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## UKZN ESTABLISHES DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR: TEACHING AND LEARNING PORTFOLIO

In 2007 the Council on Higher Education released research on the 2000 cohort study showing a “disturbing picture. By the end of 2004 (that is, five years after entering), only 30% of the total first time entering student intake into the sector had graduated. 56% of the intake had left their original institution without graduating and 14% were still in the system.” (Nan, Yeld & Scott, 2007, p4)

At about this same time, in a bold and innovative move, the university Senate and Council approved and advertised a senior executive position of Deputy Vice-Chancellor dedicated to teaching and learning - DVC (T&L). Prof. Renuka Vithal, former Dean of the Faculty of Education, was appointed and took up the position in May 2008.

The DVC (T&L) portfolio is a university-wide portfolio with the specific aim of advancing the University's vision, mission and strategic plan with regard to teaching and learning. It is a cross-cutting portfolio within the executive management of the university, parallel to the DVC (Research) portfolio, working closely with the Colleges, Faculties and Schools and support structures variously involved with teaching and learning. In keeping with the university's declared positioning as a research-led institution, a key feature of this portfolio is to infuse a research informed approach to policy, programmes and intervention strategies related to teaching and learning.

In 2008, the Department of Education released the Report of the Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions in which it notes that the “success of the transformation agenda in higher education will, in the end stand or fall on the altar of epistemological transformation, as this speaks to the core function of higher education in relation to teaching and learning”, and makes a recommendation for institutions to assess the

appropriateness and relevance of their curricula “in terms of the social, ethical, political and technical skills and competencies embedded in them, in the context of post apartheid South Africa and its location in Africa and the world” , and in developing courses which introduce students to the challenges of South Africa, Africa and the world in the 21st Century. The issue of language policies and multilingualism are also flagged among these recommendations.

These national imperatives inform the vision and mission of this new portfolio as it responds to the strengths and challenges of the new merged University of KwaZulu-Natal

### PRIORITIES FOR THE PORTFOLIO

The primary responsibility assigned to the portfolio of DVC (T&L) is to provide leadership in all areas of teaching and learning. It is, however, possible to identify within this broad mandate some central themes and priorities

The first priority is to lead curriculum transformation. This embodies, firstly, to support a deliberate effort to integrate the university's vision and mission of an African Scholarship, however diversely interpreted, within the broad curriculum reforms needed to move the university into more competitive cutting edge 21st century relevant curricula, but which remains responsive to the development challenges of the country. In addition, this presents an opportunity to meet the requirements of the new Higher Education Qualification Framework which came into effect in 2009, the National Qualifications Framework and related regulatory requirements in both the review of existing programmes, and the design and development of new qualifications. Following from the challenges of having developed “Common Curricula” during the merger, the university is well positioned to engage a next level of curriculum transformations and reforms, and to



offer selected innovative and niche programmes of national and international quality to engage an internationalisation and globalisation challenge.

The second priority is to continue to promote access but to expand this focus, paying special attention to issues of throughput and success in subsequent years. In subsuming the previous portfolio of Executive Director: Access, this priority involves taking a stronger research informed approach to understanding and acting on failure and dropout rates across programmes that have become a national higher education concern; and continuing to develop institutional strategies and mechanisms for monitoring performance, and sharing best practice to positively impact beyond the access and foundation programmes in mainstream programme teaching and learning.

A third priority encompasses ongoing cycles of developing, monitoring, implementing and reviewing university policies and procedures at all levels and with respect to both staff and students, to improve teaching and learning. Specifically, a focus on the implementation of the Language Policy, in relation to teaching and learning, needs special attention. While a range of policies have been developed following the merger and the CHE institutional audit, dissemination and implementation challenges need to be taken up to ensure consistency and coherence across the institution.

The opportunity to construct a new portfolio of DVC (T&L) provides a means for the university to actively address these priorities and themes. These were taken into consideration in developing a structure for the portfolio in both responding to and anticipating the challenges ahead.

A review of similar portfolios at other universities shows that integration of specific teaching and learning functions and responsibilities into executive structures is a relatively recent development within higher education. Within South Africa, some universities have renamed or augmented their DVC (Academic) or Executive Director portfolios to include teaching and learning. There is an increasing international trend to designate a specific portfolio

in the executive with responsibility for teaching and learning. However, the content of these vary widely across higher education systems nationally and internationally.

### STRUCTURE OF THE PORTFOLIO

One of the first tasks that had to be undertaken was to set up the physical infrastructure of the university executive office which is in the Francis Stock building on the Howard College Campus. This took the better part of 2008. In February 2009, the office became functional when the Director for Projects in Teaching and Learning, Dr Rubby Dhunpath, the new personal assistant, Ms Corlia Ogle and the administrator, Ms Nondumiso Cele took up their positions and the work of the portfolio began in earnest. An administrator was also appointed on contract to assist with the range of projects inherited with the portfolio. A contract researcher post was also advertised in 2009. In this way the University Teaching and Learning Office (UTLO) is being created and being operationalised.

When the portfolio was created, the Quality Promotions and Assurance was moved from the Office of the Vice-Chancellor and assigned to it, as was the Open Learning Initiative which was moved from the University Research Office.

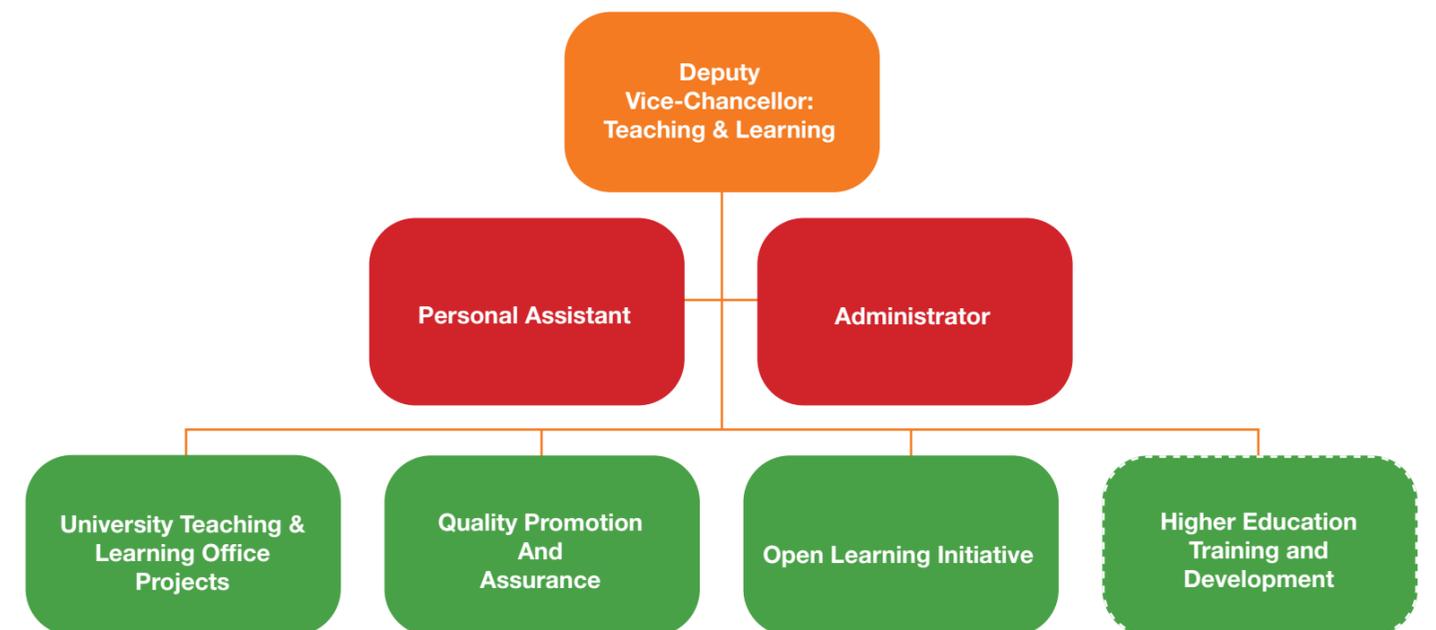
Following a long consultation process with the Faculty of Education and the College of Humanities, it was agreed that four academic posts and an administrative post from the Centre for Higher Education Studies (CHES) in the School of Adult and Higher Education, which was in the process of restructuring, would be transferred to the DVC (T&L) portfolio to enable the formation of a Higher Education Development and Training unit link to the University Teaching and Learning Office.

As a part of the process of developing the most appropriate structure for teaching and learning at UKZN, the DVC (T&L) also undertook a visit to similar centres in other universities in the country. As the structure of the DVC (T&L) portfolio evolves so too does the range of responsibilities and functions it is assigned to undertake, and as this report attests.



**Professor Renuka Vithal**  
*Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning)*

### Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Teaching & Learning) Portfolio Structure





## THE UNIVERSITY TEACHING AND LEARNING OFFICE (UTLO)

The University Teaching and Learning Office (UTLO), with its relatively small and dedicated team of staff, commits itself to the motto:

### **“Every Student Matters”**

This motto signals that once students are accepted into our University, every aspect of each student's academic life is our individual and collective responsibility, and recognizes that all staff in the university contributes to each student's unique experience of university education.

### **Staff Profile: UTLO**

#### **Dr Rubby Dhunpath**

**(Director UTLO: Projects)**

UDE (UDW); BA (UNISA); BEd Hons (UDW); CEMT (Cambridge); MEd; DEd (UDW)

#### **Professor Renuka Vithal**

**(DVC: Teaching and Learning)**

BA (Hons); UHDE (UDW); Bed (Natal); MPhil (Cantab); dr.scient.

#### **Ms C Ogle**

**(Personal Assistant to the DVC : Teaching & Learning) : B A (UDW)**

#### **Ms N Cele**

**(Administrative Officer) : B Tech Comm. Admin (MLST), PGDHRM (UKZN)**

#### **Mrs S Ntombela**

**(Administrator : SANTED):** Dipl Payroll Admin; Dipl Office Admin; Higher Cert Labour Relations (Damelin)

## PROVIDING TEACHING AND LEARNING LEADERSHIP

To enable work to take place in a co-operative mode across the different units, a UTLO Directors Forum was created. This comprises the DVC (T&L); Projects Director; and the Directors of Quality Promotions and Assurance; Open Learning and of the Centre for Higher Education Studies, which

effectively assist in the management of the portfolio as a whole and its individual units. This forum meets regularly to enable units to support each other, and facilitate coherence and co-ordination of their various activities.

The DVC (T&L) portfolio provides leadership in teaching and learning through a number of university committees and related functions.

Senate subcommittees chaired by the DVC (T&L) provide a means for Colleges and Faculties to interface with the T&L Office directly. These include the University Teaching and Learning Committee; the Access Advisory Committee and the Academic Exclusion Appeals Committee.

Other committees through which the DVC (T&L) exercises leadership as Chair are the Open Learning Board; the Distinguished Teachers Award Selection Committee and Co-Chair of the Learning, Training and Development Sub-Committee of the Staffing Committee.

The DVC (T&L) is also a member of each of the four College Quality Committees; and serves on each of the four College Promotions Committees, on Senate; the Student Services Council; University Research Committee; Senior Awards Committee; and represents the Executive Management Committee on the UKZN Innovation Advisory Board.

In addition, the DVC (T&L) provides leadership in a number of activities that arise from duties and responsibilities assigned from committees. The DVC (T&L) was a member of the Senate Task Team that produced a report on Analysis of University Research Productivity and a member of the Senate Task Team that constructed a response to the GAFC and MC reports. The DVC (T&L) also represents the university and forges links with national higher education structures such as the Higher Education Quality Committee in the CHE and Dept of Higher Education and Training enrollment planning initiatives.



# UNIVERSITY TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE (UTLC)

The University Teaching and Learning Office is effectively the operational arm of the University Teaching and Learning Committee. The University's vision and mission of becoming the Premier University of African Scholarship which nurtures academically excellent individuals, is innovative in research and critically engaged with society, is encapsulated in its current and continued investment in the quality of teaching and learning, signalled explicitly in the UKZN Strategic Plan 2007-2016. Goal Four: Excellence in Teaching and Learning. This goal commits the university to "promot(ing) excellence in teaching and learning through creative and innovative curriculum design and development, pedagogical strategies, and assessment practices in accordance with the highest quality management principles." (p10).

In pursuit of this goal, the University endeavours to:

- 1) Provide excellent teaching and learning programmes in a comprehensive range of undergraduate programmes and in select postgraduate areas;
- 2) Redesign curricula in creative and innovative ways that foreground African scholarship;
- 3) Review and revise our teaching modes and assessment practices in accordance with the highest quality management principles;
- 4) Encourage and reward excellence, innovation and creativity in teaching.

