (US\$1.2 million in 1988); and Norway (US\$500,000). Other contributions are in the form of fellowships. The leading donor is the Federal Republic of Germany. Other important donors are Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Japan and the Commonwealth Secretariat.

### CONCLUSION

The World Maritime University has come a long way in the brief period since July 1983. Its first four classes have graduated and new groups of students have been enrolled. There is now a well established resident faculty, enriched through effective support by visiting professors, a successful programme of field trips and on-the-job training, a good library, a strengthened intensive English language programme, a considerable amount of up-to-date donated equipment installed for instructional purposes and, perhaps the most important of all, the diligent involvement of an excellent student body sponsored by a vast and ever-growing number of countries appreciating the advantages of the advanced training offered at WMU.

All concerned can reasonably state with pride that in this early phase, the World Maritime University has lived up to expectations.

As we went to press with this article we learned that the class of 1989 that began in March 1988 is expected to graduate in December 1989. It consists of 102 students from 53 countries and their average age at the commencement of studies was 35 years.

It is important that mention is made of selection. A most important element in ensuring the continued success of the students at the University is very careful pre-selection by the sponsoring organisations with further screening of academic and professional qualifications of applicants by the Admissions Board of the University.

At present the number of applications exceeds the number of study places available and the Admissions Board make use of this development for an even stricter selection of applicants in the future. In other words, standards are very high.

A useful booklet entitled *Courses of Study* has been produced by the University and is available with other information on application to:

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*Reception after graduation in the ancient City Hall of Malmö.*



*Computer training at WMU is being further upgraded.*

**Editorial Note:**  
I would like to express my gratitude for the splendid assistance provided by the Rector of the World Maritime University in providing the background material on which this article is based.  
**PWR**