Crossing Borders for Change in Southern African Higher Education

Abstracts

HELTASA

Higher Education Learning & Teaching Association of Southern Africa

Development an Open Education Resource Repository of Case Studies for Distributed Online Problem-based Learning in Public Health Education

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Institutional rationales for engaging with the Open Education Resources movement range from faster, cheaper, wider dissemination of knowledge, thereby challenging social inequalities, to saving cost on developing new resources; moreover, editing and re-purposing learning materials can refine quality; showcasing a university's education offerings in a context of global competition is also recognized as an incentive.

The School of Public Health at the University of the Western Cape is developing an open education repository of Public Health case studies to enhance teaching and learning for its well-established postgraduate distance programme. Part of the challenge of Public Health education is preparing health professionals to identify and solve complex health system problems in diverse and changing environments. One strategy is to engage the pedagogical practice of distributed problem-based learning through case study analysis (Gurell, Kuo & Walker, 2010).

Apart from resource and logistical challenges, the struggle to match Public Health case development with the competence demands of the field have dominated our debates. This involves making them representative of social reality in a way that challenges health managers to grapple with the complexity of authentic health system problems. Developing cases is time-consuming work, and has raised a range of pedagogical debates. A review of debates with colleagues in the field and the findings of related literature is presented with a view to sharing progress and drawing on others' expertise in the field. It is concluded that sharing and exchanging case studies as open resources offers economies of time and personnel, while strengthening learning programmes. An unexpected outcome has been the creation of space for debate and discussion around the issue.

Gurell, S., Kuo, Y-C and Walker, A. The Pedagogical Enhancement of Open Education: An Examination of Problem-Based Learning. International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning, 11(3), 2010, 95-105.

Using creative approaches in an education module to foster effective student learning: a case study

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The paper provides a detailed account of the incorporation of drama-in-education techniques into a third year education module namely 'Issues and Challenges in Education' (PGED 302) which is a compulsory module for all B.Ed and PGCE students. The areas covered in this module are HIV and Aids, Multicultural Education and Professional Educators' Shaping Democratic Schooling.

Drama-in-education techniques such as frozen image building (tableaus), improvisation and role play were integrated into lectures to expose the students to alternative methods of teaching and learning. Learning was facilitated by enabling the students to use the content in the PGED 302 Reader and prescribed textbook as a vehicle for the animation of case studies and the creation of realistic learning experiences. They were furthermore also provided with contexts that focused on the stimulation of their creative potential to design and present realistic scenes. The scenes portrayed were used as the starting point for the interrogation of important concepts such as xenophobia, racism and democracy. A significant outcome of their experiences in class was the presentation of a theatre-in-education piece based on the themes covered during the course of the programme.

Students were afforded opportunities to provide feedback on their novel learning experiences by means of open-ended questionnaires, student feedback forms and focused group interviews. Specialists in the field of drama-in-education from abroad also visited the class and provided feedback on their observations and experiences. The findings indicated that drama-in-education could make a significant contribution to teaching and learning in the context of higher education.

Experiential Learning in Vocational Education: Organic Farming

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When learning experiences are structured to provide space for group reflection, community learning can transcend embedded prejudices. This is one way of promoting innovation in food production practice. The development of the Rainman Landcare Foundation experiential curriculum is shown as a case study which exposes the limitations of the South African Sectoral Education and Training Authorities (SETAs). Undue emphasis on adherence to centralised assessment criteria strongly inhibits appropriate group learning processes unless assessmentiInstruments can be developed by the group. Approaches to FET farmer training linked to the development of university-level praxis are shown to benefit both farmers and university students, helping farmers to reflect on innovations, and helping students to understand practical agriculture. This experience highlights the relevance of the new Higher Education Qualifications Framework and its implications for Comprehensive Universities. Reluctance from conventional agricultural trainers in both FET and university contexts to engage with innovative technologies inhibits innovation opportunities, and this is embedded in the one-dimensional structure of traditional learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

ID: **197**
Panel Discussion (80 min)
Topics: Access and articulation: Exploring linkages and articulation between schools, universities and FET colleges.
Keywords: Access, Admissions, Linkages, FET-HE interface, Curriculum, Policy

Strategies to improve the FET-HE interface in the Eastern Cape: A Regional Perspective

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The pressing need to address the skills shortage at the lower and intermediate skills levels and to find training opportunities for youth not in employment, education and training (NEETs), in order to drive the recently launched 'New Growth Path' requires urgent action from all role-players – especially the higher education HE sector The Eastern Cape government is determined to drive economic development and interventions in the FET sector and is seen as a conduit for trained skills base to drive development. It has established a Human Resources Development (HRD) Council, housed and driven by the Eastern Cape Socio-Economic Consultative Council (ECSECC), to plan strategic interventions in various sectors and thereby address the critical scarce skills needs in the Province. Among the objectives of ECSECC is to improve the alignment between HE and FET curricula in cognate fields of study and to ensure that FET lecturers are better capacitated to provide quality vocational education and training in these fields.

Higher education institutions need to promote equity of access and opportunities so as to give students the best chance of success in their pursuit of lifelong learning and diverse educational goals, including developing and implementing strategies to enhance the interface between HEIs and FET Colleges. This panel will focus on the regional interventions, partnerships and collaborations between various stakeholders in the Eastern Cape in order to develop strategies to improving the FET-HE interface in the region. The main areas discussed will be policy implications and challenges from a regional perspective, access/admission issues and articulation pathways for FET learners into HE programmes, case studies of curriculum alignment and progression as well as the challenges being faced by FET Colleges.

Attempting the Integration of Academic Literacy Development in a Final Year B.Com Marketing Class.

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Marketing is undergoing revolutionary change and cannot be taught by simply imparting theoretical frameworks that are increasingly being challenged in academia and disregarded in the world of practice. Effective teaching and learning of Marketing at a Final Year B.Com level requires students who are able to identify problems, source, evaluate and interrogate relevant and credible information and then construct and present critical, succinct and convincing arguments, insights and solutions that are more often than not unique. Applying a combination of action and case study research methodology during 2009 and 2010 the author discovered the disparity or diversity in preparedness and competencies and the generally low levels of academic literacy of students to be serious incumbents to learning. In response he attempted to integrate academic literacy development in a seven week third year marketing course by implementing significant changes aimed to provide spiraled and scaffold support to student learning. This paper/presentation describes the journey, draws on illuminating pedagogic literature and presents the outcomes of these initiatives – both their successes and their failures, providing cause for optimism and lessons to build on.

Assisting open distance education (ODE) staff in the implementation of online delivery methodologies: a proactive response to transformation

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Research reveals online technologies as indispensable for educational reform. During the past two decades e-teaching and - learning have evolved from marginal, secondary forms of education to a commonly practiced and increasingly preferred mode for delivering educational courses – especially in open distance learning (ODL) institutions. Like many universities worldwide our institution, a large ODL university, is compelled to review its traditional paper-based approach and to embrace 21st century teaching technologies.

Transforming from a mainly print-based institution to an institution using an online learning management system (LMS) presents academics with distinctive challenges. Lecturers inexperienced in using a LMS as part of their everyday facilitation activities are often overwhelmed when faced with the realities of online environments. Although much has been done in our institution to empower lecturers to use the university's LMS, research showed that there was no notable change in lecturers' use of the LMS. This could be attributed to lecturers' limited skills in using the available technology as well as limited or no e-facilitation experience.

As lecturers are increasingly expected to take up online teaching and learning responsibilities – adhering to the university's drive to meet the growing demands of higher education - it became evident that a support initiative was imperative. One cannot expect lecturers to change from a traditional paper-based approach to an online approach without providing them with the necessary skills and experience to ensure successful and confident use of the online methodology. To address this need we developed an in-house training site to assist lecturers in gaining skills and experience in using our university's LMS. This paper describes the implementation and effect of this staff development programme. Evaluation and reflection of the programme showed that lecturers benefited from the training and were more confident in using the LMS and embracing the challenge of moving to online delivery.