In giving substance to the university's vision and mission, the Terms of Reference accorded to UTLC, as a committee of Senate, entrusts it with the responsibility for:

- Policy development needed to underpin the teaching function of the University: including policies on teaching and learning, on assessment,

on curriculum, on exclusions, on staff development, on the Distinguished Teacher Awards, etc.

- Monitoring of policy implementation to ensure that University policies, which focus on teaching and learning, are carried out consistently across all Colleges, and that Faculty procedures are in alignment with these policies.
- Advocacy of teaching and learning in University constituencies, including promoting the adequate resourcing of its teaching and learning function.
- University-wide issues and projects relating to teaching and learning, to address any issues and projects relating to teaching and learning referred to it by the University community.

A core function of UTLO is to provide leadership and support to UTLC in operationalising the above terms of reference. In 2008/2009, UTLO assisted UTLC in undertaking key policy development initiatives; in reporting on Faculty monitoring and support mechanisms; supported faculties in developing academic monitoring and support systems for "at risk" students; provided analyses and reports on students' exclusions and dropouts; promoted institutional research; managed a range of teaching and learning development projects; and hosted a range of conferences, symposia and seminars on teaching and learning.

## POLICY DEVELOPMENT, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

### Tracking Exclusions and Dropouts

To give effect to the Senate directive for more comprehensive data set on exclusions, UTLC, in collaboration with DMI and Faculties, conducted an intensive institutional analysis of the exclusions and dropout data. In order to contextualize the

issue of exclusions, attention was paid to the allied aspect of student dropout, and both these were viewed against registration and graduation in undergraduate degrees in the university. For the period 2006-2008 the university data reveals a small but increasing rate of student exclusions and dropouts, accompanied by decreasing graduation rates.

Although the exclusion and dropout rates vary from Faculty to Faculty, overall, the number of students who were "excluded and not readmitted", together with dropouts, increased in 2008 to 2479 (11%), while the number that graduated from 3- and 4-year undergraduate degrees had decreased to 4306 (19%) during this period.

The investigation revealed that should these trends persist, it will become a matter of concern for the university, since students registered in undergraduate degrees account for more than half of all students registered in the university (22 406 in 2008). This has significant resource implications for the university and warrants further investigation and tracking over a longer period to determine institutional patterns and derive likely explanations with a view to informing possible action.

An analysis of Faculty responses to the verified data provided by DMI revealed that percentages of dropout and exclusions over the past three years within Faculties, were relatively constant, and the rate of exclusion by racial categories fairly consistent across Faculties with overall highest amongst Black students (3%) and lowest amongst White students (1%). With respect to gender, more males than females were excluded across all faculties.

Dropout rates proved to be a significantly greater problem, at 8% per year, than exclusions, with variations across Faculties with regard to dropouts by year of study and racial categories and to a lesser extent, gender. The Faculty of Humanities Development and Social Studies

had the highest dropout rate at 10% followed by Managements Studies and Law (9%), Engineering, Science and Agriculture (7%) while the School of Medicine has the lowest dropout rate of 1%. Dropouts are highest among students in their first year of study and, like exclusions, generally higher for males than females. In terms of race, dropouts were highest for African students in the College of Law and Management Studies and highest for White students in the College of Humanities.

The investigation revealed that a more fine-grained analysis of "drop outs", especially through a cohort analysis, could inform more strategic decisions around the challenges of retention within the institution for students in later years rather than focusing predominantly on entry, access or "at risk" students.

#### Developing Academic Monitoring and Support Systems for "At Risk" Students

The Academic Monitoring and Exclusions Policy and Procedures commits the university to identifying under-performing students timeously and to provide the necessary academic support to assist students to graduate in the minimum time possible, or redirect them and obligate students to attend and participate in the range of support that is made available.

In pursuit of the University's drive to improve student throughput and graduation rates, the Academic Monitoring and Exclusions Policy was approved by Senate and Council at the end of 2009. Following concerns tabled by the Students Representative Council regarding the "support" component of the policy and the extent of its actual implementation within faculties, UTLC was requested to investigate and provide a report to Senate. A preliminary report was prepared by a sub-committee of UTLC on "the availability and extent of academic monitoring and support systems in the various Faculties, together with proposed minimum criteria, and tabled at Senate. Through a series of consultative processes, a Template based on the minimum criteria was developed and approved by UTLC and Senate for Reporting and Evaluating Academic Monitoring and Support Systems for "At Risk" Students, and it

was agreed that such reports would be produced annually. This Monitoring and Support Template provides the basis for Faculties to systematize their monitoring and support initiatives and develop an appropriate report.



### The Academic Monitoring and Support Template

#### Faculty Self-Evaluation

Assess the extent to which the faculty is meeting the agreed minimum criteria based on a 5 point rating scale:

#### KEY:

1. Does not meet minimum requirements or not in place
2. Partially satisfies minimum requirements
3. Meets minimum requirements
4. Exceeds minimum requirements
5. Far exceeds minimum requirements and shows innovation

	Minimum Criteria	1	2	3	4	5
1	Co-coordinator (Senior academic) assigned responsibility for interventions and monitoring					
2	Provision of clearly identified administrative support					
3	Availability of a variety of interventions at Faculty and School level					
4	Input of key stakeholders solicited in design, delivery and evaluation					
5	Attendance and participation in support programmes compulsory for identified "at risk" students					
6	Academic counselling available to all students with specific provision for "at risk" students					
7	Personal and career counselling included in intervention and referrals are followed up					
8	Orientation, ongoing progress reports, and information on support and interventions given to students regularly					
9	System in place for identified "at risk" students to monitor their own participation					
10	System in place for tracking of students performance, and referrals to and from faculty, school and disciplines					
11	Updated records and reports kept at school and faculty level					
12	Regular evaluations and reviews conducted by staff and students					
13	Evaluations and reviews done are discussed and acted on at school and faculty level					
14	Allocation of adequate resources, space, staff and funding					
15	Statistical reporting and analysis done and reported to School/Faculty structures					
16	Support programmes and interventions sustainable over a longer term					
17	Research carried out on monitoring and interventions					

**The DOHET Teaching Development** Grant (R3m) allocated to the DVC (T&L) portfolio, is aimed at addressing areas that have been identified to improve the university teaching outputs. This funding was critical to enhancing the university's systems and processes for monitoring and supporting undergraduate students, to better understand why the university is not meeting its performance targets, and to innovate, pilot and evaluate some possible interventions that might have potential for later institutionalisation.

The funding has been allocated to each of the Faculties of Humanities Development and Social Sciences, Engineering, Law, Medical School, Management Studies, Science and Agriculture, Health Sciences and Education. A number of faculties utilised this funding for the appointment of Senior Faculty Co-ordinators to co-ordinate programmes and activities related to Academic Monitoring and Support, and to utilise the funding to prioritise achieving the minimum criteria identified in the Academic Monitoring and Support Report

approved by Senate in 2009. In addition, funding was made available to the Office of the Executive Dean of Students for their mentoring programme, to Quality Promotions and Assurance for moving toward an on-line student module evaluation system, and to UTLO to appoint a researcher to assist in co-ordination and support to faculties with their academic monitoring and support systems and activities.



### Supporting Faculties to Address Student Exclusions: The Case of the Faculty of Engineering

Since January 2009, when the outcomes of the Academic Exclusions Appeals Committee (AEACOM) decisions were released, Engineering students at UKZN (and some of their parents) engaged the DVC (Teaching and Learning) regarding the large number of exclusions relative to other faculties. Students submitted a Memorandum of Demands which included that the engineering student exclusion cases be reviewed. The matter of engineering student exclusions was also raised in the Senate of 11 March 2009. It was agreed that the DVC (T&L) would receive submissions from students while initiating a parallel process of engaging with the leadership of the Engineering Faculty, in an attempt to obtain a fuller understanding of the problem of exclusions from both staff and student perspectives and to identify possible solutions.

The meeting with engineering faculty addressed a range of issues, including relevant data on student exclusions. Members were invited to discuss frankly, their perspectives on student exclusions and to indicate from their perspective the reasons for student exclusions, and how the Faculty has been responding to the problem by way of support mechanisms and interventions.

Among the concerns raised by the Faculty, was the accuracy of the exclusion data generated by Data Management and Information (DMI); the validity of the application of progression, exclusion and readmission rules in relation to other Faculties; the importance of pre-and co-requisites in structuring the Engineering curriculum; student readiness for degree studies; student participation in support programmes and staff shortages

After an extended discussion on the seriousness of exclusions the faculty acknowledged that problems did exist. Several members indicated that there was sufficient goodwill and resolve in the Faculty to address the problems through a variety of short/ medium and long term interventions, including the Academic Support and Advancement Programme (ASAP) and other strategies to improve student

throughput.

Following the meeting with the Faculty, the DVC (T&L) hosted a meeting with the Student Representative Council (SRC), which included the student leadership of the Engineering Faculty. Students challenged the application of progression, exclusion and readmission rules, arguing that exclusion codes were being interpreted and applied differently by Faculties and there was a need to gain consensus on how the various codes are used.

Students argued that the practice of exclusions had become such a "normal occurrence" in its application in the Faculty that some students no longer took it seriously. Further, exclusion was exacerbated by pre- and co-requisites built into progression rules and the rigid way in which these were applied.

Students proposed a range of short/medium and long term solutions including the moderation and review of the tests, continuous assessments and examinations related to each module, the consistent application of readmission criteria; the need to establish professional open working relationships between the SRC and the School and Faculty leadership with a view to identifying problems earlier and finding joint solutions; the need to review the engineering curriculum to ensure more flexibility and better progression.

A joint meeting of the Faculty of Engineering Leadership, comprising the Heads of School, Faculty Office and the new Deanship, together with members of the SRC was convened by the DVC (T&L). A number of recommendations emerged from the meeting, including a review of the curriculum, merging of the 8 credit modules, minimising pre- and co-requisites; a review of the existing Faculty's support mechanisms, a review of readmission criteria for excluded students; student participation in Faculty structures and communication channels.

These agreed measures and actions have been taken up by the Faculty of Engineering and are being implemented through its various structures.

### ARRESTING PLAGIARISM

In response to the university's requirement for a comprehensive policy and a clear set of related procedures on plagiarism, applicable to both staff and students, the plagiarism policy was developed by UTLC. The policy deals with all aspects of plagiarism fairly, consistently, systematically and within the prescripts of the law.

Building on the efforts of other academics since 2007 and drawing from earlier documents which served at the Executive – Deans forum, the Chair of the UTLC undertook to assist the task team set up by UTLC to complete the process. The urgency for this document was the escalating instances of plagiarism and the high profile cases the university has had to manage, including legal challenges. The document establishes the values and principles that underpin the policy, identifies the objectives and scope of the policy. It then provides a detailed articulation of the policy, and concludes with procedures and guidelines for implementation. The policy document which underwent extensive consultation across the University was approved by Senate and Council by the end of 2009.

### MAPPING THE ROAD AHEAD FOR THE UNIVERSITY TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE

To appraise the extent to which UTLC is successfully exercising its mandate as a policy forum and to articulate its direction, imperatives and priorities for the next 1-2 years, UTLO hosted a two day workshop of UTLC members on 14 and 15 May 2009.

Among others, the workshop provided an opportunity to:

- Revisit the UKZN Strategic Plan Goal 4 on Excellence in Teaching and Learning to prioritise strategies and actions as initiated by the Executive Leadership Forum in Jan 2008
- Consider the Institutional Audit Self Evaluation Report and specifically the implementation of selected aspects of the Improvement Plans for teaching and learning while awaiting the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) report
- Review the University Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy, which was finally

approved by Senate and Council in 2008, to prioritise selected aspects for implementation across the university

- Deliberate and agree on appropriate Indicators and Benchmarks for monitoring and supporting teaching and learning; and driving institutional research into aspects of university teaching and learning

Given the wide scope and depth of change needed to bring to the teaching and learning endeavour in the university, a key objective of the workshop was identifying and agreeing on a set of priorities for UTLC, with clear goals, strategies and actions that can be delivered within a specified time frame of approximately 18 months, by taking account of and building on what has been done and reaching consensus on what more needs to be done across the university.

Following the release of a discussion document, UTLC engaged in intensive debate and discussion, taking into account various context imperatives including the Higher Education Qualification Framework; Report Of The Ministerial Committee





On Transformation And Social Cohesion And The Elimination Of Discrimination In Public Higher Education Institutions; The Report Of The Governance And Academic Freedom Committee Of Council.

An enduring theme that emerged from the deliberations was the need for deep and sustainable transformation to respond to the particular conditions prevalent in the country and in higher education institutions.

