

AXUM UNIVERSITY



1. Background

Axum University is one of the newly established public higher education institutions in Ethiopia. It is located in Axum town, about 1010Km north of Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian Capital. Axum enshrines one of the most impressive archeological and historical areas in the world.

The university is found in the western part of the town, in the locality named 'Sefho'. Construction of the university began in May 2006 and is planned to be completed in four phases. The first phase of construction is completed and has the capacity to enroll 2400 students. By the time the whole construction phase is completed the university will have an enrollment capacity of 9000 regular students. The main objectives of the university include teaching, research, and consultancy/community service.

The teaching learning process of the university commenced right after two weeks of the inauguration ceremony on February 16, 2007. Currently, the university is organized into 10 Offices and 5 Faculties with over 80 academic staff and more than 150 supportive staff.

The five Faculties of the University include: (1) Social Science and Languages, (2) Natural Science and Mathematics, (3) Business and Economic Sciences, (4) Technology, and (5) Agriculture and Rural Development. In these different faculties,

the university has a total of 42 academic departments. Besides the current faculties and departments, the university is planning to establish different schools (e.g. School of Archaeology and Tourism, School of Health Sciences) and research institutes/centers (e.g. Water Management Institute, Center for Strategic Studies).

In the academic year 2006/7 the university has enrolled 745 students in twelve undergraduate degree programs within the three faculties: Social Sciences and Languages; Natural Science and Mathematics; and Business and Economic Sciences.

2. Faculties and Departments at Axum University

2.1 Faculty of Social Science and Languages

The Faculty includes different departments all running undergraduate degree programs both in teaching and applied fields:

- Geography and Environmental Studies (Teaching and Applied)
- History and Civics (Teaching and Applied)
- Ethiopian Languages (Teaching and Applied)
- English and Other Foreign Languages (Teaching)
- Tourism and Hotel Management (Applied)
- Archaeology/Paleontology (Applied)
- Psychology (Applied)
- Political Science and International Relations (Applied)
- Journalism and Communication (Applied)

In the academic year 2006/2007, the faculty has enrolled students in the following departments:

- Geography and Environmental Studies (Teaching)
- History and Civics (Teaching)
- Ethiopian Languages (Teaching)
- English and Other Foreign Languages (Teaching)

The Department of Archaeology is on the verge of finalizing its curriculum and action plan for the 2007/8 academic year. Archaeology at undergraduate degree program will be opened for the first time in Ethiopia at Axum University. The opening of the program gives Axum University the opportunity to train and undertake research in the field of Archaeology and be a center of excellence in the field. By integrating

Archaeology with the department of tourism and Hotel Management the university is planning to establish “School of Archaeology and Tourism”. Axum University is mobilizing its resources to be a center of excellence in these fields.

The faculty is also finalizing its plan to launch Ethiopian Language programs (such as Tigrigna and Afan Oromo), Journalism and Communication, Tourism and Hotel Management, and Psychology in the academic year 2007/2008.

2.2 Faculty of Natural Science and Mathematics

The Faculty of Natural Science and Mathematics deals with degree programs in five different academic departments:

- Biology (Teaching and Applied)
- Chemistry (Teaching and Applied)
- Physics (Teaching and Applied)
- Mathematics (Teaching and Applied)
- Health and Physical Education (Teaching and Applied)
- Statistics (Applied)

In the academic year 2006/2007, the faculty has enrolled students in the following departments, all in teaching programs: Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Mathematics.

In addition to the already started programs, the faculty is finalizing its preparation to enroll students in the fields of Statistics, and Health and Physical Education in the academic year 2007/2008. Moreover, the faculty shall accept students in all its applied fields in the next academic year.

2.3 Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences

The Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences includes different academic departments:

- Accounting (Teaching and Applied)
- Economics (Teaching and Applied)
- Banking/Finance (Teaching and Applied)
- Marketing Management (Teaching)
- Procurement and Sales (Teaching)
- Secretarial Science and Office Management (Teaching)

- Education Economics and Management (Applied)
- Business Management (Applied)

In the academic year 2006/2007, the following departments have enrolled students in teaching and applied fields: Accounting, Banking and Finance, Marketing Management, and Economics.

In addition to the already operational departments, the faculty is completing its preparation to enroll students in the following programs in the academic year 2007/2008:

- Procurement and Sales
- Education Economics and Management
- Business Management

2.4 Faculty of Technology

The Faculty of Technology has the largest number of departments and deals with undergraduate degree programs in the following fields:

- Construction/Building (Teaching)
- Mechanics/Machine (Teaching)
- Electrical Engineering (Teaching and Applied)
- Electronics/Communication (Teaching and Applied)
- Manufacturing /Mechanical (Teaching and Applied)
- Computer Science and IT (Teaching and Applied)
- Hydraulics (Applied)
- Civil Engineering (Applied)
- Architecture (Applied)
- Construction Technology and Management (Applied)
- Computer Hardware (Applied)
- Textile Engineering (Applied)
- Chemical Engineering (Applied)

The faculty shall enroll students in the field of Computer Science and Information Technology in the academic year 2007/2008. The other departments are currently involved in curriculum development, and in preparing laboratory/workshop facilities, laboratory manuals and in recruitment of academic staff.

2.5 Faculty of Agriculture and Rural Development

The Faculty of Agriculture and Rural Development includes the following academic departments:

- Soil and Water Management Engineering (Applied)
- Agronomic Irrigation (Applied)
- Range Management, Animal Science and Marketing (Applied)
- Plant Science and Protection (Applied)
- Rural Cooperative and Management (Applied)
- Wildlife and Natural Resources Management (Applied)

In the academic year 2007/2008, the faculty shall enroll students in the following academic departments:

- Soil and Water Management Engineering
- Range Management, Animal Science and Marketing
- Plant Science and Protection
- Rural Cooperative and Management

3. Continuing Education Programs

As a higher education institution located in the central zone of Tigray which is the most densely populated zone in the region, Axum University is planning to be a center of training and research and contribute to the development of the nation. In this line, Axum University has finalized its preparations to enroll students in the Continuing Education Program (CEP) in the different fields of specializations within the five faculties. The university plans to start evening and summer programs starting from the Ethiopian New Millennium.

4. Research, Extensions and Consultancy Services

As a higher education institution mandated to undertake research, extension and consultancy services, Axum University is defining its research priorities and developing research guidelines in order to put a good foundation for future endeavors. This includes designing the University's research policy, enhancing the research capacity, improving research administration, linking research to teaching/training, developing manuals and operational guidelines for research, extensions and consultancy services.

The university is currently involved in: (a) defining the research priority of the university, (b) creating a working environment for further research, (c) establishing networks with research funding institutions, and (d) designing collaborative research projects. The university has also started providing advisory and technical support to different institutions on issues of Tourism Development, Water Resource Management, etc.

5. Future Plans of the University

To define its vision, mission and objectives, and to clearly streamline its activities, Axum University is developing a 5 year strategic plan. In this plan its strategic targets shall be defined in such a way that the institution shall be established on good foundation.

In addition to the planning process, the university is actively involved in: (a) massive capacity building (training of staff, equipment purchase, etc), (b) in designing different research projects that address local, regional and national issues, (c) establishing networks with higher education institutions, and (d) looking for collaborative institutions in all areas of training, research, capacity building, curriculum development and staff/student exchanges.

With the strong support of the government, great commitment and effort of its staff, and support by different institutions, Axum University aspires to be one of the leading higher education institutions in Ethiopia.