Multilingual glossaries: A solution for linguistic diversity and academic discourse acquisition in HE?

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In this presentation, it is argued that although the language of teaching, learning and assessment at NMMU is English, students' primary languages can be mobilized to facilitate and enhance learning. In this regard, internal research has indicated that black and coloured students' pass rates are low. As an attempt to salvage this situation, language support in the form of multilingual glossaries (in English, Afrikaans & isiXhosa) has been provided in some instances. Multilingual glossaries are developed by communities of practice inside and outside the University. These glossaries are expected to change the monolingual academic environment at NMMU to one in which linguistic diversity is regarded as a resource and not as a challenge. The research is aimed at demonstrating that students' understanding of disciplinary concepts could be improved through the use of glossaries, thereby leading to the improvement of their academic performance and pass rates. A group of 39 Tourism Management students, in a Communication tutorial are participating in a research conducted by the Centre for Teaching, Learning & Media to develop and measure the effectiveness or not of these multilingual glossaries. The data, in the form of qualitative and quantitative student feedback and pre- and post-test scores, will be presented.

Professional development of postgraduate supervisors: Opportunities for renewal and change

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As regards supervisory practice, there seems to be ample evidence to suggest that supervisors frequently base their approaches towards supervising their students on their own, often unexamined, experiences as research students. This paper will explore the possibilities for changes in the development of supervisors of master's and doctoral students. Drawing mainly on conceptions of research and scholarship (Brew 2001; Pearson & Brew 2002) as well as proposed supervisor development schemes (Pearson & Brew 2002), twenty one supervisors were asked if and how their perceptions of the role of being a supervisor changed after a supervisor development intervention. In addition, the feedback from supervisors who attended a conference on postgraduate supervision was analysed. Results indicate that two-thirds of the supervisors who participated in innovative workshop interventions reported gains in at least five developmental areas, including : (1) From being perceived as a subject expert only to taking a stronger mentoring role; (2) A change from solely product-and results-oriented to being also process-oriented; (3) A shift from little emphasis on the relevance of students' research to attaching more importance to research relevance; (4) From little mention of the importance of project management to more frequent references to project management processes; and (5) Working with thesis assessment criteria up front rather than considering these criteria later in the supervision process. Similarly, supervisors who participated in postgraduate supervision conferences and opportunities for networking reported important developmental gains. The paper suggests that supervisors seem to assess their supervisory roles and responsibilities more critically after and as a result of innovative development interventions. It is proposed that these interventions might be needed to increasingly sensitise supervisors for their key roles and actions. Further research into whether perceptual changes of supervisors indeed change supervision practices is also suggested.

The introduction of a tutor programme to facilitate teaching and learning in the Department of Applied Language Studies at NMMU.

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The Department of Applied Language Studies (DALS) offers applied language modules to most of the faculties at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

Currently 25 000 students are registered at NMMU. DALS teaches approximately 5000, or one fifth, of the total number of registered students of NMMU. This is done with 9 permanent lecturing staff and 3 Intermittent Work Contract staff (IWC) staff.

Teaching a language, especially to mainly Second Language (L2) students, is fairly demanding. In addition, the assessment of tests, essays and assignments can be time consuming. The above factors created a situation where lecturers may have had too much work to be effective in the classroom.

A possible solution was to look at a tutor programme that would ease the workload on lecturers, facilitate and maintain the quality and standard of teaching and learning in DALS and be cost effective at the same time.

This paper will discuss how DALS established and implemented a tutor programme in 2010. Simao, et al, defines tutoring as:

"the academic or educational dimension, which addresses the assistance

given to students in their endeavours to pursue their academic activities

with success, while promoting autonomy in their studies" (2008).

The tutor programme was based on the theoretical framework that "the role of the tutor is to complement, not replace, classroom instruction." Furthermore it had to be established that the role of the tutor is not to re-teach the material that was covered in class but to help the students understand key concepts and practice applying the theory in practical class room situations (Gale Encyclopedia of Education: Tutoring, 2002). Firstly, the paper will outline the recruitment and training process, then the implementation of the programme and, lastly, the evaluation and success of the programme based on student results.

ID: **215**
Interactive Demonstration (60 min)
Topics: Innovative ways of using technology to promote teaching and learning and student success.
Keywords: clickers,cellphone,connect,stellenbosch university

e-Clickers - Using mobile phones as clickers/ audience-response systems

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Clickers or audience response systems are gaining popularity around the world with even the New York Times reporting on the educational potential of this in-class educational technology*. In South Africa there seems to be a renewed interest in the tehnology's affordances with a few universities piloting different systems at the start of 2011.

The Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) engaged with lecturers and deans from Stellenbosch University and together with our Information Technology department, formalised a project around the development of a system for e-Clickers, called Maties Connect. The idea is to plan for the future use of clickers at Maties, a future we feel is defnitely cellphone/ multi-device based (as opposed to physical audience response units), and rooted in solid teaching and learning principals**.

In this demonstration, we intend to:

(a - 10 minutes) Provide a very short introduction to the concept of mobile clicker systems and how Stellenbosch University approached the design and development of an "e-clicker" system - this will include preliminary results of pilot studies;

(b - 10 minutes) Give all participants the opportunity to experience and critically discuss the system live from their own cellphones and other devices as "students";

(c - 15 minutes) Show how the system could be set up and used by facilitators;

(d - 15) Show how the system could be replicated for use at other institutions;

(e - 10 minutes) Get feedback and suggestions from all participants in an interactive discussion.
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* Steinberg, J. 2010. More professors give out hand-held devices to monitor students and engage them. The New York Times, Nov 15, 2010. Online: http://goo.gl/O8X61 (Accessed 15 April 2011).

** Beatty, I.D (et al) 2006. Designing effective questions for classroom response system teaching. Am. J. Phys. 74 (1), 31-39.

e-Clickers @ Maties: Using cellphones as clickers/ audience response systems

JP Bosman, Marinda Van Rooyen
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Through this poster we intend to:

(a) Provide a very short introduction to the concept of mobile clicker systems and how Stellenbosch University approached the design and development of an "e-clicker" system - this will include preliminary results of pilot studies;

(b) Visually create a clicker continuum to indicate the variety of teaching and learning uses of this kind of system.

(c) Graphically represent the system's architecture for replication at other institutions.

(d) Explain how the system works both from a student and facilitator perspective.

(e) Show possbile future scenarios around the implementation and further development of the system.
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Student experiences in intercultural postgraduate research supervision relationships

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The promotion of intercultural space is becoming increasingly important in international higher education contexts due to a variety of factors that co-determine student, staff and faculty populations. Some of these factors are the migration communities who are predominantly minorities (e.g. Europe), indigenous peoples who are minorities (e.g. Australia, New Zealand), multi-culturalism due to historical developments (e.g. South Africa) and the imperatives of internationalisation and glocalisation in higher education. Subsequently intercultural space in postgraduate education also demands focussed attention. One dimension of this matter is manifested in the fact that postgraduate research supervisors and their students do not always belong to the same culture and this could have a wide variety of implications for the nature of the supervision relationship, the progress of the study and other related matters. This paper reports on the experiences of Master's and Doctoral students who were in a multi-cultural research supervision relationship in a particular faculty at a South African university from 2007 to 2010.

Qualitative research was conducted by collecting data through unstructured focus group interviews; these were followed up by individual interviews and observation of a group contact session between supervisors and Master's students. An integrated theoretical framework was developed from the literature on intercultural education and postgraduate supervision. This framework will be used to analyse the interview transcriptions by coding, categorising and identifying themes. As this process is still on-going, the outcomes are not yet known. It is envisaged that the outcomes will inform the development of a model for intercultural research supervision of postgraduate students and that this model could benefit the wider postgraduate community. Follow-up research will include supervisor experiences in the same context.

