
**CHARTER OF THE AFRICA UNIVERSITY
A CHARTER TO ESTABLISH AFRICA UNIVERSITY OF
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

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PART I**Preliminary*****Short title and commencement***

1. This document may be cited as the 1991 Charter of the Africa University of the United Methodist Church, and shall come into operation on such date as the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe shall determine in accordance with section 19 of the National Council of Higher Education Act, 1990.

Interpretation

2. In this Charter, unless the context otherwise requires:
“Assistant Vice-Chancellor” means the person holding office as Assistant Vice-Chancellor of the University in terms of section 15;

“Africa University” means a university established in accordance with the provisions of this Charter;

“Academic and Administrative Selection and Appointment Committees” means the academic and administrative selection and appointment committees appointed in terms of section 21; “academic staff” means all persons employed, whether full-time or part-time, permanently or on short-term contracts, by the University as professors, lecturers of any class or persons engaged in research;

“administrative staff” means all persons employed by the University who are determined by the Board of Directors to be members of the administrative staff; “Alumni Association” means the alumni association established in terms of section 19;

“Bursar” means the person holding the office as bursar of the University in terms of section 20;

“Board of Directors” means the board of directors selected in terms of section 10 and shall comprise the university council;

“Chancellor” means the person holding the office of chancellor in terms of section 10;

“Dean” means an academic officer appointed in terms of section 24;

“Faculty” means a faculty of the University as determined by the Board of Directors;

“Librarian” means the person holding office as librarian of the University in terms of section 20;

“non-academic staff” means all persons employed by the University who are not members of the academic staff;

“professor” means a professor of the University;

“Promotions Committee” means the promotions committee appointed in terms of section 22;

“Registrar” means the person holding office as registrar of the University in terms of section 20;

“regulations” means regulations made by the Senate in terms of section 16;

“student” means a person receiving regular instruction in the Africa University;

“Students’ Union” means any association of students recognized by the Board of Directors as the Students’ Union;

“Vice-Chancellor” means the person holding the office of Vice-Chancellor in terms of section 14.

PART II

Establishment and Functions of The Africa University

Establishment of the University

3. (1) There is hereby established a university to be known as Africa University of the United Methodist Church.
(2) The University shall be a body corporate with perpetual succession and shall be capable of suing and being sued in its corporate name and, subject to this Charter, of performing all acts that bodies corporate may by law perform.
(3) The University was established at the request of the African Central Conferences of Angola, Burundi, Liberia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Zaire and Zimbabwe. The General Conference of the United Methodist Church approved the establishment of the University in May, 1988. Although related to the United Methodist Church, the University shall be inclusive, embodying a global and ecumenical spirit.

Establishment of faculties and other institutions

4. The University may consist of two or more faculties including: the Faculty of Theology, the Faculty of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the Faculty of Management and Administration, the Faculty of Education and others.

Governance

5. The University shall be self-governing and an independent institution awarding its own degrees, diplomas and certificates.

Student body and staff

6. The student body and staff shall be drawn from Africa and other parts of the world without regard to social standing, ethnic identity, race or gender.

Prohibition against discrimination

7. No test of religious or political belief, race, ethnic origin, nationality or sex shall be imposed upon or required of any person in order to entitle that person to be admitted as a member of the staff or student body of the University or to hold any office or privilege, except where a specific qualification for admission or appointment is required.

Objects and powers of the University

8. (1) The objects of the University are:
 - (a) to preserve, transmit and enhance knowledge for the benefit of the peoples of Africa in accordance with the various principles and developmental strategies prevailing on the Continent;
 - (b) to empower students to enhance the formation of their fundamental capabilities, and by assisting them to think critically and to be skillful in communication and methods of inquiry;

