

MKU Digital Varsity Goes Global

MKU digital varsity is a collaborative partnership with Sakai Platform of USA

MKU Digital Varsity started as an abstract in July 2010, motivated by the Mount Kenya University's desire to expand access to higher education and to provide an alternative way of obtaining quality academic qualifications to those who could not attend the campus-based mode of learning.

The university has invested in reliable ICT infrastructure, integrated students management and digital learning management systems to actualise digital learning. Like the proverbial long journey that starts with only one step, MKU Digital Varsity started as a small distance learning centre housed at the Main Campus in Thika, offering Bachelor of Business Management and Bachelor of Psychology.

With just a population of around 50 students, the centre morphed into MKU's Virtual Campus in July 2011, and later to Virtual Varsity in 2012. Currently, over 10,000 students are enrolled in various course programmes, with the number set to grow to over 50,000 students.

MKU Digital Varsity is a collaborative partnership with Sakai digital platform of USA. This is the platform of choice by over 350-plus world's top-ranked universities, including Stanford and Oxford universities. The platform serves upwards of 1.25 million students in the US and 4 million students globally. This number includes more than 10,000 Mount Kenya university students.

Within a single platform, the MKU Digital Varsity supports virtually any type of instructional approach, including elements of the educational experience that are unique to specific programmes.



MKU Founder Dr. Simon Nyutu Gicharu exchanging MoU with his China University Counterpart Dr Fengchi Luan.

Our exceptional team of technical support staff help students to navigate the platform. Students connect with the Student Support Team by phone, email, and online chat.

Virtual access

MKU Digital Varsity offers students the opportunity to study at Mount Kenya University wherever they are in the world. They enjoy access to innovative learning

resources, leading-edge curriculum and the experience of friendly and dedicated staff. The students are offered personalised support all along the way from enrolment to graduation.

Students choose from a growing programme offered at Digital Varsity, including Master of Business Administration, Master of Public Health, Bachelors in Criminology and Security Management, among others.

The digital learning format include an introductory orientation week for students to meet fellow students and prepare themselves for 12 weeks of lecturer-led independent study and discussion. Students are able to study “anytime, anywhere”, and contribute to ongoing lively discussions and debates with fellow students and their lecturer, each week. Active participation is expected and encouraged.

In the final week, students are scheduled to sit for end of trimester examinations at the nearest Digital Varsity examination centre. MKU Digital Varsity has a proud history of serving the education needs of the military, police service and other security agencies. Currently, the varsity offers diploma, undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in security studies.

By providing broad access to quality higher education through distance learning, MKU Digital Varsity has become the choice of more than 2,250 men and women serving in various security agencies. Amidst the fast-changing and challenging role of Members of Parliament, 12 members of National Assembly and a member of Senate are currently pursuing programmes through the Digital Varsity.

The Digital Varsity remains committed to making a positive and enduring impact in communities. This commitment is best expressed by the motto, “Scaling the Heights of Education”. When students succeed, countries prosper and societies benefit.

The Varsity offers a unique learning experience that combines web based supported learning, and strong student, technical and academic support through the use of interactive and feedback learning tools embedded in the Digital Learning Management system.

The online lecturers and university professors provide the required academic support to students. Learning combines various digital instructions with e-tutorials through the learning system. The university has an elaborate students’ mentorship programme to ensure their

academic life is catered for from the time of enrolment to graduation.

Today, MKU serves students from more than 21 countries including US, United Kingdom, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Cameroon, Seychelles, Angola, UAE and Oman.

The Digital Varsity has established networks with alumni who have acquired their qualifications through the online system. Furthermore, it is well equipped and has the necessary capacity to cater for the academic needs of both local, regional and international students at the global scene, thanks to information Communication Technology, powerful Enterprise Resource Planning System (ERP), Students Management information System (SMIS) integrated with a scalable learning management system (DLMS) and a capable human resource that ensures both the administrative and academic needs of students are promptly addressed.

The customer relations system is embedded in the digital varsity call centre, which is managed by able customer care staff. This has upgraded the level of customer and online students support.

Mount Kenya University has positioned itself as a centre of excellence and the preferred centre of choice in promoting educational opportunity by providing



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quality higher education, training and professional development to meet the learning needs of the society.

Digital Learning is borne out of recognition that learning is moving out of the classroom and into the learner’s environment, hence virtual technology is central to this inevitable and indispensable transformation. It is embedded on the philosophy of education anywhere, anytime, at your own schedule and place.

The Digital Varsity therefore seeks to provide learning opportunities to students who are unable to take up full-time on campus programmes.

The Digital school provides a wide range of quality programmes at certificate, Diploma, Undergraduate and Post-graduate levels. The convenience that the university offers learners is set for enhancement.

The university plans to have Diaspora students take their exams online. This will be a huge improvement over the current arrangement, whereby Diaspora students sit for exams in Kenyan embassies abroad. There are also plans to make the call centre available 24 hours a day.

For now though, Kenyans who live outside the country but desire to learn at MKU are assured of gaining access to education. They learn and do continuous assessment tests (CATs) online, but sit their exams at Kenyan embassies and high commissions, wherever they are.

For their graduation, they have to travel back to the country. Everything else, including registration, is done from where they live.

The university’s digital learning management system has given virtual students and online lecturers and professors a new interactive and support framework. It enables the students to access their lecturers and resources, including CATs and assignments, and e-learning material and library online. The system allows students to evaluate their lecturers on trimester basis as part of enhancing quality in learning.