Analysing Teaching and Learning at Six Historically Disadvantaged Universities

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This paper draws on a large piece of commissioned research which attempts a 'meta-analysis' of teaching and learning at all twenty three South African universities. Previous work (Boughey, 2009, 2010) has reported on teaching and learning at five 'research intensive' universities and four universities of technology. This paper focuses on historically disadvantaged universities and uses Margaret Archer's morphogenetic framework to identify some of the constraints and difficulties related to the transformation of teaching and learning at institutions which were structurally conditioned to produce inferior learning experiences.

The value of the paper lies in the use of a framework to explore and identify what is experienced by those who work and study at the historically disadvantaged universities in a rigorously theorised way. Much of what the paper identifies will therefore not be unfamiliar to HELTASA conference participants but it is anticipated that the use of a rigorous framework will contribute to the development of theory and methodology in the field of Higher Education Studies.

Driving a Teaching & Learning Agenda

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This workshop is aimed at participants who have some responsibility for driving a teaching and learning agenda at various levels within an institution. These levels could include the department, the faculty and, indeed, the entire institution. The workshop will outline a framework intended to assist in the development of a teaching and learning agenda and will then provide space for AD practitioners to identify areas in which they can best exercise agency in their own contexts.

Developing critical professionals to deal with difference: From working with students to working with educators

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The paper poses questions about how to reconfigure a pedagogical project which was initially constructed and implemented for students to one which would be appropriate for higher educators. Troubling knowledges relating to citizenship, social inclusion and difference were the themes of courses taught to students and then educators.

The courses, which were based on Boler and Zembylas's (2003) notion of 'a pedagogy of discomfort' by using PLA techniques and other innovative pedagogical practices, had a common intention with students and academics. The major purpose was to facilitate interaction across boundaries to cultivate critical professionals – whether they were students or higher educators, who would be capable of challenging hegemonic disciplinary discourses. Davidson (2004) proposes the decentring of the academic self as a useful pedagogic tool for critical reflection. 'Decentring' refers to an academic who interrogates the assumptions of his or her own discipline through engagement with perspectives of other disciplines. Our project initially involved encouraging criticality and the decentring of academic selves of senior undergraduate students across disciplines and historically advantaged and disadvantaged institutions. We then focused on educating lecturers across HEIs and disciplines. Reflections on the students' course and more particularly, the two iterations of the higher educators' course, will be considered in terms how to construct a curriculum to provide meaningful learning experiences for educators. These reflections will consider the outcomes of the courses for lecturers, participants' responses and our experiences as initiators of these courses.

Emerging ICTs in Higher Education

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This paper will report on a research project on emerging ICTs in Higher Education designed by a team of researchers across eight South African Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and one International NGO. The study aims to investigate how emerging technologies can be used to transform teaching and learning interactions and paradigms in South African HEIs. More particularly, the research project is intended contribute to local and international knowledge about whether and how qualitative outcomes in higher education could be realised through pedagogies which use emerging technologies.

The presentation will sketch the local and international context for the study, and provide a brief overview of local and international literature regarding the topic. Furthermore, the theoretical and analytical framework which has been used to develop the research instrument and which will be used to analyse the data will be discussed. This framework is based on Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT), which has become recognised for understanding how tools such as emerging technologies and other ICTs are utilised in teaching learning interactions in Higher Education (Engestrom, 1987; Knight, 2002).

In addition to providing an overview of the research design, the paper will describe the design of a scoping questionnaire to establish current practices regarding emergent technologies in South African HEIs. The online questionnaire which will comprise closed and open ended questions was developed using the theoretical framework of CHAT. The reason for using this framework at the outset is to establish the activity systems that frame current practices of use of emerging technologies within South Africans HEIs. Preliminary results from the study will be made available in the presentation.

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Scholars ICT Career Interest Survey

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The career choices of scholars/learners (Grade 9, 11 and 12)have changed in recent years and the important role of social neworking has had a soignifiant influence on scholar/learner career decisions and resources of information. Two previous studies were conducted in the field of ICT career choices and the factorss that influenced scholar/learner career choices.

The study conducted in 2010, included eleven schools in the Eastern Cape Province and 3, 000 questionnaires were distributed and a final amount of 1, 536 questionnaires were returned. The study for the first time included scholars/learners in urban and rural environments. The results indicate that Grade 11/12 learners are more career focused. Law and Education have become more prominent fields of study and Computer Science and Information Technology were considered as second and third career options. The overall results indicate that rural scholars are not interested in Computer Science/Information Systems/Information Technology (CS/IS/IT) careers and have a very limited knowledge of the fields of study. Students of colour were more inclined to indicate that they were interested in ICT careers and female scholars were less inclined to pursue careers in ICT. All scholars had inadequate knowledge of CS, IS and IT.

The results of this study confirm the findings of the two national studies that reported that scholars of colour and scholars with no access to computers are more inclined to pursue ICT careers. The study also found that scholars that have negative perceptions of IT jobs are less inclined to study CS and IS. The study further concluded that scholars lack the interest to pursue ICT careers. The results of this survey indicate the urgent need for similar interventions and emphasises the important fact that scholars do not pursue CS, IS and IT degree programs due to limited knowledge of the fields of study.

ICT 1st Year Career Choice influencing factors

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A number of authors have identified a list of factors explaining why students select certain majors. Researchers found that ICT students studied the program because they loved working with computers (90%) and not for the future financial benefits (6%). Several research studies have pointed out that the most important factor affecting a students' choice of majors was the fact that they had a genuine interest in a field of study. The students' interest in a computing subject ranked higher in importance than any other factor in deciding on an ICT career choice. The perceived importance of "Interest in the career field" when choosing a career, remained high at two South African universities, specifically among first year CIT students.

In South Africa, recent research conducted among scholars and students that focused on the factors that influenced a student's choice of a major, motivational factors and perceptions of the ICT job market. First year students generally indicate that they obtain information from tertiary institution websites, parents, teachers and peers. Marketing material, such as letters to matriculants, brochures and advertisements play a limited role in a student's career choice.

In this study, data were collected from first year students completing the Computer Science and Information Systems programming courses. The first years indicated that their parents and teachers had the greatest influence on their career choice. The students indicated that visits to schools were very helpful in exposing them to new and different career possibilities. The university Open Day, where departments at the tertiary institution showcase career programs and career opportunities, allowed the students to be exposed to a variety of known and unknown study areas and career opportunities. The study highlighted the importance of a departmental web site for obtaining information and assisting in making career choices.

Factors that influence the re-engineering of a tertiary institution website

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Research studies have highlighted the importance of institutional web-sites when obtaining career information and being a source of information. The usability of a web-site is of utmost importance and users become easily frustrated and discontinue utilising a website. Internationally, universities such as Harvard have invested and researched the layout, content and usability of tertiary institution websites. Best business practices in web-site design have been published by researchers, such as the Nielsen group and have provided guidelines on web-site design.

Designers of web-sites need to take the prospective users of the site into consideration. Users are increasingly utilising mobile technologies to access the Internet. In South Africa, a limited number of users have access at school to the Internet, however most learners have cell phones and to a limited extend access to the Internet. The users of a web-site

In this study a tertiary institution re-engineered an award winning web-site taking best business practices, the user's educational background and usability guidelines into consideration. The re-engineered web-site was extensively evaluated and included usability evaluations and eye-tracking evaluations. The users included a wide range of participants, including scholars/learners, the general public, academics and further focused on computer literate and computer illiterate users. The results of the study indicate that users of different education levels acquire information on a web-site differently and that users using mobile technologies require limited and reduced information. The results will further assist web-site designers in developing countries to improve institutional web-site layout and content analysis.