### EMERGING CHALLENGES, STRATEGIC RESPONSES FOR UTLC

Taking into account the current higher education policy environment at various levels; having regard for UKZN's strategic imperatives, especially Goal Four of the Strategic Plan; and distilling the key issues emerging out of the UTLC workshop, the deliberations of UTLC in its July and August 2009 meetings, six key priority areas were identified requiring action by UTLC within the foreseeable future:

- curriculum transformation;
- assessment, evaluation and rewards;
- performance indicators and benchmarks for teaching and learning;
- teaching and learning environments;
- staff development;
- research into aspects of teaching and learning.

The recommendations that emerged with respect to each of the above priority areas were deliberated on further by UTLC, together with those that emerged from Senate's engagement with the Reports on Governance and Academic Freedom, and the Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions. A set of recommendations guiding UTLC's work for 2010/11 were approved by Senate in November 2009.

Some of the key recommendations include:

#### Recommendation 1

UTLC to initiate a broad review of the obstacles hindering the implementation of the University's approved language policy with special reference to those aspects relating to teaching, learning and assessment and identify a course of action for implementation (minutes of UTLC, 1 July 2009, paragraph, 5.5.1).

#### Recommendation 2

UTLC to initiate and oversee the development of a policy and set of procedures for mandatory staff education and training in assessment, as a priority and precursor to other development initiatives around teaching and learning for all newly appointed academic staff as part of their probation requirement; and for academic staff identified through the findings and recommendations of any evaluation or review process (minutes of UTLC, 1 July 09, item 4.4).

#### Recommendation 3

For improved planning, and coherent and consistent implementation of the student module evaluation policy, each school is to develop a 3-year schedule (2010-12) listing all modules, (with the discipline and qualification to which it belongs, the academic responsible for the module, etc.) to be provided to QPA. QPA to provide an annual report to College Quality Committees on modules evaluated per school.

#### Recommendation 4

Colleges and Faculties to consider developing appropriate criteria (and/or using the criteria in the promotions or distinguished teachers award policy and procedures) for recognizing excellence in teaching at Faculty and/or School level, and to identify a range of rewards (such as Dean's commendation letters; small teaching grants, etc.), that may be provided.

#### Recommendation 5

UTLO to establish a "Technology Forum" to enable ongoing dialogue between academic and technical experts on the expansion of technology for effective teaching and learning, and to provide specialist advice on technologies such as "Moodle" learning

management systems, including information on roll out, staff development and training needs, infrastructure needs, etc.

#### Recommendation 6

UKZN staff should have different opportunities and interventions to help familiarise and sensitise them to the learning needs of students from diverse backgrounds (minutes of UTLC, 1 July 2009, item 5.8.3).





# TEACHING AND LEARNING PROJECTS

The appointment of the Director: Teaching and Learning Projects in February 2009 was critical for managing and co-ordinating a range of projects both existing and emerging in UTLO with a range of partners...

became instrumental in supporting implementation of UKZN's Access Policy, and in allowing, what was then called the Access Office, to initiate a range of projects which were then inherited by the University Teaching and Learning Office in 2008.



Director UTLO: Projects – Dr Rubby Dhunpath

In addition, SANTED made available a grant of R3m for the Multilingual project managed by Prof. Nobuhle Hlongwa. This enabled the university to begin implementing its multilingual language policy and plan.

UTLO set up a steering committee of all project leaders, and met on a regular basis to assist and support the projects, and ensure they were on track in meeting the goals of the project and reporting obligations. In addition, a dedicated full time contract administrator was appointed from the allocated funding.

Funding was received from SANTED to undertake various project activities, viz.

- Institutional Access and Throughput Research
- Collaboration with Secondary Schools: Fast Forward Project
- Integration of Alternative Access Programmes: Faculty of Management Studies
- Enhancing Postgraduate Throughput: 'Mastering Masters' project
- Enhancing Undergraduate Throughput

## THE SOUTH AFRICAN NORWAY TERTIARY EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The South African Norway Tertiary Education Development (SANTED) project launched the University of KwaZulu-Natal Access and Retention Project (SUKAR 2) in 2005 (R6.6m), with the primary objective of addressing the many access and retention issues arising out of the merging of the Universities of Durban-Westville and Natal – to become the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Among others, primary goals were to develop access strategies, and integrate existing foundation courses on the different campuses. SUKAR

2009 has been an extremely rewarding year with most projects successfully concluding their activities and achieving their objectives and outcomes as scheduled. The highlight for UTLO, which administers the project, was its annual 2009 Conference, where several papers related to SUKAR project activities were presented. Project leaders received valuable critique and advice which will enabled them to take their research forward.

A further initiative coordinated by UTLO will be to provide development assistance for presenters to enable them to convert their conference presentations into peer-reviewed publications.

In the 2009 Annual Report to SANTED, one of the projects notes:

"The Access Programme coordinators and all the disciplinary tutors involved in the extended curriculum have invested an enormous amount of pioneering energy and personal commitment into this project. As seen in the accompanying documents, the results have been rewarding for the many students who have benefited from this 'pedagogy of care'. The semester-by-semester student evaluations show that the students recognise the difference that this has made to their academic careers and both formally and informally express their gratitude and appreciation. Very extensive experience and capacity has been built up during the course of this project and a warm, engaged community of trained practitioners has developed".

However, going forward, a challenge for university structures and faculty committees is to take up the challenges offered by this programme, that is:

"to improve teaching and learning in undergraduate courses at UKZN so that they provide better epistemological access to incoming students".

Having successfully completed some of the projects, the challenge now is for the project activities and outcomes to become institutionalized. The project is due to close at the end of 2010, culminating in a close-out conference at which project leaders will present their research findings and analyses of the project.

## DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING (DOHET) FUNDED FOUNDATION PROGRAMMES AND TRAINING PROVISION

In 2009, UTLO continued to manage various development grants related to Foundation programmes at UKZN, including the Foundational Programme Funding Grant and the Foundational Training Fund.

The DOHET Foundation programmes are intended to assist the university in providing teaching and learning activities to students from disadvantaged educational backgrounds to enable them to acquire the academic foundations necessary for succeeding in higher education.

UKZN offers two types of access programmes funded by DOHET. The first is broadly referred to as Foundation Programmes which comprise modules, courses or other curricular elements to equip under prepared students with academic foundations that will enable them to successfully access and complete mainstream qualifications. The second is the Extended Programme which varies from Faculty to Faculty but typically involves spreading the first year mainstream programme modules over two years.

UKZN offers several programmes, namely the Bachelor of Science Access Programme both Foundation and Extended, and the Management Studies Access programme and Humanities Access Programme which are both extended curricula. Student Performance in Access Programmes vary from one programme to another, but on the whole have been successful in giving access to students who ordinarily would have been excluded from Higher Education.

With regard to the 1-year Foundation Programmes, 2177 students were registered in 2004. Of these, 1295 have gained admission into mainstream with 213, graduations and 593 students are still registered. With regard to the 4-year Extended Programme, 3100 Access students were admitted in 2004. While it is too early to provide conclusive

graduation data, of those enrolled in 2004, more than 1700 have either graduated or are still registered. It therefore seems that the augmented programme is filling in the gaps of a disadvantaged education and bringing the students in the augmented programme up to speed with the rest of the mainstream class

In 2008/2009, several programmes, staff and activities at UKZN have benefited from Department of Education's Foundational Provisioning Training funding. These include foundational programmes in each of the Faculties of Law, Humanities, Development and Social Sciences. In addition, the University Teaching and Learning Office (UTLO) hosted a university wide two-day conference to review the success, scope and direction of Foundation programmes at UKZN, with a view to developing new innovations. The workshop reflected critically, with input from national experts, on the practice of each Access Programme and the underpinning educational theories, methodologies and practices in order to determine the extent to which they adequately address issues of access, throughput and improve quality. An important aspect of the workshop was the sharing of innovative and exemplary practices in foundational provision exploring how these may be escalated to other areas of need.

Another important project was the Development of Multilingual Foundational Modules and facilitating multilingual classrooms. This intervention develops awareness around how best to introduce multilingualism within Foundation programmes. An important component of the project revolved around research to examine how staff and students understand and regard the idea of multilingualism, in respect of particular interventions such as code-switching, materials in isiZulu, etc. It addresses concerns about exclusion and perceptions that empowerment is linked only to English language proficiency.

Some of the other programmes funded by the DOHET included the design of a high quality

extended curriculum; encouraging the utilisation of assessment to develop learning skills; developing materials to support learning; and assuring and promoting quality through and in foundation provision.

## ANNUAL TEACHING & LEARNING CONFERENCES

The annual teaching and learning conference is a gathering of academics, researchers and policymakers to showcase innovations and debate challenges in teaching and learning in Higher Education. Submissions are invited from all disciplines in Higher Education institutions around the country, from both experienced and novice researchers, scholars and practitioners.

The 3rd Annual Teaching and Learning Conference, held from 21-23 September 2009 at the Edgewood Campus was one of the highlights of the University Teaching and Learning Office. The theme of the conference was "Multilingualism, Multiliteracies and Innovative Teaching Technologies in Higher Education".

The conference which was expanded to 3 days, provided a platform for academics involved in a variety of projects, including SANTED – SUKAR and the inter-institutional SANTED Multilingualism project, as well as a variety of ICT initiatives accommodating papers from institutions in the greater Durban area.

The conference committee introduced a number of innovations to improve the quality and grow the level of scholarship of the programme while having expanded participation. These included a series of pre-conference and post-conference workshops provided by the Centre for Higher Education Studies (CHES), to assist novice authors/presenters to develop their papers and presentations.

A variety of presentation formats was introduced, including 43 one-hour paper presentations featuring novice and accomplished UKZN academics, alongside academics from other institutions around



Prof David Boud addressing the 3rd Annual T & L Conference



the country. The lengthening of the session to an hour was welcomed by all, as it allowed time for deeper engagement between speakers and delegates on critical issues.

Keynote speakers included Prof. Mamokgethi Setati of UNISA who argued vigorously for language to be used as a transparent resource in the mathematics classroom, to make mathematics accessible to multilingual learners to develop their proficiency in mathematics. Prof. David Boud, the second keynote speaker, presented a thought-provoking talk entitled: "Assessment, as if it really mattered". He argued that assessment communicates a powerful message to students about what we value, and we risk the distorting effects of not putting learning first when we design assessment activities.

Recipients of UKZN's 2008 Distinguished Teachers Award: Dr. Francesca Balladon, Professor Robin Joubert, Professor Thandinkosi Madiba and Professor Kriben Pillay, presented papers on innovative and successful teaching and learning that had won them the recognition of their peers. Equally popular were the 2-hour interactive workshops presented by Prof. David Boud, Prof. Cecilia Jacobs, Dr. Emmanuel Mgwashu, Prof. Kriben Pillay and Mr Eran Williams.

For the first time, papers were presented in isiZulu with slides translated into English. These sessions were well attended and there were calls for this innovation to become integral to future T&L conferences. Also, for the first time, all presenters were invited to submit their paper presentations for inclusion into the conference proceedings. 15 papers were received and developed into proceedings which were supplied to delegates on a Flash Drive. Several more paper and slide presentations were received during the conference and these will be posted on the UTLO website.

As part of its outreach initiatives, UTLO involved UKZN's Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) who expedited the supply of conference bags which were designed and manufactured by women afflicted by HIV. SIFE students also provided

assistance to the conference by serving as aides and ushers, a service appreciated by the delegates. The conference closing session included a presentation by UKZN ICT on the role of the Network in facilitation teaching and learning. This presentation provided a snapshot on UKZN's ICT capacity and offered glimpses of how emerging technologies could change teaching and learning in profound ways.

### CONVERSATIONS ABOUT TEACHING AND LEARNING

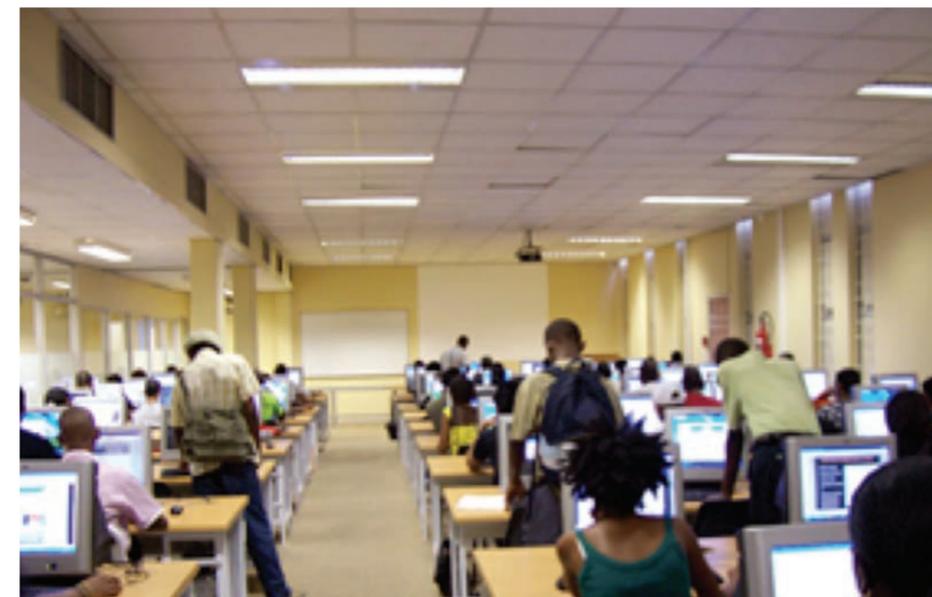
As part of its aim to promote a research driven, empirically informed approach to teaching and learning, UTLO hosted eight Seminars, Symposia and Technology Faura covering a wide variety of themes and issues, involving academics and researchers from within the university and other institutions. Some of the themes explored included:

**1. Seminar 1:**  
**Why Do University Students Drop Out? presented by Moeketsi Letseka (UNISA)**

**2. Seminar 2:**  
**Higher Education in South Africa: What have ICTs got to do with it? International trends and institutional responses. Laura Czerniewicz (UCT) with Manoj Maharaj (UKZN) as respondent**

The possibilities and pitfalls offered by information and communication technologies (ICTs) in advancing teaching and learning at Higher Education institutions was the focus of a Technology Forum organised by the University Teaching and Learning Office (UTLO) and the Open Learning Initiative.