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- (c) to create a sense of public responsibility in the students and to promote respect for learning and pursuit of truth and mature thinking about the ultimate meaning of human life;
 - (d) to encourage perspectives and moral values embodying a sense of vocation, a deep concern for human betterment, an obligation of service to others, equality among persons, loyalty to the truth, and responsible citizenship;
 - (e) to develop and promote leadership with moral character and instilled with a sense of care and responsibility to all;
 - (f) to stimulate and to promote cultural development, interpersonal relationships and international understanding among the students;
 - (g) to promote an understanding of the practical applications of knowledge including historical origin, purpose and meaning of life, a sense of value to life, a balance of intellectual and spiritual health, identity with African culture, and integration of various cultures.
- (2) For the achievement of its objects, the University shall, subject to this Charter, have the following powers:
- (a) to provide courses leading to degrees, diplomas or certificates, including training for persons wishing to enter the University;
 - (b) to hold examinations and to confer degrees, including honorary degrees, diplomas, certificates and other awards, upon persons who have followed courses of study approved by the Senate, and, additionally, or alternatively, have satisfied such other requirements as may be determined by the Senate;

Membership of the University

9. The University shall consist of the
- (a) University Council which is the Board of Directors;
 - (b) Vice Chancellor;
 - (c) Assistant Vice-Chancellors;
 - (d) members of the Senate;
 - (e) members of the Alumni Association;
 - (f) professors and lecturers;
 - (g) students;
 - (h) members of staff; and
 - (i) such other persons as the Board of Directors may declare to be members.

PART III

The University Council

The University Council

10. (1) Subject to the provisions of the National Council for Higher Education Act, 1990, and the by-laws of Africa University, control of the University shall be vested in the University Council which is the Board of Directors.

(2) The number of directors shall not be less than eighteen nor more than thirty voting persons. The membership of the Council shall be as follows:

(a) eleven members nominated by the Bishops of the African Central Conferences of the United Methodist Church;

(b) four members nominated by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the United Methodist Church;

(c) two members nominated by the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church;

(d) the General Secretary of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the United Methodist Church and the General Secretary of the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church;

(e) two members nominated by the Bishops of the European Central Conferences of the United Methodist Church;

(f) two members selected by the Government;

(g) three members selected by and from the Senate;

(h) the President of the Students' Union, who shall be an *ex-officio* member;

(i) two representatives selected from the business community in Zimbabwe.

(3) The Vice-Chancellor shall be an *ex-officio* member without vote.

(4) The term of office of the directors shall be as provided in the by-laws of the Africa University.

(5) The Board of Directors will elect its officers including its chairperson and the Chancellor of the University.

(6) All persons nominated to the Board of Directors except those selected by the Government, the Senate and Students' Union shall be elected by the Board of Directors of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the United Methodist Church, Incorporated, a Tennessee, United States of America, company.

Functions of the Board of Directors

11. (1) Subject to provisions of this Charter, the Board of Directors shall

(a) appoint the Vice-Chancellor, the Assistant Vice-Chancellors, faculty deans, the Registrar, the Bursar and the Librarian;

(b) institute professorships, associate professorships and other academic and non-academic offices, and abolish or hold in abeyance any such offices;

(c) receive and, if the Board of Directors considers it proper to do so, give effect to reports and recommendations from the Senate on those matters upon which the Senate is authorized or required by this Charter to make reports and recommendations;

(d) cause to be prepared annually a statement of the income and expenditure of the University during the previous academic year, and of the assets and liabilities of the University on the last day of such year;

(e) submit to the annual statement of income and expenditure to audit by an auditor appointed by the Board of Directors;

(f) cause to be prepared annual estimates of income and expenditure for the following financial year.

(2) Without limitation on any other powers conferred on the Board of Directors by this Charter, the Board of Directors shall have the following powers

(a) to receive recommendations from the Senate for the conferment, withdrawal or restoration of degrees, including honorary degrees, and diplomas, certificates and other awards and distinctions of the University;

(b) to administer the property of the University and to control its affairs and functions;

(c) to do such other acts as it considers to be necessary for the proper administration of the University and the achievement of its objects.

Executive committee of the Board of Directors

12. (1) There shall be a principal committee of the Board of Directors to be known as the Executive Committee with such powers as may be delegated to it by the Board of Directors.

(2) The Executive Committee shall be composed of the officers of the Board of Directors and chairpersons of standing committees.

(3) The Executive Committee may also be composed of any other officer or agent of the University as the Board of Directors may deem appropriate.

(4) The Vice-Chancellor shall serve on the Executive Committee, *ex-officio*, without vote.

(5) All actions taken by the Executive Committee shall be reported to the Board of Directors.