Developing an experiential research writing course experientially

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In this paper we reflect on the purposes, context, experiences and outcomes of an experiential research writing course for academics. We describe in some detail the collaborative process of the course design and the series of activities which are intended to overcome the isolation, 'stuckness', doubt and tendency to procrastinate that academic writers often grapple with. Instead of being the arduous and anxious process that participants normally describe writing to be, in our course the learning and writing are grounded in creativity, exploration and fun. Our course aims to assist practitioners to find their voice and increase productivity in research writing. In the process we aim to build a new ethos of trust and a sense of community among participants.

We show how our own engagement in the curriculum design, workshop activities and course evaluations mirror the learning processes that the research writer-participants engage in. As course designers and facilitators, we work experientially- we act, observe, conceptualise, reflect, give each other feedback and adapt to changing groups and contexts.

We also provide an account of three occasions on which we have presented the course in 2009 and 2010 at the University of the Witwatersrand. On each occasion, the participants, their expectations, the nature of their engagement in the course activities differed markedly, challenging us as both course designers and presenters to be responsive and flexible. We then reflect on some of the other challenges we have experienced as course presenters, including co-presenting to our peers, group cohesion, accountability, difficulties experienced by some participants in learning experientially. We also consider participants' formal and informal evaluations of the course, and report on an enquiry into which research writing skills have been easy or difficult for course participants to implement once the course has finished.

Exploring and troubling dominant conceptions of academic writing and writing centre work in South African higher education

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In a recent meeting of members of writing centres from DUT, NMMU, UWC, UJ, WSU and CPUT, presentations were made outlining aspects of the work we all do in our own writing centres, in our own institutions. What emerged towards the end of the day was a growing sense that while we may be speaking a common language in our theoretical talk about writing centre work, we all approach this work in very different contexts, working with students who have very different needs and levels of ability on entering higher education. We felt that the theoretical and even the practical approaches and underpinnings of many writing centres locally and abroad tends to present a 'one-size-can-fit-all' approach to teaching academic writing, in and outside of writing centres. But the reality is that approaches that may be successful with students who attend an urban university and come from a fairly urban, and resourced educational background may not be as successful at a rural university where most of the students have attended rural and township schools. Issues of language, home background, school background, advantage and disadvantage, to name a few, need to be examined and interrogated by all teachers of writing in and outside of the disciplines. We feel we cannot assume that what works in one context can simply be translated into other different contexts without looking carefully at the practical implications such a transfer, for the teachers and the students.

Reflections on the first two years of an embedded legal writing development initiative at UWC

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In 2010, the Law Faculty at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) became part of a Large Class Project (LCP). The Large Class Project (LCP) is collaboration between the Centre for Improving Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (CITL) and four South African institutions. The aim of the LCP is to identify key mechanisms needed to improve student learning in the context of large class teaching. The Law Faculty at UWC focused on the academic writing of first year students as a key factor for success, and has been engaging with the Writing Centre coordinator to create an embedded and collaborative writing workshops aimed at inducting students into legal writing as a practice. A corollary to this was the intention to lay a firm foundation for the writing, and related thinking and reading capacity, these students will need to develop in further years of study at UWC. Different intervention activities were initiated and carried out, designed to develop the student's academic writing skills as well as their overall coursework performance. The preliminary results are encouraging, and have informed some of the continued interventions currently being pursued in 2011. This paper presents the initial progress of the project focusing on three basic issues. These are: to indicate the progress that has been made to date and what we have learned so far; to highlight key challenges that we have encountered in implementing the project; and to offer some insights on how we plan to proceed with writing support beyond the end of the Large Classes Project, which ends in 2011.

Towards growth: crossing the borders of academic literacy development

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Academic under-preparedness of first-year students and its impact on throughput rates is an international concern well documented in the literature. Linguistic ability forms part of discussions about academic success, as it is argued that a significant percentage of academic success can be construed to the influence of language. Universities therefore support students also linguistically to help them obtain qualifications within the prescribed time.

One such initiative is that of Stellenbosch University's Language Centre (LC). This Centre is responsible for all language and academic literacy (AL, for purposes of this paper synonymous with academic language proficiency) development on campus. During the decade of the Centre's existence changes in the higher education (HE) landscape necessitated significant adaptations to previous approaches underlying AL development. These changes include the so-called massification of HE and the concomitant change in demographic profile of students, changes in school curricula, diversity challenges such as multilingualism, and an apparent decrease in literacy levels.

The LC is currently faced with the question whether AL is more successfully acquired within specific academic disciplines or rather as taught by language experts in a more generic way. Part of the institutional discourse these past ten years was the identification of four approaches to credit-bearing courses: (i) generic courses with a focus on thinking, reading and writing skills; (ii) subject-specific courses where disciplinary specialists include AL development; (iii) courses taught by AL specialists but with discipline-specific content, and (iv) subject-specific courses where AL and disciplinary specialists collaborate.

The purpose of this paper is, firstly, to report on a theoretical investigation to address the above-mentioned challenge by analysing these approaches. It will, secondly, report on an empirical investigation into the success of one of the four, often criticised as undesirable. Lastly, it aims to provide a backdrop against which AL practitioners can make more informed decisions.

ID: **146**
Workshop (120 min)
Topics: Creating new spaces for dynamic teaching and learning to foster student success.
Keywords: self-study; transformation; new spaces; memory work; pedagogy

Transformative Education/al Studies

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Transformative Education/al Studies (TES) is an inter-institutional project involving researchers from the Durban University of Technology, Walter Sisulu University and the University of KwaZulu-Natal and is funded by a grant from the National Research Foundation (NRF). The project aims to support academic staff who are pursuing Masters and Doctoral degrees using the approach of self-study of educational practice in Higher Education Institutions. Another key focus of the project is on developing supervisor expertise in the area of self-study of educational practice.

This project will contribute to the scholarship and practice of learning and teaching in the Higher Education sector by focusing on the vital role that educators play in transforming learning, teaching and assessment practice and curriculum development and design. Another key contribution of the project will be its complementary focus on the academic value of educators' scholarly inquiry into their own teaching and learning practice. Moreover, it will allow critical investigation into what forms of knowledge are of value in South Africa across a wide variety of situations/disciplines/fields.

In this workshop, we will involve participants in creative and participatory self-study activities, such as memory drawing, self-stories, photo-voice, collage, inter alia.This will give participants the opportunity to experience how these kinds of approaches can be used as pedagogic and research approaches, with the aim of creating new, transformative spaces for learning and teaching in higher education.

"Getting more for your dollar". Supplemental Instruction: an innovative tutor programme crossing the borders for change.

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In order to cope with challenges like increasing student numbers, decreasing funding and larger classes many tertiary institutions introduced tutorial programmes as part of their academic support structures for undergraduate modules (McClure, 2007). In addition tutoring sessions have a smaller student-to-tutor ratio than large classes and can provide a forum for active collaborative learning and more individual attention. Universities employ different types of tutorial programmes, for example peer tutoring, faculty tutoring, online tutoring, small group tutoring and one-on-one tutoring. The North West University opted for a cross-year small-group tutoring programme known as Supplemental Instruction(SI). In this type of tutoring, upper year under graduates or post-graduates act as tutors to lower year undergraduates(Topping, 1999). Peer tutoring is fully understood through the lens of social constructivism. Tutors "scaffold" tutees to a more difficult level through social interaction (Vygotsky, 1987). The tutors in the SI programme are trained extensively and are expected to facilitate learning rather than spoon feed the tutees. Ongoing professional training is administered to the tutors including study methods, collaborative learning practices and exam preparation.The students attend SI sessions voluntarily once or twice a week. This study will report on a qualitative case study done at the North West University, Mafikeng Campus, to determine the benefits students and lecturers gain from the SI programme. Data was gathered using interviews, questionnaires and observations. We argue that the SI programme offers more to students than just acquiring knowledge; it equips them with skills to cross many borders that they will be confronted with in their academic life. Emerging results show that students benefit both academically and socially through the SI programme.