Associate Professor Laura Czerniewicz, who addressed the seminar titled 'Higher Education in South Africa: What have ICTs got to do with it?', is the Director of the Centre for Educational Technology at the University of Cape Town. Professor Czerniewicz noted the lack of overarching ICT's in the education framework in South African Higher Education, unlike many other countries in the world.



Her presentation to the UKZN academic community covered international and institutional trends and challenges in the incorporation of new technologies in teaching and learning at universities. She offered three possible institutional responses to the possibilities of new technologies, focusing on administrative efficiencies, reconfiguring teaching and learning activities, and reconfiguring the entire university as a whole.

Responding to Professor Czerniewicz's presentation, the Director of Information Systems and Technology (IST) at UKZN, Professor Manoj Maharaj, said: "We want to embrace technology in teaching and learning to survive in our technology driven world. There's competition out there and the longer we (universities) stay where we are, the further we fall behind. Currently our students can find answers through search engines and not through teachers." He said most of the resistance to technology like podcasting, was due to fear, and sometime as a result of ignorance of the real benefits of technology.

**Seminar 3:**  
**Conversations about Language with the US Embassy featuring presentations by Eran Williams (US Embassy)**

**Seminar 4:**  
**Prof. Rosemary Chromaty (UKZN); Ms Penny Niven and Emmanuel Mgwashu (UKZN) as respondent**

**Seminar 5:**  
**The State of Transformation in South African Higher Education by Prof. Crain Soudien (UCT)**

Professor Crain Soudien, Chairperson of the Ministerial Committee and the Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the University of Cape Town (UCT), presented findings of the report on the Ministerial Committee report on Transformation and Social Cohesion in Higher Education Institutions at a Seminar hosted by UTLO.

According to Professor Soudien, most South African universities have initiatives in place to address transformation. However, the pace of change concerned the Committee.

"While there are good practices that have been developed at some of the institutions that might serve as models for change in the country, nobody must underestimate the difficulties which still exist. There is virtually no institution that is not in need of change or transformation," stated Professor Soudien.

Factors contributing to the slow pace of change at Higher Education institutions included:

- the inability of universities to attract and retain black and female academic staff;
- limited funds for the creation of new posts;
- resistance to transformation from middle management;
- poor accountability mechanisms to effectively implement policy; and the lack of gender sensitivity.

Another key area of concern was the lack of scholarly research into student residence life which could be crucial for new students who needed to adapt to the university environment.

The University Teaching and Learning Office (UTLO) stated its intention to set up research funding to investigate the area of transformation highlighted in the report. The various University constituencies are expected to draw up their plans for transformation by August.

**Seminar 6:**  
**The Creation of a Bilingual Degree: Processes and Challenges by Prof Esther Ramani & Dr Michael Joseph (Univ. Limpopo)**

**Seminar 7:**  
**Possibilities and Potential for Technology Driven Learning at UKZN facilitated by Kogie Moodley**  
The seminar series has proved to be a popular platform for debating current issues in higher education and attendance has been on the increase. In some instances, seminars were video-streamed live.

**Seminar 8:**  
**Establishing Institutional Research Networks**  
One of the initiatives pursued by UTLO in 2009 was the promotion of institutional research (IR) across the university. UTLO believes that creating a culture of institutional research is vital to address the many imperatives facing universities such as student exclusions, throughput and dropout rates, some



*Delegates at the 2009 Institutional Research Symposium*

of which are at unsustainable levels. IR is also an attempt to transcend the silo-effect of disciplinary research and develop macro-level insights into institutions. In 2009, UTLO initiated conversations with academics across the spectrum of disciplines in an attempt to explore current and future institutional research perspectives at UKZN.

In addition, Prof. Vithal and Rubby Dhunpath expanded their IR networks by attending IR conferences here and abroad, establishing prospects for future collaboration and research. The conferences attended include the HELTASA Conference on Risk and Resilience in Higher Education at the University of Johannesburg; the SAAIR HEMIS

Institute at UKZN; the Institutional Research Conference in Sheffield, UK.

#### **Teaching Venues Upgrade**

The first phase of the Teaching Venues Upgrade project was undertaken by the University Teaching and Learning Office in collaboration with various Divisions within the portfolio of the Executive Director: Physical Planning & Operations - Campus Management Services (CMS), Audio-Visual (AV), Information Communication Technology (ICT), Risk Management Services (RMS) - and the Timetabling Office (Registrar) and Procurement Office (Finance). Initiated following the VC School visits, the work of the past 18 months (July 2008 to Dec 2009) have resulted in a number of achievements and recommendations, including an accurate and updated data base is available of common teaching venues across the five campuses of the university.

The project yielded a much larger number of teaching venues (181), of which 170 (65%) were common teaching venues, were upgraded than was originally planned (110 or 42%) within the budget of R7.3m; the provision of data projectors and wireless connectivity as standard equipment in at least 75% of common teaching venues, expediting the implementation of Moodle.

In addition, staff training was provided in MS Project for project members, and a range of recommendations were generated relating to timetabling and teaching venue usage, planning, allocation and booking have been put forward for optimising space utilization. A number of lessons have been learned and further actions have emerged from the project, which are to be considered as the next phase of the project is conceived and planned. These include plans

to extend the data base of teaching venues by conducting a full audit of teaching venues across all campuses; assign responsibility for ongoing updating and maintenance of the teaching venues database (e.g. to the Timetabling Office) with mechanisms for reporting upgrades and facilities; create a more nuanced categorization of teaching venues e.g. by assigning priority or first choice use to increase the pool of available venues; address the optimisation of teaching venues, utilisation through reviewing timetabling, block period utilisation, venue booking and allocation arrangements and practices; ensure the integration and coordination of support services to avoid duplication, unnecessary or wasteful expenditure by setting up cross divisional and campus structures or processes; mount an information campaign for staff and students to publicise and encourage use of the new and upgraded facilities and advocate care to protect and look after teaching venues.

The second phase of the teaching venues upgrade project is expected to be undertaken by the directorate: Physical Planning & Operations, in collaboration with other university structures.

#### **Disseminating the UKZN PACT**

The UKZN PACT which is an agreement; a compact and a covenant between sovereigns is the product of a collaborative initiative between students and the broader university community since the merged university was born in 2004. The new merged university brought together a multiplicity of histories, cultures and values - common and diverse, consensual and contested.

The PACT responds to the declared need for recognition of the rights and responsibilities of both staff and students to a common goal with respect to quality teaching and learning. The PACT represents a documented commitment of the UKZN community, binding all members to dedicate themselves to promoting the common goals of respect, dignity and commitment to quality education.

The proposal of a "pact" was mooted strongly by the students as a way of ensuring that the rights of students to quality teaching and learning are formally and actively promoted within the institution. The UTLC, through which the PACT was developed, broadened the mandate of these rights to include a reciprocal co-responsibility of all members of the university community to commit themselves to ensuring a quality teaching and learning working ethos, within the framework of the university rules and regulations.

Several versions of the document were circulated within the University structures, and a concise version was finally endorsed by all sectors of the university community. The intention is that this precise enunciation of the UKZN PACT will be engaged and displayed widely within the university community: publicised student diaries, faculty handbooks; as posters and banners to be displayed within lecture halls, University academic and public spaces, and within the websites and communication portals of the University.



**UNIVERSITY OF  
KWAZULU-NATAL**

**THE UKZN PACT**

**We, the staff and students  
of the University of KwaZulu-Natal  
agree to treat each other with respect,  
to abide by the rules and regulations of the institution  
and to commit ourselves to excellence in research-led  
teaching and learning**

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**Isivumelwano seNyuvesi yaKwaZulu-Natali**

**Thina, singabasebenzi nabafundi  
baseNyuvesi yaKwaZulu-Natali  
sivumelana ngokuthi siphathane ngenhlonipho,  
silandele yonke imithetho nemigomo yesikhungo  
futhi sizibophezela ekufundeni nasekufundiseni  
okuholwa ucwaningo nokunobunyoningco**

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***The Premier University of African Scholarship***

*UKZN Pact*



# PROMOTING SCHOLARSHIP & EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

## UTLO COMPETITIVE RESEARCH GRANT

For the first time in 2009, UTLO launched its Competitive Teaching and Learning Research Grant (CRG). Designed on the core principles of the CRG offered by the University Research Office, the Teaching and Learning CRG was designed to offer a dedicated fund to promote and support research in the broad area of teaching and learning.

In the first call nineteen applications were received for 1- to 3-year projects. Proposals were subject to a peer-review process and after extensive deliberation by a 6 person Competitive Teaching and Learning Research Grant Committee, ten grants to the value of R430 000 were approved for 2009/2010.

Some of the projects funded in 2009-2011 include:

- The living and learning experiences of mature age undergraduate students in higher education : a study at the Edgewood Campus UKZN
- Integrating the Competency Framework in final year Auditing through a process of interdisciplinary curriculum development
- Student success in the Faculty of Health Sciences : the impact of curriculum change, the introduction of innovative teaching/learning methods, and student support services
- Assessing Assessment : the disconnect between expectations of learners, undergraduate students and lecturers
- Knowledge Construction in Community Based Service-Learning in Basic Nursing Programmes in two selected South African

Nursing Education Institutions

- Statistical assessment of the demographic and academic factors affecting research productivity and student throughput (attritions & retentions) at UKZN
- Exploring Science and Engineering students' attitude to learning - What are the challenges for quality in teaching and learning?

## CRITICAL REVIEW OF ACCESS PROGRAMMES

A review of Access Programmes offered at UKZN was undertaken at a 2-day workshop (22-23 May 2009) organised by the University Teaching and Learning Office which undertook a critical review of existing alternative-access programmes available at UKZN. Programme coordinators used the opportunity to "present deeply critical, evaluative, analytical and self-reflexive perspectives on each of their programmes with a view to highlighting exemplary practices, while identifying and resolving emerging challenges" within the context of an evolving higher education environment.

In reviewing and evaluating Access programmes aimed at preparing disadvantaged students for mainstream studies, the workshop served as a platform to interrogate the philosophical and theoretical underpinnings of programmes, revisit debates about the mode of delivery and consider empirical evidence that documented the success or otherwise of Access programmes. At the same time the university had to be careful that the support offered did not create a dependency syndrome among students or stigmatise those who participate in Access programmes.



Another outcome of the workshop is a proposed book publication tentatively titled: Models of Alternative Access into Higher Education, authored by programme coordinators and edited by Prof. Renuka Vithal, Dr. Rubby Dhunpath and Dr. Leonora Jackson. The book emerged out of a realization that in order for universities to continue to offer responsive, high-quality Access Programmes, there is need to critically review and update their Access policies, evaluate current offerings and their effectiveness, share successful aspects of the various programmes, identify problems and design innovative solutions.

### DISTINGUISHED TEACHERS' AWARDS

A strategic imperative of the portfolio of the DVC (T&L) is promoting scholarship and providing appropriate incentives and rewards for outstanding performance. One such mechanism is the Distinguished Teachers Award (DTA). The University sees teaching and research as its two main functions, closely aligned with serving the community. Prestigious annual awards for academics excelling in the field of research have been established to recognise and reward outstanding academics who have a distinguished record of excellence in the field of teaching, a field of endeavour which has tended to receive less public acknowledgement.

