

## **The Faculty of Science of the University of Kelaniya: 1967 – 2008**

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The Faculty of Science is one of the five Faculties of Vidyalankara University of Ceylon established at its inception in 1959. It consisted of two academic departments, namely the Departments of Mathematics and Geography. However, in 1961/62 the Faculty of Science was abolished and the two departments were attached to the Faculty of Arts. During the period 1959 – 1962, there was no Dean at the Faculty of Science. Then in 1967, it was started again as a new Faculty with six academic departments. Formal approval for the Faculty was given by the Minister of Education in 1968. Professor Milo Wolff, a Physicist, arrived in early 1966 through the auspices of the Asia Foundation and proceeded with the planning for the setting up of a Faculty of Science at the University of Kelaniya. This Faculty was intended to be different in outlook and orientation from the conventional Faculties of Science then in existence. The rationale behind this intention was that Sri Lanka in its industrialization effort needed Science graduates with an expertise and training different from the traditional variety.

With the establishment of the Faculty of Science with six academic departments, namely the Departments of Botany, Chemistry, Industrial Management, Mathematics, Physics and Zoology, the University proceeded to fill the Chairs in Chemistry, Physics and Zoology. These in fact were the first academic staff appointments to the Faculty of Science. The new appointee to the chair in Physics, Professor C. Dahanayake became the first Dean of the fledgling Faculty. At present the Faculty consists of 8 Departments with the addition of Departments of Microbiology, and Statistics and Computer Science in 1986 and 1999 respectively. The first batch of students numbering 57 was admitted in October 1967 and with the recruitment of members of the academic staff, the infant Faculty started its initial development programme and its academic activities. The present annual intake of students to the Faculty is 510. The present academic cadre attached to the Faculty is 113 and it consists of 6 Senior Professors, 8 Professors, 9 Associate Professors,