Committees of the Board of Directors

13. (1) There shall be committees of the Board of Directors consisting of two or more members which

(a) shall be under the control and serve at the pleasure of the Board of Directors;

(b) shall have charge of such duties as may be assigned to them by the Board of Directors;

(c) shall maintain a permanent record of their actions and proceedings;

(d) shall regularly submit a committee report to the Board of Directors.

(2) The Board of Directors shall appoint standing committees of Finance, Student and Academic Affairs, and Buildings and Grounds.

(3) The Board of Directors shall appoint any other committees including *ad hoc* committees as the Board of Directors may find it necessary to appoint from time to time.

The Vice-Chancellor

14. There shall be a Vice-Chancellor of Africa University who shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the University and who shall be appointed by the Board of Directors. All administrative officers, faculty, and other members of staff shall be responsible to the Vice-Chancellor and subject to the direction of the Vice-Chancellor in the performance of their duties. The Vice-Chancellor shall be responsible only to the Board of Directors. As Vice-Chancellor of the University, the Vice-Chancellor or a representative designated by the Vice-Chancellor shall be a member, *ex-officio*, of all standing committees of the Board of Directors, the University, the Faculty, and any joint committees.

Assistant Vice-Chancellors

15. (1) There shall be an Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs who shall be responsible for all educational affairs of the University. The Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs shall have such powers and duties as assigned by the Vice-Chancellor and shall be responsible to the Vice-Chancellor. In the absence of the Vice-Chancellor, the Assistant Vice-Chancellor for academic affairs shall act for the Vice-Chancellor. The Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs shall be appointed by the Board of Directors.

(2) There shall be an Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Administration who shall be responsible for the administrative and business affairs of the University. In the absence of the Vice-Chancellor and the Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Administration shall act for the Vice-Chancellor. The Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Administration shall be appointed by the Board of Directors.

PART IV

The Senate

The Senate

16. There shall be a Senate of the University which shall be the academic authority of the University and shall be composed of

- (a) the Vice-Chancellor who shall be the chairperson;
- (b) Assistant Vice-Chancellors and the Deans of the Faculties of the University;
- (c) the chairpersons of departments;
- (d) professors and associate professors;
- (e) two members elected by the Students' Union; and
- (f) one academic representative from each faculty.

Functions of the Senate

17. The Senate shall be responsible to the Board of Directors for the control and general regulations of the instruction, education and research within the University and, in addition, shall have the following functions:

(a) to satisfy itself regarding the content and academic standard of any course of study offered by any faculty, institute or constituent faculty of the University in respect of a degree, diploma, certificate or other award of the University and to report its findings to the Board of Directors;

(b) with the consent of the Board of Directors to make regulations regarding the eligibility of persons for admission to courses for a degree, diploma, certification or other award of the University, and for the obtaining of any degree, diploma, certificate or other award of the University and with regard to the standard of proficiency to be attained in each examination

for a degree, diploma, certificate or other award of the University;

(c) to decide whether any candidate for a degree, diploma, certificate or other award of the University has attained the standards of proficiency prescribed in the regulations and is otherwise fit for the grant of such degree, diploma, certificate or other award of the University;

(d) to appoint examiners for examinations conducted by the University;

(e) to make proposals to the Board of Directors on matters relating to the conduct of the University generally;

(f) to perform such other functions as may be delegated to it by the Board of Directors.

Senate Executive Committee

18. (1) There shall be a Senate Executive Committee consisting of the Vice-Chancellor and the Assistant Vice-Chancellors, the Deans of the Faculties, and two Senate representatives to be elected by the Senate.

(2) The Senate Executive Committee shall exercise such functions of the Senate as the Senate, with the approval of the Board of Directors, may delegate to it.

PART V**Alumni Association*****Alumni Association***

19. (1) There shall be an alumni association of the University which shall consist of all persons who are graduates of the University.

(2) The Alumni Association may deal with any matter relating to the University which may be referred to it by the Board of Directors.

PART VI**Staff and the Appointment of the Staff of The University*****Registrar, Bursar and Librarian***

20. (1) There shall be a Registrar of the University who shall be appointed by the Board of Directors to assist in the administration of the University.