In conceiving of the DTA, the concept of teaching is understood broadly as encompassing all aspects of the educational process involving the interface between teaching and learning. The award may be based on excellence in contact or distance modes, in undergraduate or postgraduate education, in the supervision of higher degrees, and/or in community or external service in the field of education. The Distinguished Teachers' Awards acknowledges and values the commitment of staff who, in prioritizing teaching in the exercise of their duties, have excelled as academics. The DTA requires candidates not only to be excellent and sympathetic teachers demonstrating successful and effective learning outcomes, but to have made

a sustained contribution to teaching and learning beyond fulfilling their teaching duties.

Four Distinguished Teachers' Awards are made annually, each carrying a significant monetary purse. The award may be used for academic purposes, particularly for the improvement of teaching/learning.



*Dr Francesca Balladon*



*Prof Thandinkosi Enos Madiba*



*Prof Kriben Pillay*



*Dr Robin W E Joubert*



*Dr Suzanne Francis*



*Ms Kerry Frizelle*



*Prof Deogratius Jaganyi*



*Ms Heidi Matisonn*

### Recipients of the UKZN Distinguished Teachers Awards for 2008

Name	School	Faculty	College
Dr. Francesca Balladon	French Programme	Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences	College of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences
Prof Thandinkosi Enos Madiba	General Surgery	Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine	College of Health Sciences
Prof. Kriben Pillay	Leadership Centre	Faculty of Management Studies	College of Law & Management Studies
Dr. Robin W E Joubert	School of Occupational Therapy	Faculty of Health Sciences	College of Health Sciences

### Recipients of the UKZN Distinguished Teachers Awards for 2009

Name	School	Faculty	College
Dr. Suzanne Francis	School of Politics	Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences	College of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences
Ms Kerry Frizelle	School of Psychology	Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences	College of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences
Prof. Deogratius Jaganyi	School of Chemistry	Faculty of Science & Agriculture	College of Agriculture, Engineering and Science
Ms Heidi Matisonn	School of Philosophy & Ethics	Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences	College of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences



# QUALITY PROMOTION AND ASSURANCE (QPA)



## VISION AND MISSION

QPA's mission is to ensure the promotion and development of a culture of quality in the University of KwaZulu-Natal through a comprehensive quality assurance system, which:

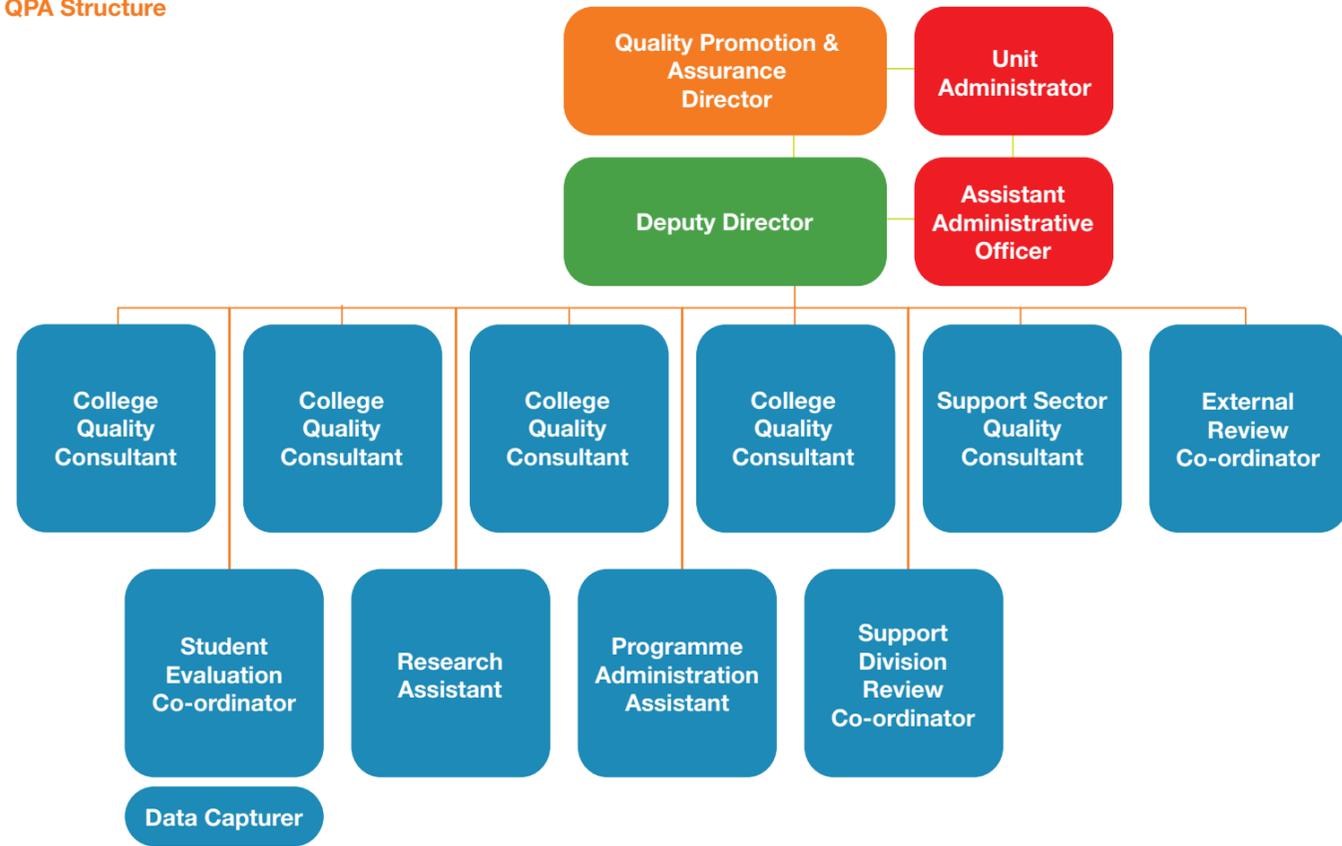
- Improves quality in the core functions of teaching, learning, research and service to the University,
- Prepares the University for external programme accreditation, review and institutional audits and ensures the University responds effectively to national and international requirements,
- Provides leadership on the development and implementation of quality management systems at all levels,
- Provides practical support and advice to the University on all quality related activities,
- Promotes quality through institutional policy development.

The QPA unit is well-established and since the merger has been well-integrated into a range of structures, undertaking a variety of activities which include: developing policies related to quality, advocacy work for the inclusion of quality across the university, support to programmes undergoing

external reviews, quality assurance reviews of schools and centres, support for the development of teaching portfolios and criteria and processes of evaluation for these, assisting individual staff with their teaching; student feedback through module evaluations and student surveys; development, approval and registration of programmes and modules within the university and for compliance with national requirements, e.g. by the Department of Higher Education & Training (DOHET), the Council on Higher Education (CHE), and the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA).

In 2008, the QPA and the Strategic Planning Office were instrumental in providing leadership within the University in the extensive preparation process for the external quality audit of the institution by the HEQC/CHE in October of that year. This involved the coordination of the entire process through the Institutional Audit Coordinating Committee, the managing of a number of task teams that met monthly, the preparation of the University's self-evaluation report, managing the logistics for the event which saw over 400 people being interviewed, and running the communications campaign for both staff and students.

## QPA Structure



### Staff Profiles

#### Ms LE Browning

**(QPA Consultant - Senior Lecturer):** BA; BA Hons; HDE; BEd; MEd (Natal)

#### Florence Southway-Ajulu

**(Senior Lecturer):** BSc (Lesotho), MSc (Sussex), Phd (Sussex)

#### Ms Alison Walker

**(Quality Consultant Support Sector & Institutional Research):** BSoc Sci; BSoc Sci Hons, BSoc Sci Masters (Natal)

#### Ms T Zank

**(Research Assistant):** BA Hons (University of Natal)

#### Mrs MR Chunder

**(Students Evaluation Co-ordinator):** BA HONS (UDW); Course in Basics of Total Quality Management (UNISA)

#### Meena Paramanund

**(Administrator)** (Certificate in Office Technologies and Internet Applications (TATA Infotech)

#### Ms N Manana

National Dip: Public Relations (Technikon SA), BTech Public Relations Management(UNISA)

### SUPPORT TO COLLEGES

The QPA structure is predicated on the need for integration with the College model. A Director serves to ensure that the activities of the unit are coordinated and embedded in the main functions and committees of the University, while the academic members of QPA serve as Quality Consultants to each of the four Colleges and to the

support sector.

The College Quality Coordinators serve each of the Colleges as a resource in the various Faculty and College-level structures that are concerned with quality in core activities such as teaching and learning. They assist with programme development, and programme approvals processes, with the development and evaluation of teaching portfolios, with advice on quality-related issues and with policy development in quality-related areas. A major aspect of their work is to coordinate and organize external reviews of academic Schools, or undertake any other evaluative reviews requested by Deans and DVC's.

### Reviews

The QPA, with the assistance of two retired staff members, coordinated a number of External

Reviews of Schools, units and departments in the reporting period. These were as follows:

- The review of the Department of General Surgery held on 4-6 November 2008
- The review of the School of Environmental Sciences held on 17-20 November 2008
- The review of the School of Anthropology, Gender and Historical Studies held on 27-29 May 2009.

- The review of the Graduate School of Business held on 11-12 June 2009
- The review of the Electron Microscope Units held on 27 – 28 August 2009
- The review of the School of Pharmacy and Pharmacology held on 14-16 October 2009
- The review of the Management Studies Education Unit was held on 1 October 2009.

### STUDENT SURVEYS AND FEEDBACK

Student feedback is an important component for assessing quality in teaching and learning. QPA received data on 1233 module evaluations by students in 2009. The data was analysed and 1319 reports were processed and sent to individual staff members and the Head of School in those Schools or Faculties where a policy to this effect was in place.

	2007	2008	2009
<b>No. of Evaluations Received</b>	821	1080	1233
<b>No. of Reports Sent Out</b>	917	1500	1319

In the first half of 2009, QPA managed to generate reports in a 6-8 week turn-around time. In the second half of 2009 a staffing capacity problem (2 staff members resigned) lengthened the turn-around time, and has resulted in a current backlog in the reports being generated.

QPA also provides guidance to individual staff members and Schools in the development of appropriate evaluation instruments, and in 2009 assisted the Faculty of Health Sciences to develop a policy on evaluation of teaching and a set of questionnaires to be used by all staff in the Faculty. In response to a number of recommendations from the Key Priority Areas for Teaching and Learning: 2009-2011 document relating to the Student Feedback System, QPA carried out the following activities:

- A set of core questions to be used across the University was drafted in 2009.
- It was decided that for improved planning, and coherent and consistent implementation of the student module evaluation policy, each School should develop a 3-year schedule (2010-12) listing all modules (with the discipline and qualification to which it belongs, the academic responsible for the module, etc.), to be provided

to QPA and that QPA would provide an annual report to College Quality Committees on modules evaluated per school.

- A process was begun to develop an appropriate on-line Student Feedback system at module level using Moodle which can be used by academic staff to gather feedback from students about their teaching.

QPA also obtains feedback from students by conducting Graduation Surveys on an annual basis during the University's Graduation Ceremonies. The principal purpose of these surveys is to determine graduates' opinion on the quality of education received at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The survey is then used to make comparisons with the opinions of previous years of graduates. The 2009 report offered an opportunity to analyse trend data over the preceding five years. A sample of 3694 respondents completed the questionnaire for the 2009 Report and a seminar in March 2010 was held to help disseminate the information.

In addition, a Student Opinion Survey is conducted every four years. The aim of the 2009/2010 survey is to determine registered students' perspectives on their experiences at UKZN, and students are asked to evaluate a wide range of student services and

facilities as well as the quality of their educational experience. The initial preparation, research and planning for this survey took place early in 2009, with extensive meetings with Directors of the various Support Services. The survey was developed and an extensive data collection took place at the end of 2009, with some 2261 students from the five campuses responding. Data is in the process of being cleaned and analyzed.

### SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT FOR PROGRAMME AND MODULE APPROVAL

QPA consultants provide support for the development and approval (internal and external) of new modules and programmes. Feedback is provided on draft templates and input is made on the various committees where these are reviewed and approved. The QPA coordinates the external and internal approval processes.

In the last few years, it became apparent to QPA that the SAQA database of qualifications did not accurately reflect all UKZN qualifications. Staff members could not easily look up qualifications, and before submissions of programmes against these qualifications could be made to the Department of Higher Education and Training, qualifications needed to be correctly recorded.



The setting up of the Online Module and Programme Template System (OMAPTS) was completed in January 2009. A process to load existing module and programme templates onto the system was begun.

The database reflects as follows:

- Faculty of Engineering (224 templates)
- Faculty of Science and agriculture (135 templates)
- Faculty of Management Studies (134 templates)
- HDSS (55 templates)
- Medical School (43 templates)
- Faculty of Law (43 templates)
- Faculty of Education (7 templates)

Towards the end of 2008, QPA undertook to build up the UKZN qualifications' database. In 2009, working with SAQA and DMI, the main database of qualifications was completed. In some cases, this involved going back to hardcopy documents to re-construct information which should have been sent to SAQA several years ago. The situation currently is that it is possible to access UKZN qualifications from SAQA sites. QPA corrects and updates the database if any omissions are detected and communicated to QPA.