A paradigm shift in collaborative learning

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One of the problems that universities experience related to student success is that students are underprepared and find it difficult to negotiate the university system. Campbell and Koring (2005:10) noted that many students consider their peers to be accurate sources of academic information and support, rather than faculty and staff.

At the University of the Free State (UFS) the New Academic Tutorial Programme (NATP) addresses student success rates by assisting students academically. In the past tutors have been trained in peer facilitation skills based on Supplemental Instruction (SI) principles in order to create an environment where peers can learn from one another through a teaching and learning process. Continued research at the institution has shown that academic advising practices need to be revised in order to address retention rates, therefore a paradigm shift from a prescriptive to a developmental, student-centered academic advising approach was necessary. This approach to academic advising has been followed in many U.S higher education institutions over the past fifty years. The UFS has contextualized this approach to academic advising to find a way to address students' academic success in the South African context.

During the first quarter of this year academic advising training was added to the NATP, empowering tutors to help their peers to understand the university system better and refer them to reliable sources on campus. Continuous qualitative research has been conducted during the year through surveys and focus groups.

The objective of this study is to look at whether the additional skills provided to tutors enabled them to provide better academic support to students of the UFS, and whether students found it beneficial to have someone they can relate to for guidance, not only in module-specific matters, but also with their general academic goals and objectives.

The Effectiveness Of The Catt Programme By Bridging The Gap Between University And Industry

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The increase in the provision of suitably qualified engineers is essential for growth in the economy, expansion and maintenance of infrastructure and alleviation of poverty in South Africa. The current shortage of engineering staff in most organizations in South Africa has focused the attention on the increasing demand for engineering staff. This paper addresses the challenges faced by industry to upskill the education of employees in the engineering field in order to stay abreast of new technologies. Furthermore, possible strategies are explored on what it is that higher education institutions (HEIs) can pursue that will contribute towards an increase in the supply of suitably qualified engineering staff.

A large company in the Vaal Triangle, Gauteng Province, South Africa, requested a university to assist them in Converting Artisans to Technicians (CAtT Programme). They agreed to grant the students five hours per week study time, as long as the programme was offered on site in order to eliminate travelling time. To meet the client's request for in-house training, the university developed an innovative programme and implemented technology to promote teaching and learning in ensuring that the client's needs are met. This programme was recently broadened to include another site of the company in the Kwa-Zulu Natal Province. It was decided to implement the Virtual classroom concept. The virtual classroom make up could be defined as "an institution, engaged in a delivery of degree granting programs in Higher Education, using technology and methodology outside a traditional classroom". Results obtained by comparing the pass rates and by analyzing a questionnaire completed by the students in the in-house training programme, indicated that this joint effort can and will contribute towards closing the gap between the University and Industry and at the same time provide well-qualified engineers and technicians to the global market.

ID: **169**
Short Paper (20 min)
Topics: Creating new spaces for dynamic teaching and learning to foster student success., Exploring literacies and their development in higher education.
Keywords: Freirean philosophy, integrated arts, Continued Professional Development of teachers

A Freirean perspective: teaching literacies in an integrated arts curriculum

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The curriculum for schools in SA is aimed at transforming society by transforming the individual to live in a democratic society. A democratic society is an open society where the individual is liberated and is allowed to engage critically. This resonates with Paulo Freire's pedadgogy.

The researcher is currently busy with the implementation of a qualification for Continued Professional Development (CPD) of teachers to enable them to effectively engage with the integrated arts curriculum in schools.

In this paper the researcher intends to explore a theoretical framework for this CPD and the multi-faceted literacy education in the arts with adult learners. She will do so within a Freirean perspective. To this end she will draw on selected aspects of Freirean critical pedagogy, namely:
- transformation education
- liberating education
- critical dialogue and
- critical literacy.

How I use living theory to explain my multiple border crossings in higher education

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I am Irish by birth and upbringing. I studied and taught Philosophy and Theology in Italy (1994-2004), where I experienced and used traditional lecturing methods. Currently I teach Philosophy to undergraduates from various disciplines at Strathmore University in Nairobi. My multiple border crossings to respond proactively to diversity and the need for transformational learning in higher education really began upon my arrival in Kenya in 2004, when I faced challenges which I had to overcome to be effective in my teaching practice.

In this paper I show how I am using living theory action research to develop a "living" methodology based on in-depth reflection on my teaching experience and student feedback over time, to adjust various aspects of my teaching practice to foster transformative learning in my students. This process has enabled me to identify the educational values which motivate my work and which are now the standards of judgement against which I evaluate the effectiveness of my practice. As I narrate my response to some of the more relevant challenges faced, using specifically designed learning projects, I will show how my personal living educational theory has developed.

The significance of my paper lies in the living theory methodology which I am developing, along with my living educational theory, which offers insights regarding the role of interpersonal love, mutual respect for each others' freedom and the desire to facilitate personal growth as key values in developing educational relationships which can facilitate transformative learning.

I think I can show that true effectiveness in "crossing borders for change in higher education" can only be achieved if we are willing to change ourselves in practice in the first place, and so be in a position to help our students want to change themselves and contribute to improving our society

Crossing borders: Who and How?

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In this paper, I respond to Jansens's call (2009, 191) for theory on the complexities involved in the personal transformation of all South Africans. I argue that, at the core of social and political transformation in South Africa, is its impact on the emotional lives of ou citizens. Hence, if we want to cross the border of transformation in South African Higher Education, students' and staff's 'feelings about', for example, the past, fellow South Africans, the country, the future, and so forth, need to change. This can only be done if we relocate the emotions in our conception of education, because without that, the establishment of a socially just and transformed South African higher education landscape will remain elusive.

The use of technology in the implementation of community engagement in large classes

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The aim of this paper is to explore the effectiveness of technology to assist with the implementation of community engagement projects in the curriculum of undergraduate Education students at the University of Pretoria. The projects to be discussed form part of a compulsory undergraduate course, (Language Across the Curriculum), for all 2nd year students at the University of Pretoria. The course explores effective communication strategies linked to the requirements of the teaching profession to enhance effective communication with learners through the medium of English. In this presentation the lecturer will focus on the complexity of managing a large group of students. The students all take part in community engagement projects, where they have the opportunity to apply the skills learned in the course in a real life situation. They tutor learners in various contexts such as aftercare centres, after school programmes, educational programmes in local prisons and programmes for vulnerable children. Due to the large numbers of students (900 in 2011) the lecturer collaborated with a colleague from the Department of Education Innovation in using Blackboard system (the university's in-house brand for the learning system is clickUP) as well as other tools to communicate with the students and to organise the projects more effectively. These tools have also been used for assessment purposes, which will be discussed in detail. Research is now being conducted to determine the success of the implementation of Blackboard system and to find ways to improve this. Surveys are to be completed by the students to find out more about their experiences of using the system and the frequency of their use of technology throughout the course will be analysed. From this, deduction can be made on the effectiveness of the tools available to the students, the frequency of usage.and the impact on student engagement.

Teaching interventions to cultivate student success

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Students in their first year of study in the programme National Diploma: Office Management and Technology have had difficulties with understanding concepts and terminology in Personnel Management. For the last four years this subject has been labelled as an 'at risk' subject because of the low pass rate. Initially the low pass rates were only attributed to students' lack of understanding and conceptualising of the various terminologies used in the subject, and students' attitudes.

The academic literacy skills gap between secondary and tertiary students is a continuous concern, as not only do they need to grapple with new terminologies in the prescribed literature, they also need to understand that they have to take responsibility for their learning, by using the available resources provided at the institution. Although the lack of academic literacy skills was one of the factors which contributed to students not being able to critically analyse information or text, one could not ignore the role of the lecturer, and that a change was required in the methodology, to address the challenges experienced by the students. As the students' profiles changed, lecturers however initially failed to adapt to the challenges, or potential "at risk" students.