(2) There shall be a Bursar of the University who shall be appointed by the Board of Directors and who shall be responsible for the financial administration of the University and shall act as accountant of the University.

(3) There shall be a Librarian of the University who shall be appointed by the Board of Directors and who shall be responsible for the administration and safeguarding of the libraries of the University subject to the directions of the Senate and the Vice-Chancellor.

Academic and Administrative Selection and Appointment Committees

21. (1) There shall be an academic and administrative selection committee, with the duty of making recommendations to the academic and administrative Appointment Committee.

(2) The Academic and Administrative Selection Committee shall be composed of the following:

- (a) appropriate Assistant Vice-Chancellor shall serve as chairperson;
- (b) the Assistant Vice-Chancellors;
- (c) two members representing the Senate;
- (d) dean of the faculty concerned;
- (e) Registrar who will serve as secretary.

(3) There shall be an academic and administrative Appointment Committee chaired by the Vice-Chancellor with the duty of making appointments of faculty and staff based on recommendations of the Academic and Administrative Selection Committee.

(4) Except those officers that the Board of Directors must appoint, the Academic and Administrative Appointment Committee shall make final appointments for all faculties and staff.

Promotions Committee

22. (1) There shall be a Promotions Committee appointed by the Board of Directors with the duty of promoting the academic and administrative staff. The Vice-Chancellor shall report the decisions of the Promotions Committee to the Board of Directors.

(2) The Promotions Committee shall be composed of the following:

- (a) the Vice-Chancellor or the nominee of the Vice-Chancellor shall serve as chairperson;
 - (b) the Assistant Vice-Chancellors;
 - (c) one member of the Board of Directors appointed by the chairperson of the Board of Directors;
 - (d) all faculty deans;
 - (e) chairperson of department concerned;
- (3) The Vice-Chancellor shall have the duty of promoting non-academic staff.

Terms and conditions of service of staff

23. The terms and conditions of service for each category of staff employed by the University, including the Vice-Chancellor and the Assistant Vice-Chancellors, shall be determined by the Board of Directors in terms of this Charter.

PART VII**ORGANISATION OF THE FACULTIES*****The Dean of a faculty***

24. (1) Each faculty shall have a Dean who shall be appointed by the Board of Directors.

(2) The Dean shall be head of the faculty and shall provide leadership and direction to the faculty in carrying out its functions.

PART VIII**DISCIPLINE*****Staff Disciplinary Committee***

25. (1) There shall be a Staff Disciplinary Committee which shall be appointed by the Vice-Chancellor and composed of the following:

- (a) an Assistant Vice-Chancellor for administration or Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs;
- (b) a senior member of the academic and/or administrative staff;
- (c) a member of academic or administrative staff of similar status to the person charged;
- (d) the Registrar who will serve as secretary.

(2) Charges of disciplinary offence against a staff member shall be investigated by the Staff Disciplinary Committee which shall recommend disciplinary action to the Vice-Chancellor as it deems appropriate upon being satisfied that the charge has been proved.

(3) The Staff Disciplinary Committee shall exercise such other powers regarding staff discipline as may be delegated to it by the Board of Directors.

Student Disciplinary Committee

26. (1) There shall be a student disciplinary committee composed of the following:

- (a) the Dean of the faculty concerned who will serve as chairperson;
- (b) the Dean of Students;
- (c) one staff member elected by each of the faculties;
- (d) two students elected by the Students' Union.

(2) Every charge or disciplinary offence against a student shall be investigated by a Student Disciplinary Committee which shall recommend to the Vice-Chancellor disciplinary action as it may consider appropriate upon being satisfied that the charge against the student has been proved.

(3) The Student Disciplinary Committee shall exercise such other powers regarding student discipline as may be delegated to it by the Board of Directors.

PART IX**Miscellaneous*****Regulations and Policies***

27. (1) Subject to the National Council for Higher Education Act, 1990, the University shall be administered in accordance with its regulations and policies.

(2) The Board of Directors, by appropriate action, may amend, repeal or replace any statutes, regulations, ordinances, by-laws, or policies in order to prescribe all matters which are required or permitted to be prescribed in University documents or which, in the opinion of the Board of Directors, are necessary or convenient for the proper administration of the University.