Also in 2009, QPA undertook to ensure that the programme data in the UKZN Programme and Qualification Mix approved by the Department of Higher Education and Training correctly reflects what appears in the Faculty handbooks. This involved going through the Handbooks to reconcile these entries with the PQM. The result is that there is a better reflection of the University offerings on the PQM. These changes are being negotiated with the Department to have them added to the national PQM database.

On an ongoing basis, new and modified programmes are sent via QPA to the HEQC for accreditation. Though aspects of the process were slow, the following were granted provisional accreditation in 2009, as a first step in the full

accreditation process:

- Bachelor of Agriculture in Agricultural Extension and Rural Resource Management
- Master of Health Sciences
- Master of Pharmacy

Ongoing quality support work:

QPA consultants provide guidance to individual staff members in the development of teaching portfolios for promotion purposes. In 2008 and 2009 they ran a series of presentations on different campuses and within some Faculties on how to develop a teaching portfolio. QPA consultants served on the Faculty Teaching Portfolio Assessment Sub-Committees. The Director of QPA chaired the University Teaching Portfolio Moderating Committee.

Evaluation of the Leadership Course in 2009 which was aimed at students who occupy or aspire to occupy leadership positions in diverse student and community organisations. The course is run on an annual basis by the Student Leadership Development (SLD) Office and is an intensive 10-day course. QPA undertook an evaluation of the course to contribute to the future design and interventions of the Leadership Course and, more specifically, assist in future planning.

QPA is building a database of short courses. This was begun in 2009 and an audit of all short courses will be carried out in 2010.

The following support initiatives (among others) were undertaken in 2009:

- An investigation into the high failure rate in a module in the Faculty of Law and a report was submitted to the Dean.
- A Curriculum Review Workshop for the School of Family and Public Health was facilitated by the QPA on the 26 May 2009.
- A Curriculum Workshop for the Optometry Department was facilitated by the QPA on 3-4 December 2009.
- A presentation and discussion by the QPA on

trends in student feedback in Chemistry was held in the School of Chemistry on 13 August.

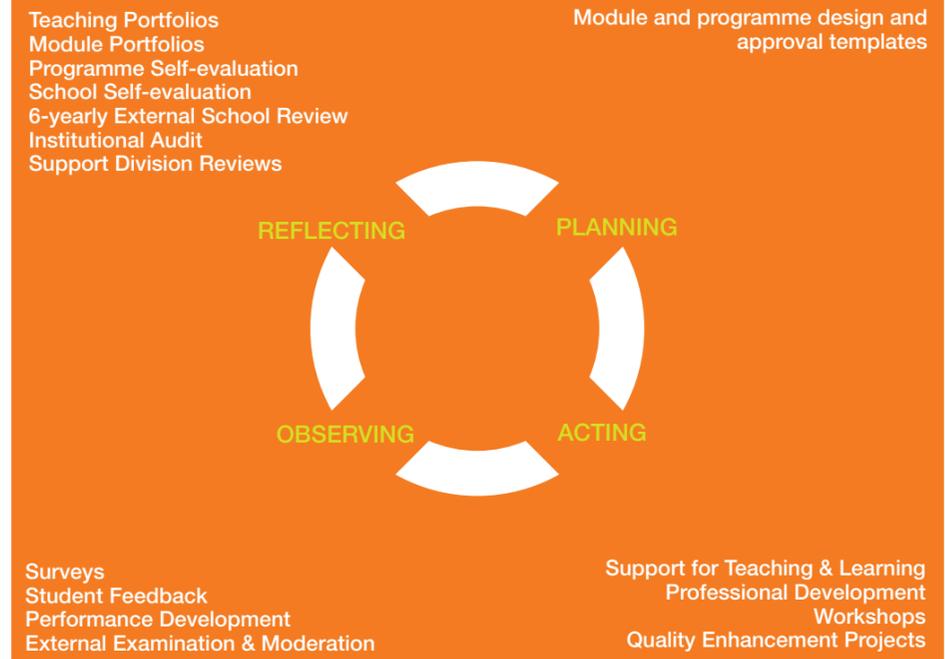
- There was QPA input into the induction of new academic staff in the Faculty of Education-University on quality assurance processes and the academic staff link (12th May 2009, Edgewood campus).
- A curriculum and programme review of the Master of Science in Engineering was co-facilitated by a member of the QPA on 24-26 April 2009.
- A Strategic Planning Workshop for the College of Law & Management Studies was facilitated by the QPA on 26 October 2009.
- A Strategic Planning and Team Building Workshop was facilitated by the QPA for the DVC Physical Planning & Operations Portfolio on 7 December 2009.

### PROMOTING QUALITY IN THE SUPPORT SECTOR

Development of a Strategic Planning and Monitoring Framework for the Support Sector arose as a result of a Task Team which was set up to work on Goal 7 of the University's Strategic Plan, that is, the achievement of efficient and effective management. As part of this process, QPA was involved in researching and developing a guide to planning, implementing, monitoring and reporting in the support sector. The document outlines the assessment process and provides suggestions and ideas for making the process meaningful and useful. The document also outlines the framework and steps for UKZN's Support Divisions to align themselves with the University's Strategic Plan, as well as addressing a number of other goals from the Strategic Plan, namely:

- Goal five - institution of choice for students;
- Goal six - institution of choice for staff; and
- Goal seven - efficient and effective management.

The framework endeavours to ensure appropriate quality and efficiency in the provision of services, and ultimately to determine the best location of services in the devolved structure.



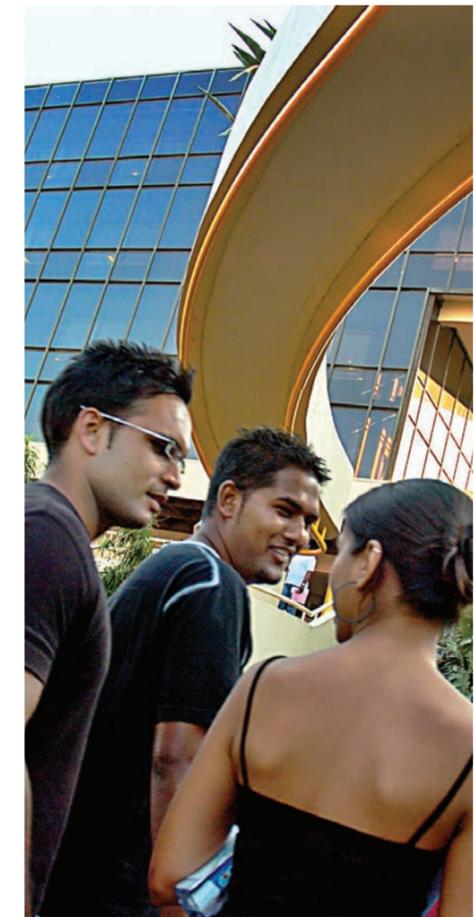
#### Quality Assurance Toolbox for Support Sector

- Rubric for evaluating strategic plans,
- Template to assist Divisions in reporting outcomes,
- Support Sector Board Rubric for evaluating reports,
- Policy for external reviews for support sector Divisions
- Guidelines for conducting a Divisional self-evaluation

#### External Links

Members of the QPA participated in the following events:

- SAAIR HEMIS Institute (May 2009)
- Higher Education Quality Management Initiative for Southern Africa (HEQMISA) (November 2009)
- SAAIR annual conference: Institutional Research - 21 -23 September, NMMU.
- Student Participation in Quality Assurance (CHE) - 29 Jan, Jhb.
- HELTASA Conference '09 Risk and Resilience in Higher Education, 25-27 November 2009 at the University of Johannesburg.





# OPEN LEARNING

Recognising the importance of lifelong learning, the University of KwaZulu-Natal is committed "to offering selected programmes, flexible both in structure and in mode of delivery, that provide opportunities for education, training and re-training in specific professional disciplines and in areas of national need, for students who cannot study on campus during working hours." (UKZN Strategic Plan)

of delivery, both in specific geographic areas and in terms of specific national and provincial educational needs.

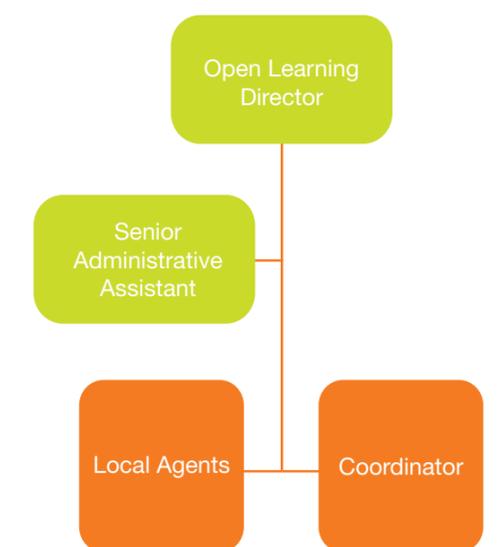
Open Learning is responsible for the establishment, management and monitoring of off-campus centres, examinations at the centres, ensuring that internal structures and systems serve the needs of Open Learning students, the promotion of quality in open learning programmes, and research and policy development.



Director-Open Learning - Ms Kogje Naidoo

### Structure and Staffing:

Open Learning is a small unit of three full time staff members (Head, Coordinator, and an administrator) and operates from both the Howard College and Pietermaritzburg campuses. The core staff is supported by Local Agents who are employed to manage the Centres, acting as the University representatives, as contact persons, providing information, monitoring the quality of delivery, and ensuring the integrity of University examinations.



### VISION AND MISSION

Open Learning enables access to lifelong learning for the non-traditional student, i.e. for students who cannot study on-campus during working hours. Open Learning supports the delivery of programmes that are flexible in structure and mode



#### Staff Profile

##### **Ms K Naidoo (Head):**

BA (UDW), BA (Hons) (UNISA), M Phil (Value Analysis and Policy Formulation) (US)

##### **Ms d Gumede (Coordinator):**

BA (Community Development) (UKZN), B Tech (Business Administration) (DUT)

**Ms N Ndlela (Administrator):** BA (Community Development), Postgraduate Diploma in Rural Resource Management (UKZN)

### PROGRAMMES AND CENTRES

Learning centres have been set up in remote areas in KwaZulu-Natal and (since 2009) in Mpumalanga. The number of centres has fluctuated between 15 to 18 over 2008 and 2009.

While most of the centres have been in operation for the past 7 to 9 years, some have been set up for shorter periods to respond to specific provincial training needs in particular geographic areas.

Eleven programmes were offered through the Open Learning centres in 2009. Programmes offered by the Faculty of Education were: National Professional Diploma in Education, and the Advanced Certificate in Education programmes in School Library Development and Management, Mathematical Literacy, Technology, GET Mathematics, Science and Technology, and School Management and Leadership, and the Post Graduate Certificate in Education.

Programmes offered in 2009 by the School of Nursing and Decentralised Nursing were the Bachelor of Nursing (Advanced Practice), Nursing Management, Mental Health, and Community Health programmes.

The Open Learning policy recognizes that the "programme structure and administrative management and support for open learning are integral to those of the general University operation", and includes a commitment to the development of more flexible systems of administrative operation and management where necessary to

accommodate the needs of off-campus students. Registration conducted at the centres have up to date been processed manually at the centres and brought to the campuses for capture onto ITS. Access to ITS for registration was piloted at the Ladysmith centre in January this year. While access to ITS was achieved, problems experienced are being identified and addressed. Successful off-campus registration could significantly reduce the on-campus registration load.

Several programmes run block sessions at the University campuses during the holidays which necessitate Open Learning students being booked into the residences. The difficulties experienced by students and staff when Open Learning students are categorized on University systems as 'conference delegates' rather than bona fide UKZN students has been addressed.

There has been a concerted effort to improve the facilities at the off-campus centres by providing better teaching equipment. In a phased operation over a period of 3 years, the first consignment of 9 data projectors, laptops and screens have been purchased to support teaching and learning at the centres.

The Students Representative Council conducted a review of all Open Learning Centres. Their effort and recommendations are greatly appreciated (some of which have already been instituted) and their continued involvement is welcomed.

### ACTIVITIES

Technology Driven Learning and Teaching: Building Capacity

Important developments in the area of technology driven learning at the University and further afield have the potential to offer significant benefits in terms of the quality of teaching and learning and the costs of delivery. This is especially so given the scenario of increasing and continuing demand for higher education; resource constraints i.e. decreased state funding and the high costs of mixed mode delivery, and the negative impact on the quality of teaching and learning arising from

the difficulties experienced in accessing the large numbers of qualified, skilled tutors required for simultaneous multiple delivery sites,

Open Learning hosted a forum on the 'Possibilities and Potential for Technology Driven Learning at UKZN' in May 2009, with the intention that this forum be the start of an ongoing opportunity for those currently working with such tools (and those who intend to), to begin discussions to identify resources, possibilities, challenges and policy gaps around technology driven learning.