With the escalation of the low pass rate for this subject, lecturers were encouraged to reflect and realised that an immediate intervention was required, hence the revised pedagogical approach. This paper will assess the interventions, so as to ascertain whether these interventions contributed to the improved performance of the students in this "at risk" subject.

Students' learning satisfaction from a blended learning environment for physiology

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A blended learning environment combines the advantages of face-to-face and technology-assisted learning (TAL) to promote learning satisfaction. An added advantage is that different modes of instruction support different types of knowledge acquisition (Hui, Hu, Clark, Tam & Milton: 2008:246).

Hui et al. (2008:250) identified learning effectiveness, perceived course learnability and learning community support as determinants of learning satisfaction. Each of these determinants is supported by different modes of instruction.

In a constructivist learning environment learning effectiveness of the initial conceptualisation phase is best supported by face-to-face instruction to assist with the construction of schemata (Kopp, 2009:1211). The enriched intellectual stimulation of interactive computer-based presentations of scenarios used for case studies can be used to support more advanced problem-based learning activities. The flexibility of branching and immediate feedback is a further advantage of TAL to support each student according to their personal needs.

The difference in learning style affects a student's perception of the learnability of the course. Kolb (1985) describe a learning cycle to distinguish between perception (concrete and abstract conceptualisation) and process (reflective observation and active experimentation). Hu (2007:1108) reported that the only phase of Kolb's cycle for which TAL was perceived better than face-to-face was for abstract conceptualisation.

Vygotsky's theory claims that instruction is most efficient when students engage in activities within a supportive learning environment and when they receive appropriate guidance that is mediated by 'tools' used in the learning environment.

Access to the academy: transforming learning in a Science Extended Studies course

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Gross participation and throughput rates in higher education institutions in South Africa indicate an inequitable and poorly functioning system. Using a theoretical frame of learning as an embodied way of knowing and being, this interpretive study examines how an intervention that includes an overt approach in dealing with the nature of science, coupled with active student involvement in an independent research project in a Science Extended Studies course, can enhance epistemological and ontological access. Analysis of project outcomes and student critical reflections revealed evidence of students gaining access to the scientific and academic Discourse through (a) developing improved procedural and principled scientific knowledge, (b) engaging meaningfully with the language, norms, limitations and conventions of the Discourse, (c) integrating everyday knowledge into more abstract scientific knowledge, and (d) developing personal scientific discursive identities. It is concluded that curriculum interventions that focus on both epistemological and ontological aspects of learning would be appropriate not only in Extended Studies programmes but throughout the higher education sector.

An Academic & Community Outreach Partnership across Disciplines to improve Collaboration

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In the White Paper of 1997 which informed the Higher Education act of 1997, a key objective of Universities identified was to promote and develop social responsibility and awareness amongst students. The explicit mission of interdisciplinary approaches together with community outreach forms part of one of NMMU's values, 'Ubuntu'. In order to enhance collaboration, the Department of Computing Sciences and the Centre for Extended Studies at NMMU initiated an integrated curriculum-based community engagement project. This came about with the sharing of 2 people's passion and commitment to enhance awareness, build relationships across two different departments and outreach to the community.

Computer Skills and Academic and Life Skills were integrated by students of both courses to serve the community. The advantage of the collaboration of the two departments has led to sharing of ideas, inclusion of concepts in study material, evaluation of projects from both departments and identifying curriculum similarities in order to enhance the students learning experience.

A spin-off from this project is that it has influenced other departments to engage in similar projects. The department of Computing Sciences has for example also started including community outreach for programming students on another campus.

Through this paper, we will demonstrate that collaboration between academic departments can lead to change and in thus doing, assist with the crossing of borders. We will also be focusing on the value of collaboration and social responsibility for students.

The focus of the paper will thus be on a description of the collaborative approach, the evaluation of the project for students as well as the influence on other departments. This will be demonstrated by the use of questionnaires and reflection by the lecturers involved. As this is an ongoing project the aim is to extensively research the value of such collaboration and to influence the practice of peers.

SoTL as catalyst to create pathways that cross traditional teaching and learning/research borders in academic work

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Mergers of universities pose particular challenges such as how to develop a common understanding about the nature of academic work, teaching and learning, what constitutes excellence, reward and recognition systems, and promotion criteria. The main objective of this paper will be to trace the visioning of the nature of academic work at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU), which came into being in 2005 as a result of merging three divergent institutions. The process that has evolved at NMMU to conceptualize the role of scholarship across academic activities, teaching and learning, research and scholarly outputs; and community engagement undertaken by academics will be reflected on. A key catalyst in the conceptualization process has been critical debates, expert input and a position paper about the nature and role of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) to enhance teaching and learning.

The specific objectives of the session will be to provide (a) an overview of the visioning process, (b) evidence of how debates and critical discussion about SoTL and SoTL research studies have institutionalized the role of SoTL in enhancing teaching and learning, and (c) provide information on how the process is leading to the development of three career pathways for academics, one of which has a primary focus on expertise and excellence in teaching and learning and SoTL.

Attendees can expect to (a) be exposed to the complexities of a merged university and the opportunities that this provides to reconceptualise academic work and (b) the role that SoTL can play in rethinking the nature of teaching and learning, research and community engagement.

Initiating the improvement of the quality of teaching of Novice lecturers

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Studies to date have established that recognized skills to improve teaching (reflection and double-loop problem-solving) have not been successfully developed in the developmental training given to lecturers and that the dichotomy between teaching and research persists.

This study focuses on how novice lecturers engage with educational issues formally and informally. An overview of the dialogical relationship between educational theory and discipline practices on the teaching development of novice lecturers will be undertaken. The possibility of exploring emergent workplace teaching practices and of integrating discipline practice into educational theory coupled with the recontextualisation of learning theories according to the professional experience of the novice lecturer, which appears to be largely ignored, will also be considered.

The holistic effect of these aspects on the effective teaching development of novice lecturers will be broached through action research. The complex interrelationship between institutional imperatives, the influence of a community of practice, the preferred identity or inclination of the novice lecturer towards research or teaching and the incentives and rewards for the individual, faculty and institution in terms of quality of teaching will be the field of study.

Postgraduate formative assessment – pearls and perils

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Dietz et al., (2006:11,12) outline eight of the "systemic" problems in postgraduate supervision in South Africa. Five of the factors highlight competence, lack of formal training and level of experience of supervisors. The authors also add that "bad practice in doctoral supervision is therefore sustained by a lack of effective interventions from within, or outside of, institutions to correct these problems."

Postgraduate supervision and assessment are specialised and complex educational and pedagogical tasks that require specific expertise and interpersonal skills from the supervisor. The ultimate purpose of this process is to assist the academic development of the student by providing appropriate feedback with which the student can identify strengths and shortcomings in the thesis or dissertation. There is the perception that the feedback from the supervisor may impact on the successful completion and quality of a thesis or dissertation. It however remains a theoretical assumption that formative assessment (supervision) needs attention because specific studies to focus on the specific topic are not available. This situation potentially questions the quality of the supervision processes since there is no known golden standard to maintain.

A university in the United States of America (USA) was used as a qualitative case study to investigate the postgraduate formative assessment process. The information collected was added to the literature on postgraduate supervision and used to draw up guidelines for formative postgraduate assessment. These guidelines emphasise the formative process usng a "research committee" . Additionally it provides for collaboration in the process to eliminate the isolation of both the supervisor and the student.

