

World Maritime University

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WMU in the News

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WORLD MARITIME UNIVERSITY

The World Maritime University completed its first year and welcomed its second intake of students in 1984. It has now reached its projected maximum of nearly 140 students.

The World Maritime University moved quickly into productive effort on its establishment early in July 1983. For the initial class of 72 students from 40 developing countries, the University successfully completed its first semester of course work in December 1983, thus covering one-fourth of the two-year courses on General Maritime Administration, Technical Management of Shipping Companies, Maritime Safety Administration and Maritime Education. In addition intensive English language courses were given to 48 students during this period.

An international faculty of eight professors, including the Rector, works full-time at the University. In addition, more than 30 visiting lecturers and professors have given classes on specialised subjects during the period. They all served without remuneration except for travel and a per diem allowance.

As part of the curriculum in the first semester the University organised 14 field trips to a number of different organisations and institutions in northern Europe.

The University also installed and began to put to good training purposes a considerable amount of up-to-date and modern equipment, a large part of which was contributed by a number of companies from countries all over the world. In addition to modern navigation, electronic and other equipment, the University has installed an up-to-date system for intensive language training recommended by a consultant professor who has been providing advisory services for the language training programme. Also very important in launching the University on a firm footing has been the high quality of the students from the developing countries. The seriousness and importance the sponsoring developing countries attach to the advanced training produced by the University is clearly shown in their willingness to invest in the further technical training of these students, whose absence from their positions in their home countries must represent a significant cost in itself.

Some of the new intake of students arrived in Malmö in January to take part in an intensive English language programme lasting nine weeks. For the remainder the academic year began in February and ran until December. This will also be the academic period in future years. The new year began with 65 new students and this group, together with the initial 72 in the first class, will bring the total number close to full capacity for the University's one- and two-year students.

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Preparations were made to begin short-term courses in the latter half of 1984. Perhaps most important of all, the response of the developing countries to the establishment of the WMU has been enthusiastic. Many countries from all regions have decided to send students to the WMU and the students are serious and of high quality. As a result of their initial experience, more than half of the countries sending students in the first year indicated their intention to send more students in 1984 and 17 countries sent students for the first time in 1984.

The World Maritime University is the only academic centre in the world devoted to the training of senior maritime personnel, primarily from developing countries. Its aims can best be stated by quoting the Charter, 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."

The origins of the University go back to a seminar on training attended by delegates from 45 developing countries which was held at Malmö in November 1980. At the conclusion of the seminar a resolution was adopted requesting IMO and the United Nations Development Programme – which acts as the main funding agency within the United Nations system – to support the idea of establishing an institution to provide maritime training for students from developing countries. The resolution referred to the 'enormous need' of developing countries for administrators, teachers, surveyors, examiners and other senior personnel, stating that a minimum of one or two years in a suitable academy would be necessary to acquire the extensive training needed. The idea attracted wide support and in November 1981 the IMO Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution authorising the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps for the establishment of the University at Malmö, where the Government of Sweden had already offered facilities.

Eighteen months of intense activity followed during which financial support was secured: premises acquired; a board of governors named; academic and administrative staff appointed; curricula worked out; a charter prepared; and – most important of all – students from nations all around the world applied for the 75 places available.

The University was officially inaugurated on 4 July 1983. Although the University has already established itself academically IMO is anxious to secure a permanent financial base. At present the University's \$4 million a year budget comes primarily from donations

by governments and organisations – notably the United Nations Development Programme and Sweden.

IMO has announced the creation of a fund-raising programme which includes the establishment of a General Fund. All contributions to this Fund, no matter how small, will be acknowledged and permanently recorded. Those who donate \$500 or more to the Fund will become Patrons of the University and will be recorded in the University's Book of Honour, while those individuals, companies or organisations donating \$10,000 or more will be listed as Founders and their names will be inscribed on a special Wall of Honour.

Another way of contributing to the University is by providing fellowships for individual students. It is estimated that a sum of \$10,000 a year covers the expenditure on the boarding, lodging and other basic necessities in respect of each student at the World Maritime University. Not a vast amount of money, perhaps – but still more than many developing countries can provide.

IMO is therefore seeking sponsors for individual students who are willing to provide \$10,000 a year for a minimum two-year period. As the maximum annual intake of new students is 75 that is the number of fellowships required. Some of these have already been helped by generous donors; but more are required. More specifically, governments, donor agencies, foundations, trusts, organisations, shipowners, shipbuilders, manufacturers of marine equipment, marine insurers and all others are invited to provide, on a recurring basis, one or more fellowships, each of the value of \$10,000 per annum valid for two years. This means a sum of \$20,000 for each fellowship. Contributions can be general or made specifically towards students from one country or region. Each fellowship will carry the donor's name. All donors will be listed as Founders and their names will be inscribed on a special Wall of Honour.

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Enquiries should be addressed to: THE PRINCIPAL,
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