#### The Forum profiled informative presentations by;

- Ms Ruth Searle: Overview of Possibilities and Policy
- Ms Rosemary Quilling & Mr Craig Blewett: Virtual University
- Prof. Manoj Maharaj: Podcasting
- Dr. Fatima Suleman: Online Learning

The Forum was attended by 58 staff members from a very wide range of disciplines. The need for both formal and informal training was identified as an immediate and urgent need. A follow-up Symposium to take forward the issues raised is scheduled for May 2010.

It is envisioned that a range of interventions will build capacity in online learning and other technology driven teaching and learning methods.

Key challenges to the provision of online learning are the low computer literacy levels of our students,

and access to computers with internet access at the centres. A project to provide internet access at the centres is being developed.

The National Association of Distance Education and Open Learning in South Africa (NADEOSA) Ms Naidoo (Head: Open Learning) was elected to the Executive of the NADEOSA Board at its last Annual General Meeting in August 2009 and Ms C Thomson (Faculty of Education, UKZN) was co-opted onto the Board.

The NADEOSA Courseware Awards for 2010 will be jointly organized and adjudicated teams from UKZN and UNISA (the joint winners of the previous award).

### LOOKING AHEAD

Open Learning at UKZN stands at the threshold of a new era of technology assisted learning which has the potential to significantly influence access to continuing professional development and address the imbalances in access to computers and levels of computer literacy in terms of the urban vs. rural divide and the Africa vs. world divide.

The move to online learning is expected to be a gradual one, given that the computer literacy levels of our students is low (first indications from a survey we conducted is that about half of our students have never used a computer).

Further challenges are low levels of ownership of personal computers make access to computers at

the learning centres particularly important (though the proposed roll out of computers to teachers will improve the situation). Compared to on-campus students, students at the learning centres have very limited access to computers.

A move from a mixed mode approach to technology driven approach could offer significant benefits in terms of quality and costs such as;

- Increased access to content especially in remote areas where university libraries cannot be easily accessed,
- Time and distance are no longer constraints,
- Greater efficiency (speed of communication, etc),
- Encourage reflective practice,
- Develop new ways of teaching and learning,
- Increase interactivity and collaboration ,
- Networked learning (e-mail, bulletin boards, discussion forums, chat, online conferencing),
- Learning systems have the potential to be more sensitive to, and adapt to individual students' learning styles = more personalised education,
- Contribute to further convergence of on and off campus learning, and
- Has the potential to create effective quality learning environments.

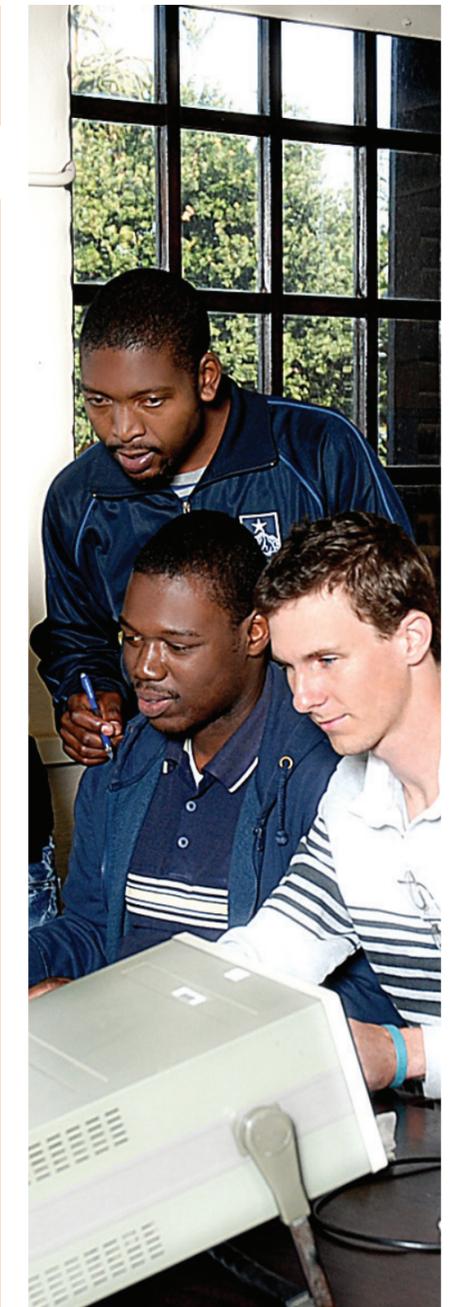
Expert support and training for staff developing online / technology based programmes has been identified as critical to the process. The development of online learning programmes also has the potential to make cross boarder provision a reality.



From left to right: Mr Glen Bares (DMI); Dr Rubby Dhunpath (UTLO); Ms Ruth Searle (CHES); Prof. Renuka Vithal (DVC: T&L); Prof. Michael Samuel (Dean-Education: UKZN); Prof. Yusef Waghid (Dean-Education: Stellenbosch)

			Education Programmes					
			NPDE	ACE				
Centres	Venue	Pro-grammes per Centre		School Library	Maths Literacy	School Leadership	Maths Sc & Tech	Technology
Bushbuckridge	Mapulaneng Education Dev. Centre	1		30				
Dundee	Ethangeni Combined School, 44 Cornhill St, Dundee	2			37		161	
Howard C		2		116				
Empangeni	Dover Combined School, Old Mtubatuba Road, Empangeni	4		26	47			
Ermelo	Ligbron HTS, Voortrekker St., Ermelo	2		30				30
Ixopo	Ixopo Primary School, Ixopo	1				14		
Ladysmith	Windsor Secondary School, 28 Forbes Street, Ladysmith	5	168	21	52	21		
Mbazwane	Mbazwane Education Resource Centre, Mbazwana	2		22				
Nelspruit	Lowveld High Sch, 15 Figtree Rd, West Acres, Nelspruit	2						60
Newcastle	Newcastle Senior Primary, Cnr Allen & York Streets, Newcastle	6	91	62	41			
Middelburg	Middelburg HTS (Technical High School) c/o Zuid & Fontein St, Middelburg	2		30				30
Port Shepstone	Port Shepstone High School, 22 Colley St, Port Shepstone	4	156	12	40			
Pietermaritzburg	PMB Campus	1						
Queenstown	Kwa-Komani Comprehensive School, 1874 Pelem Rd, Kwamlungisi	3						
Stanger	Stanger High School, Theunissen Rd, Stanger	1				34		
Umsinga	Msinga High School, Esijozini Road, Tugela Ferry	2	170				70	
Vryheid	Mpofini High School, 3231 Mpofini Rd, New Bhekuzulu Location, Vryheid	2	134	21				
Students per Programme			719	370	217	69	231	120
		Centres per Programme	5	10	5	3	2	3

PGCE	Total	Nursing Programmes					Total	
		BN-AP	Primary Care	Nur Mgt	Community Health	Mental Health	Total Nur	Students per Centre
	30						0	30
	198						0	198
	116	27					27	143
	73			65	42		107	180
	60						0	60
	14						0	14
	262			21			21	283
	22			30			30	52
81	141						0	141
	194		30	20	55		105	299
	60						0	60
	208		30				30	238
	0	30					30	30
	0			40	43	45	128	128
	34						0	34
	240						0	240
	155						0	155
81	1807	57	60	176	140	45	478	2285
1	14	2	2	5	3	1	8	17



Open Learning Centres and Programmes for 2009

# STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

One of the primary goals in establishing the DVC (T&L) Portfolio was to develop a fully functional and responsive unit that efficiently addresses challenges related to access, throughput, and quality in teaching and learning. A related aim is to promote scholarship in teaching and learning by acting as a catalyst for, and bringing together academics and researchers who have the common purpose of promoting optimal student learning both inside and outside the classroom. To achieve this outcome, UTLO has established strategic partnerships with Centers, Units and NGO's, within and outside the university, such as the Centre for Higher Education Studies (CHES, Faculty of Education), the Research Office; The Department of Higher Education and Training; Council for Higher Education; The South African Norway Tertiary Education Development (SANTED); The Environment and Language Education Trust; the US Embassy, and a range of related entities.

## Centre for Higher Education Studies (CHES)



Director - Centre for Higher Education Studies  
Ms R L Searle

## Vision and Mission

The Centre of Higher Education Studies promotes the field of Higher Education in all its facets and forms, as an area of scholarship and praxis, through a commitment to collegiality, collaboration and equity as the basis for excellence.

In developing Higher Education as a field of study and scholarship, the Centre is committed to excellence in all aspects, and across all levels and forms, of the sector. Through national, regional, institutional and individual collaboration and networking, it provides a conducive and stimulating environment for developing and supporting research-based professional practice in areas such as curriculum design and development, professional development, teaching and learning, policy development, assessment, quality and excellence, leadership and management, organization or institutional development and systems in Higher Education. Staff development and capacity building through both formal and informal processes are seen as key activities, fostering reflective research-based practice, rather than simply technical input and assistance.

## Staff Profile:

**Ms R L Searle (Director):**

BA Hons; PGCE; MA (Zim)

**Dr. Sioux Mckenna (Senior Lecturer)**

PhD (Rhodes University); MA (Linguistics) Stellenbosch University; HDE (University of Natal); BA University of Natal

**Ms F O'Brien (Lecturer):** BSocSc Hons, MSocSc (Natal)

**Ms S Jeenarain (Senior Admin Assistant):** BSOCSC (UKZN) - (current studies)

Since the merger, CHES is a unit located within the School of Adult and Higher Education Studies in the Faculty of Education. CHES has a long history of providing educational programmes, workshops



and courses for academic training and skills development across teaching, learning, research and community engagement. While offering a specialisation in the discipline of Higher Education in a number of postgraduate qualifications in the Faculty of Education, members of CHES supervise research students, many of whom are academics, and are involved in a range of research projects in Higher Education in the university and in collaboration with other universities.

Although CHES is engaged in a range of education, training and research projects within the university, its location in the DVC (T&L) brings the potential to create:

- A strong institutional research arm to drive a university research agenda involving analysis of institutional data and activities, including students, programmes, staff, and management related to teaching and learning, in cooperation with DMI
- With(in) faculties and colleges, to develop a critical mass of educational research experts in different disciplines with the capacity to analyse and transform curricula, assessment, teaching approaches and implement teaching and learning related policies and decisions, in discussion with and through Faculty Teaching and Learning committees (or their equivalent). Members of CHES to serve as educational research consultants to colleges and faculties
- Develop a suite of coherent integrated academic professional development programmes to support academics to manage the increasing student diversity and new pedagogies and assessments, including technological advances and the imperatives of the new language policies of the university
- Support the cycle of curricula and policy development and review, through institutional research. That is to undertake research to inform policy reviews and reforms needed to improve teaching, learning and curricula
- Complementing and acting on the reviews and evaluations of QPA. Bringing CHES and QPA under the same portfolio has the potential to strengthen the work of both by "closing the

quality loop" on evaluation and review process with directed opportunities for staff development and training to address lack of capacity and competences

There have been discussions within the Faculty and agreement reached that CHES be relocated to the DVC(T&L) portfolio and that the remaining Centre for Adult Education in the School be integrated with the School for Education and Development. This would effectively reduce the number of schools in the Faculty of Education from six to five. A Faculty document, including this recommendation, (within a broader proposal for reconfiguring of three schools in the Faculty as a result of a process of discipline consolidation and staff relocation), is currently serving through the various Faculty and College structures.

CHES has 4 academic staff (1 Ass. Prof. and 3 Senior lecturers) and an administrator who are envisaged to relocate to the DVC (T&L) portfolio. CHES presently operates from the PMB and Howard College campuses.

Further negotiations will take place with the College, Faculty and the School of Education and Development, which will continue to house the discipline of Higher Education Studies, regarding teaching and supervision by staff. A MOA is being signed to formalise and institutionalise the relationship between the faculty and the DVC (T&L) office.

#### Programmes in Higher Education Teaching and Learning

The Centre for Higher Education Studies is focused on developing Higher Education as a field of study and scholarship. Through national, regional, institutional and individual collaboration and networking it seeks to provide a conducive and stimulating environment for developing and supporting research-based professional practice in areas such as curriculum design and development, professional development, teaching and learning, policy development, assessment, quality and excellence, leadership and management, organization or institutional development and

systems in Higher Education. Staff development and capacity building through both formal and informal processes are seen as key activities, fostering reflective research-based practice, rather than simply technical input and assistance.