(3) These statutes, regulations, ordinances, by-laws and policies may provide for:

(a) the appointment, conditions of service, and functions of the Vice-Chancellor, the Assistant Vice-Chancellors, the faculty deans, and the Board of Directors, and all members of academic and non-academic staff and the categorization of such members of staff;

(b) the functions of the Vice-Chancellor and Assistant Vice-Chancellors and other administrative officers;

(c) the election or appointment of persons to the Board of Directors, the Senate and committees of the Board of Directors and the Senate;

(d) the terms of office of members and officers of the Board of Directors and its committees;

(e) the convening of meetings of the Board of Directors, the Senate and committees of the Board of Directors and the Senate, the quorum at such meetings and the procedure to be adopted thereat;

(f) the terms and membership of office of members of the Academic and Administrative Selection and Appointment Committees and the Promotions Committee, the convening of meetings of the Board and its committees, the quorum at such meetings and the procedure to be adopted;

(g) the functions of the Academic and Administrative Selection and Appointment Committees, the Promotions Committee, and the Finance Committee;

(h) the persons who may enter into contracts and sign documents on behalf of the University, and the procedure to be followed in relation to transactions entered into by or on behalf of the University;

(i) the establishment and organization of faculties, departments, centres and institutes;

(j) the functions of deans of faculties, chairpersons of departments and heads of centres and institutes;

(k) the holding of congregations of the University for the purpose of conferring degrees, diplomas, certificates and other honours and awards;

(l) the seal of the University and its use and custody;

(m) the academic year of the University;

(n) the discipline of members of staff and students;

(o) the Board of Directors may empower any person to make ordinances, rules, regulations, by-laws or policies in respect of any matter referred to in this section.

28. The University shall be a non-profit making organization. Any surplus of institutional expenditures shall accrue to the institution and no dividend shall be paid to the owners or sponsors of the University. Accounts shall be audited by auditors registered in Zimbabwe.

Revocation of Charter

29. In the event that this Charter is revoked pursuant to the provisions of Section 22 of the National Council for Higher Education Act, 1990, the Board of Directors shall determine the disposition of the assets of the University.

Schedule

Establishment of the University

1 (1) The United Methodist Church in Africa has proposed to establish its own university to be known as Africa University.

(2) The United Methodist Church in Africa sees its efforts as a contribution to the Continent's educational work.

(3) Although such efforts have worldwide support, especially from the U.S.A. and Europe, the initiative of the project is by the United Methodist Church in Africa as it understands the needs and challenges of Africa today.

(4) The University shall be autonomous and shall award its own degrees whose quality shall be subject to annual moderation by external examiners to be appointed by the University.

Students admission policy

2. (1) Students shall be selected and admitted on merit without regard to religious or cultural identity and regardless of ethnic origin, colour, race, political opinion or sex. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed as preventing the University from giving preference to qualified students from the countries constituting the Africa Central Conference of the United Methodist Church.

(2) Africa University will offer a three year full-time degree programme to applicants who meet the University's requirements for admission as stipulated in the admission policy in the handbook.

(3) Entry qualifications for the students shall be identical with, or recognized as genuinely equivalent to those of the National universities in Zimbabwe.

(4) Students from other African countries and abroad shall be allowed to enter Zimbabwe and shall comply with the immigration requirements and abide by the laws of Zimbabwe.

(5) The international nature of the University shall be recognized.

The staff

3. The academic and administrative staff shall be of a calibre that would qualify it to teach in any one of the national and international universities and shall be appointed without regard to race, religion or gender except where a specific qualification for admission and appointment is required.

Governance

4. (1) The University shall be subject to all the laws and regulations of Zimbabwe and shall be open to any scrutiny as the Government undertakes in the case of other educational institutions of comparable level.

(2) The governance and control of the University shall be vested in the University Council which is the Board of Directors.

Curriculum and general orientation

5. The curriculum to be followed by students shall be balanced and while in its general orientation shall accord with the Zimbabwean society, it shall strive to meet needs of African nations.

Other organizations

6. The University may seek relationships with other educational organizations including those related to the United Methodist Church.

ACADEMIC REGULATIONS