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Exploring the tension between institutional learning management systems and emergent technologies: staff perspectives at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology

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Perceptions on the use of institutional Learning Management Systems, such as Blackboard, amongst staff and students have been widely researched. However, with the growing availability of free, easy to use and visually appealing web applications and better and more stable access to the Internet (especially through the use of mobile phones), staff and students are relying more and more on emerging technologies to support teaching and learning. Emerging technologies are defined as technologies (or practices) that are likely to enter mainstream use in higher education, which will affect teaching and learning over the next one to five years (Johnson et al. 2011) and are often not part of the institutional support structures. Examples of emerging technologies are social media, mobile technology or ebooks. This study aims at understanding the use of emerging technologies at a large University of Technology in South Africa. Data was collected from academic staff through questionnaires and analysed using the statistical software package SPSS. Follow-up interviews were conducted with selected staff members to explore some of the issues uncovered in the surveys in more depth. Using Czerniewicz and Brown's (2005) adaptation of Laurillard's conversational framework (2002), the study establishes usage pattern of staff relating to emerging technologies for teaching and learning. In addition, the study reports findings on staff's perception on advantages and challenges for the use of the institutional learning management system versus emergent technologies and implications for technical and instructional support that the institution will have to consider when promoting the use of emerging technologies in teaching and learning.

Professional development through formative evaluation

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Formative evaluation and its associated methodology of reflection on practice are used extensively in academic staff development. In reflecting on formative evaluation processes in both more traditional and newer programmes conducted at our university a number of variables reported in the literature were observed to have influenced academic staff members' ability to reflect and change practice. Drawing on illustrative cases, this paper argues that explicit attention needs to be given to additional variables concerned with the nature of the knowledge being taught, academic identity and the availability of a community of educational practitioners if academic developers are to foster critical reflection as an essential element of formative evaluation and productive change in practice.

The Role and Scope of a Foundation Programme at a Private Higher Education Provider: A case of Ugly Ducklings or the Goose that lays the Golden Egg

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To offer a foundation programme, we're often told one needs a healthy dose of optimism and a resilient belief in ugly ducklings and eagles that are living as chickens. However in the context of a 'for profit institution', equity, widening of access and redress are often evaluated equally with market demand and profitability at a managerial level. This paper seeks to explore the role and scope of a foundation programme as part of a programme review process at a private higher education provider and comment on some of the challenges and opportunities found within this context. The perceived changes in matric quality and the implementation of a move to the Higher Education Qualification framework, have led many institutions to raise entrance criteria and move towards extended programmes. This foundation programme is offered in the context of growing market demand coupled with high accountability in terms of value for money. This with the divergent pressures of 'for profit' management and educational objectives result in a need for a clear shared understanding by all stakeholders of the role and scope of a foundation programme. This paper finds that the value of the foundation programme for both students and the institution is centered not only in the opportunity for access but also the success of these students in their degree studies.

"You just try a bit on your own": Purpose and identity in student writing in health science

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The aim of this paper is to explore how a written assignment was used to assist students in positioning themselves in a new discourse community. Qualitative data was obtained from three student focus groups who discussed their understanding and experience of a written task which required each student to produce a medical case report during a block spent in a hospital environment. These structured interviews together with interview data from the lecturer were transcribed and compared.

A thematic analysis of the transcribed interviews enables an exploration of how the students understood the writing task and how the lecturer sought to challenge prevailing ideologies. The resulting insights into issues of identity and power at play in this context are linked with the notion of discoursal choices in terms of appropriate genres available to the students and the question is asked whether the lecturer achieved her goals in setting the task.

The paper makes the claim that, while work on identity which has characterised the research literature has generally been restricted to notions of hegemony in the discourse of medicine, this should not exclude a focus on issues of writer purpose with the aim of allowing students to achieve inclusion within their new community.

The E in e-Learning = engagement

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Technology is a part of our daily lives – cell phones, computers, digital research, commerce, banking, etc. And in Higher Education, this fact means that we must quickly adopt these technologies in order to avoid obsolescence – both for us, as educators, and for our graduates as participants in the world. Therefore, educators are constantly using and teaching with these new technologies in order to both improve our teaching and to improve students' learning. At Unisa, we have been investigating an increased use of online e-Learning technologies.

While Unisa's LMS has been up and running for over a decade now, the model has been a blended approach to e-Learning with an emphasis on printed study materials and a blend of online and other media support. But in the past few years, there has been a decided shift in the blended mode continuums to more use of the online learning environment. In 2010 a Senate decision was taken to develop an e-Learning teaching model for postgraduate qualifications, which would mean almost fully online e-Learning.

As part of this initiative, the authors worked on a pilot project with academics from the College of Science, Engineering and Technology. The pilot module for this was an Honours module in the School of Computing, where all the students must have access to computers and to the internet. Using the existing LMS at Unisa, the course development team has re-designed the course and it went into implementation for 2011 students. In brief, rather than students receiving guidance from the academics in the form of printed tutorial letters and study guides, the e-Learning students now have had to make the shift to an interactive e-Learning model...

One more starfish: Assessing value in a student-staffed writing centre

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Writing centres are well established structures in the landscape of higher education, finding favour, for varying reasons, with management, staff and students. Changes to this landscape, specifically the move towards "managed education" (Mahala, 2007), impact on the way writing centres conceive themselves, enact their business and, critically for this paper, the way they understand and assess their impact. While assessing the impact of writing centres has been divided between assessing the value provided to the writer and the value for money provided to the institution or sponsors, the pressure to prove "impact" or "usefulness" to the university is increasing, both globally and locally. Locally, writing centres are under pressure to meet the needs of an increasing number of students, both first and second-language speakers of English, who, in the transition from high school to university, face major reading and writing difficulties. While the number of students using a writing centre may increase, an impact assessment must assess whether the interventions offered translate to "gains" for the student and the institution. Using data obtained from an impact assessment undertaken by a major University in the Western Cape (including versions of essays; questionnaire data; interviews with students, consultants, management and staff; and observations and recordings of one-on-one consultations and workshops), this presentation will attempt to outline how value is constructed by different stakeholders and how this writing centre and its consultants navigate conflicting value demands.

The Changing Environment for Higher Education: Going Global-Staying Local

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We are in a period of enormous change in higher education across the entire globe. Nations and regional economic areas recognize that applying knowledge to local economies is essential to economic growth, personal and social well-being.

With global electronic networks, the growth of open source materials, and Web 2.0 applications (such as YouTube, Wikipedia, Facebook, Twitter, and the Khan Academy, as examples), valuable knowledge and potential applications of this knowledge are increasingly embodied in networks rather than in books or even within human minds.

Universities are faced with new challenges as well as new opportunities in this rapidly changing environment, where knowing how to learn, how to collaborate, and how to access what one needs to know quickly and efficiently, are essential skills learners of all ages in all settings must develop.

Dr. Hanna will explore these leadership and pedagogical challenges for higher education institutions, and will offer some strategic options for the future.

ID: **164**
Comprehensive Paper (40 min)
Topics: Creating new spaces for dynamic teaching and learning to foster student success., Professionalising teaching and learning in higher education and establishing collaborative communities of practice.
Keywords: discourse, collaboration, literacies, teaching practices

Literacy engineering discourse collaboration: Practice implications

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Research and South African Higher Education (HE) experiences over the last 20 years confirms that that no student has acquired literacy naturally. As literacy acquisition depends on literacy practices that students have acquired in the past and those that are specifically extended to them in the present, the teaching and learning of literacies like writing also need to be facilitated into disciplinary discourses (Jacobs, 2007: 870). However, content lecturers tend to treat content as bodies of knowledge and often pay little attention to how students know, process or apply that knowledge. They become "immersed in their disciplines that they are unaware of the specificity of the cognitive and lingual demands they are making" (Kapp 1998:28). Consequently, to gain access to academic literacy, students often have to "invent" the expectations within the lecturer's mind as these expectations are seldom made overt and often act as gatekeepers for success in HE (McKenna 2004: 279).