#### Formal academic programmes

The Centre provides formal credit bearing academic programmes related to Higher Education through the Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education (PGDHE), the Masters in Higher Education (M.Ed), and engages with individuals doing doctoral studies in the area of Higher Education.

In 2009, the PGDHE was not offered since this qualification is currently being reviewed, however a number of the modules were on offer to accommodate the needs of pipeline students and for professional development needs. In 2009, the following modules in the PGDHE were on offer:

- Higher Education Practice – facilitated by Ruth Searle, provided a general overview of areas in higher education with a specific focus on teaching and learning
- Developing a Professional Portfolio – facilitated by Frances O'Brien, participants draw from their professional activities to show how they fulfil their professional roles, placing their activities within a theoretical framework
- Professional Skills – facilitated by Sioux McKenna, focused on career planning and upgrading which allows for the inclusion of non credit bearing activities offered across campus in the context of professional development

#### Masters Modules: 2009

- Higher Education Practice – this, a core module for the Masters programme, providing a base for other studies is facilitated by Ruth Searle.
- Research and Supervision – provides a theoretical and practical foundation for postgraduate supervision, exploring the changes at postgraduate levels, including different forms of supervision, differences between disciplines, policy guidelines, strategies, etc. A number of guest lecturers are

invited to participate and provide exciting inputs for the group. This was facilitated by Sioux McKenna and Ruth Searle

- Assessment in Higher Education – after an intensive exploration of theory, participants trial some innovative practice (large or small, formal or informal) in their courses, facilitated by Ruth Searle
- Curriculum Design and Development in Higher Education – an examination of curriculum trends in Higher Education, with the implementation of various aspects within individual practice, facilitated by Ruth Searle.

#### Postgraduate Supervision and Support:

In 2009, staff in the Centre were supervising 24 Masters' theses, (22 half theses and 2 full theses) and 9 PhD's. A number of supportive activities to encourage research and understanding of teaching and learning issues were on offer alongside the formal supervision. These activities provided support and guidance to the participants on the courses, and also provided those interested in researching Higher Education with a forum for discussion. These consisted of monthly meetings, invited guest speakers and similar activities. Monthly meetings were held with all Higher Education Masters, and PhD students and supervisors to discuss progress and to explore aspects of interest to the group.

#### Workshops

Higher Education Practice Workshops are the individual sessions which make up the core module of the Diploma and Masters programmes offered through the Centre. Modules can be taken for non-degree purposes. Those completing modules for credits or qualifications need to develop a portfolio to cover the various topics during the whole module in relation to their own areas of practice. Participants are encouraged to theorise their practice. The module introduces the participants to basic theories whilst also providing practical suggestions for different approaches to teaching and learning.

Research and Supervision workshops, also the individual sessions of a module in the Masters programme, are designed to encourage discussion

around practices related to postgraduate supervision, different ways of structuring practices, different approaches and policies, as well as troubleshooting. Whilst there is some theorising of practice, there is a focus on practical strategies in a variety of situations. Guest lecturers provide a range of different inputs and insights which provoke rich interactions and an exploration of practices across a variety of disciplines.

Teaching and Learning Conference support workshops played a central role in the planning and execution of the UKZN Teaching and Learning conference. In its inception, this conference was specifically designed to encourage staff within the institution to showcase their practice, to encourage discussions on teaching and learning issues across disciplines in a safe space and to ensure that innovative practice was shared across the institution. The planners use the conference to create awareness and, as a consequence, those receiving institutional awards such as the Distinguished Teachers Award, were invited to run sessions to share their innovative practices.

To support academics and encourage participation in the conference, CHES also ran a series of workshops to help participants develop their presentations, and then to bring those presentations to a publishable form. Three pre-conference workshops were hosted, aimed at helping participants develop an abstract for their presentations, developing the conference paper, and assisting in the presentation of the paper. Follow up workshops for the conference aimed at converting the paper into a publication were also hosted.

Support for Foundation Programmes was offered by the Centre with funding received from the Department of Higher Education and Training. Three key activities were planned and implemented, including a series of six workshops offered to foundation staff in the institution. These were designed to encourage staff to meet one another since many teach in different faculties across the institution, to enable networking and create a space



for discussion of practices that each engage in. It also provided valuable input on teaching, learning and assessment, with particular emphasis on the special needs of foundation programmes. These sessions were well attended and there was lively discussion in each. They provided an opportunity for practitioners to raise a number of issues that they faced within different programmes and some practical hands on activities.

Conferences and Research Symposium attended included the Institutional research symposium hosted by the University Teaching and Learning Office. CHES staff attended and Ruth Searle, was one of the speakers at this meeting. Some of the staff in the Centre are members of the Higher Education Teaching and Learning Association of Southern Africa (HELTASA). Ruth Searle as a member of the Professional Development special interest group (sig) attended a meeting in March in Cape Town where the group discussed

challenges facing professional developers. The Community Engagement Conference organized at UKZN focused on issues relating to community engagement in Higher Education. Frances O'Brien was part of the organizing committee and piloted the World Café during the conference to promote meaningful conversations between the participants on issues pertinent to the theme. The Centre had the opportunity to host Prof. David Whitehead and his partner Prof. Joan Whitehead who explored the theme, self study and transformative learning.



### COLLABORATION WITH EXTERNAL PARTNERS

UTLO has established a collaborative relationship with the US Embassy and Fulbright. In 2009, UTLO hosted a special seminar to welcome Eran Williams, the Regional English Language Officer. The Seminar featured presentations by Eran Williams and several UKZN academics on the various language projects and initiatives. In the immediate future, UKZN will host Fulbright Fellows from US Universities, including Harvard and Indiana University.

### THE ENVIRONMENT & LANGUAGE EDUCATION TRUST (ELET)

#### Symposium on Food Security

UTLO Facilitated a highly successful symposium on Food security hosted by ELET in July 2009.

The Symposium was attended by various government departments, NGOs and UKZN academics. Prof Sheryl Hendriks, Head of School, Agricultural Sciences and Agribusiness, UKZN, in collaboration with Dr Stuart Ferrer, Snr Lecturer, Economics, UKZN were presenters at the Symposium.

Presentations included:

- Permaculture, by the Durban Botanical Gardens.
- The Department of Agriculture's Food Security programme in KZN by the manager of the Food Security department
- The National Schools Nutrition Programme by the Department
- ELET's school gardens project
- A talk on genetically modified crops
- A religious perspective on food
- A global perspective on Food Security by UKZN academic, Professor Sheryl Hendricks.

### IADP: E-BOOK PROJECT

UTLO hosted a series of meetings with UKZN-ICT and the International Association of Digital Publishers (IADP) represented by Angus Scrimgeour, Kevin Brown, Prof Ken Harley. There was consensus that the availability of electronic resources (in various forms such as ebooks and Open Education Resources (OER) were a necessary and inevitable part of the future teaching and learning landscape. The challenge was to merge policy, administrative, financial, legal, and ICT systems to make this possible in such a way that the IADP system interacted directly with students through UKZN's version of Moodle.

The meetings explored how cost effective digital content for students and staff could be secured by identifying existing constraints and finding effective ways of overcoming these. The consultative process involved, among others:



**Megan Ellis (US Embassy) Rubby Dhunpath (UTLO) and Deva Govindsamy (US Embassy): Discussing the placement of Fulbright Fellows at UKZN.**



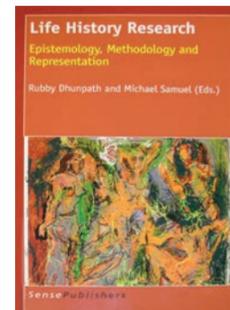
- Raising awareness within UKZN of what can be achieved with the IADP Affordable Access eBook System. UKZN will start by conducting a survey of the courses that have large student numbers and/or high failure rates. Data will be generated on which books are prescribed, and how many?
- On basis of this survey, IADP will follow up by (a) investigating the possibility of obtaining high- volume discounts from publishers with whom there are existing contracts (b) entering contractual negotiations with new publishers on basis of identified needs (c) advising UKZN of cases where more up to date versions of prescribed books are now available or pending.
- Identify areas of need for eBooks and how these can be made available through a bridging system which will require further consultation as IADP's Technical and Functional specifications become operational.
- Seek support of Higher Education South Africa (HESA).



## JOURNAL ARTICLES, CHAPTERS AND BOOKS

**Biputh, B. and McKenna, S. (2009)**  
*Quality Assurance in Pre- and Post-Apartheid South African Schools Compare.* July 2009

**Dhunpath, R. (2009)**  
*The Ethics and Politics of Excavating Organisational Identity in Life History Research: Ethics, Methodology, Representation,* Sense Publishers, Netherlands.



**Dhunpath, R & Samuel, M, (Eds) 2009,**  
*Life History Research: Ethics, Methodology, Representation,* Sense Publishers, Netherlands

**Govender, N, Ramsuran, A & Dhunpath, R (2008)** *Clifford Malcolm: Glimpses of his South African Legacy of Hope.* International Journal of Cultural Studies in Science Education, Volume 3, Number 3 / September, 2008, pp 535-791.

**Keitel, C. & Vithal, R (2008)**  
*Mathematical Power as Political Power – the politics of mathematics education.* In Clarkson P & Pressmeg N (Eds) *Critical Issues in Mathematics Education: Major Contributions of Alan Bishop.* New York: Springer. (pp. 167-188)

**Malcolm, C and Dhunpath, R (Ed), (2009)**  
*Learner Centered Science Education,* Sense Publishers, Netherlands

**O'Brien, F. (2009).**  
*In pursuit of African scholarship: Unpacking engagement.* Higher Education 58 (1), p. 29-39.

**McNamee, L.S., O'Brien, F.Y. & Botha, J.H. (2009).** Student perceptions of medico-legal autopsy demonstrations in a student-centered curriculum. *Medical Education*, 43, p. 66-73.

**Searle, R, McKenna, S and Harrison, L** (in process) *"I won't be squeezed into someone else's frame": Narratives of Supervisor Selection* submitted to Higher Education

**Setati, M., Vithal, R & Malcom, C; Dhunpath,**

**R. (2009)** (Eds) *Researching Possibilities in Mathematics, Science and Technology Education.* New York: Nova Science Publishers.

**Powell, P. and McKenna, S. (2008)**  
*Only a name change: The move from Technikon to University of Technology* The Independent Journal of Teaching and Learning. Volume 3 2008.

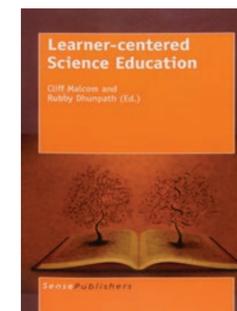
**Vithal, R (2009)**  
*Researching, and Learning Mathematics at the Margin: From "Shelter" to Margin.* In Sriraman, B; Ernest P, Greer, B (Eds.) *Critical Issues in Mathematics Education.* London: Information Age Publishing. (pp. 475-484)

**Vithal, R. (2009)**  
*A Quest for Democratic Participatory Validity in Mathematics Education.* In Dhunpath, R & Samuel, M. (eds.) *Life History Research: Epistemology Methodology and Representation.* Sense Publishers, Rotterdam. (pp. 67-81)

**Vithal, R (2008)**  
*Complementarity, Mathematics and Context.* Journal of Education, 45, 43-64

**Vithal, R (2008)**  
An analytical framework for mathematics teacher education from a critical perspective. *Perspectives in Education* 26(2), 45-59

Editors: Setati, M, Vithal, R, Malcolm, C, Dhunpath, R, (2009) *Researching Possibilities in Maths Science and Technology Education,* Nova Science Publishers, USA



**Inaugural Lecture**

**Vithal, R (2008)**  
*Mathematics Education, Democracy & Development: Challenges for the 21st Century.* Inaugural lecture, Edgewood campus, University of KwaZulu-Natal, 4 April.

**PhDs Graduated (Prof R. Vithal)**

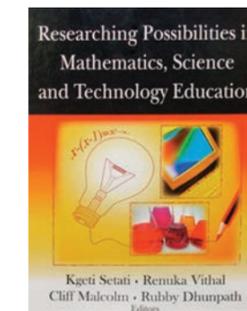
**Nomali Mncwabe** *"Inside the lives of township high school working learners"*

Nyna Amin (as Main supervisor with Co-supervisor Prof Michael Samuel) *"The paradox of knowing: Teachers' knowing about learners"*

**Masters Graduated (Prof S. McKenna)**

**Greg Bass (M.Ed)**

An Investigation of the Perceptions of Learners and Staff in Respect of the Dental Technology Extended First Year Programme.



**Evonne Singh (M.Ed)**

Hospitality Management students' understanding of and response to assignment feedback at a University of Technology

**Kogie Moodley (M.Ed)**

An Evaluation of the Use of Multiple Choice Assessment within a Problem Based Learning Medical Curriculum

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