This paper describes a situated engineering project at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) which is underpinned by collaboration between Applied Language Studies (DALS) and Mechanical Engineering. The collaboration requires language practitioners and engineering experts to negotiate on academic literacies practices, discourse understandings, reports as genres as well as literacy concerns so that engineering students can acquire the necessary academic literacies to be successful in HE and in the workplace. As the collaboration intends to facilitate the embedding of teaching and learning of literacies into disciplinary discourses enacted in genres (Jacobs 2007b:870), interactive and sustained collaboration is needed to situate the teaching and learning of literacies, especially the writing of different kinds of genres in mainstream curricula. The paper focuses on social practices and organisational circumstances that generate and / or delimit specific discourses practices.

Providing epistemological access to physics students within an extended curriculum programme at the University of the Western Cape (UWC)

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This paper reports on work done in the Physics Department at UWC within the Science Faculty Extended Curriculum Programme (ECP). Ongoing research based course development in the ECP has resulted in the current focus on giving students epistemological access to the study of Physics and improving their success with tertiary studies.

Entering students at UWC have educational disadvantages which predicate against success at tertiary level. However, all available information point to the major impediment to student success at tertiary level in South Africa being the gap between the 'ways of knowing' students have acquired in their schooling careers and those required by the specific discourses to be studied at university. In the context of physics, students generally view physics as disconnected pieces of information to be memorised without understanding and as mathematics in the context of substituting numbers into equations.

The wider social aspects of the discipline and its relevance to their everyday lives and future careers are not appreciated by students. Socio-cultural perspectives on learning in the sciences have guided the development of our intervention strategies to direct students' learning toward gaining access to the ways of knowing of the discipline. Such perspectives suggest that an exclusively individual or cognitivist approach may need to be complemented by those that recognise the social contexts in which science learning takes place, and which place a greater emphasis on learning as participation and identity development. The curriculum, classroom practices, learning outcomes, learning activities and the assessment thereof were aligned, with the purpose of making the discourse of physics explicit to the students. Survey questionnaires were used to explore students' perceptions and experiences of the ECP Physics learning environment. These will be discussed together with the many challenges throughout the delivery of the physics course, with the view to future development and improvement.

In Service of Academic Identity

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Higher education's mandate was articulated in the White Paper of 1997 as encompassing three core pillars: teaching and learning, research, and community engagement. There is evidence, such as institutional audit reports, that community engagement is the most neglected of these areas. This chapter argues that the reason for this apparent disregard is that community engagement has been ill defined and under theorized in an academic context, and its implementation is generally reliant on the goodwill of individual academics.

Community engagement can be characterized as having five areas, one of which, the focus of this chapter, is service-learning. Service-Learning is formally curriculated as part of the academic programme and can be conceptualized as a pedagogic tool drawing on the interrelationship between theorized knowledge construction that students engage in the realm of formal instruction and the experiential knowledge construction in which they engage in the community.

The call for greater social responsiveness from South African higher education institutions has been an impetus driving the infusion of service-learning in curricula. However such calls for infusion are often undermined by assumptions which are explored in this paper. The assumption that service-learning can easily bridge the worlds of the university and society denies the complex differences between these worlds. Furthermore there is an assumption that service-learning is an appropriate and generic pedagogic tool for all disciplines, which disregards the complex differences in the ways in which knowledge is constructed in different disciplines. Basil Bernstein's theories of cultural transmission are used to argue that the relevance and ways with which service-learning can be infused depends on the discipline and its knowledge structures.

Having argued for a more theorized understanding of service-learning, the paper then moves to consider the kinds of staff development spaces which are needed to support the infusion of service-learning in curricula.

ID: **178**
Short Paper (20 min)
Topics: Creating new spaces for dynamic teaching and learning to foster student success., Access and articulation: Exploring linkages and articulation between schools, universities and FET colleges.
Keywords: innovative lecturing, school improvement, practitioner research, living theories

Innovative higher education practices to effect lasting changes in schools, teachers and researchers: a NMMU case study

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The quality of higher education learning and teaching is largely dependent on, and determined by, the quality of schooling that precedes it. The injunction that 'Schools must improve' is stated emphatically at countless HEI meetings. This paper examines what a university education faculty can do to improve its feeder schools. It explores how lasting changes can be effected in the professional performance and educational experiences of teachers and learners at the schools. The paper considers what 'borders' can be crossed and 'new spaces' created to enable teacher education in HEIs to bring about sustainable school transformations in and through their student teachers and researchers. Drawing on a range of postgraduate offerings at NMMU's Faculty of Education (ACEs, BEdHons, MEds & DEds), the paper demonstrates how various innovative practices (including site-based learning, school improvement projects, peer evaluating and action research studies) can inspire and support large numbers of in-service student teachers to become informed and effective change agents in their schools. It examines the processes that have been employed to challenge and enable NMMU's student teachers and researchers to 'cross traditional and habitual borders' and move into the new and unchartered territories of initiating teaching changes and coordinating school reforms. In concluding, the paper argues that undergirding these innovative practices is a fundamental shift in educational philosophy and theorizing; one that is more 'problem-focused' than traditionally conceptualized, and one that recognizes and encourages self-reflective practitioner research that generates and shares 'living' theories.

Second language or academic literacy: Two perspectives on self-reported language problems for students in an Engineering faculty.

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This paper discusses some recent research undertaken in the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment at UCT, which explored the impact of language on our students. The data comes from a survey conducted across the faculty asking students for their opinions on how language has impacted on their studies. The data elicited information on students' language practices at university and uncovered common language-related problems that students experience. Two main domains emerged in which students experienced problems. Firstly, it appears that proficiency in English language heavily impacts on a student's perception of their ability to cope, which has serious affective implications for our African language students, particularly those coming from rural schools where the medium of instruction is a language other than English. Secondly, students report on difficulties relating to what can be described as the 'academic literacies' required to be successful within the engineering programmes. Students provided suggestions for interventions that would help them with both aspects.

Students coming from previously disadvantaged backgrounds are often our target population for Academic Development initiatives. The data suggests that these students are the group affected most by both language and academic literacy expectations. The students at stake are crucial to transformation and redress in post-apartheid South Africa. This paper makes the argument that higher education needs to be responsive to these students who could, and should, be helped through the provision of language-related interventions.

Investigation into students' attitudes and perceptions towards WiSeUp an E-learning system at Walter Sisulu University

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Many institutions globally have advanced in the use of e-learning which brings about positive benefits towards the development of quality education. The success of e-learning in any institution depends on how well Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are utilised and the good quality standard of design and content of e-learning websites which meet the needs of students in particular. However, the benefits and challenges of e-learning have been discussed in a variety of studies globally, moreover understanding students' attitudes and perceptions towards e-learning is a critical issue for improving the value and use of e-learning systems in tertiary education.

All courses have been uploaded on the WiSeUp e-learning system and many lecturers and students have been trained on using the system, but most are not using WiSeUp. Faculty of Science, Engineering and Technology (FSET) was a pilot group and has embarked on training workshops to equip staff and students on e-learning. Four courses from FSET will be used to conduct this research. The main challenge is to improve the current pass rates at WSU; hence it is the researcher's interest to investigate students' attitudes and perceptions of using WiSeUp system at WSU.

This is an action research as the process will be evaluated at the end of each implementation cycle. Interviews will be conducted and a questionnaire will be distributed all active students registered for these courses whereby their perceptions, experiences, challenges and benefits of the system will be identified. However it is believed that globalisation and the need for modernisation is calling for better quality education for all and the application and accessibility of e-learning could speed up the process of transforming education, also understanding students attitudes towards e-learning is significant for improving e-learning usage and results at WSU.

ID: **234**
Short Paper (20 min)
Topics: Professionalising teaching and learning in higher education and establishing collaborative communities of practice.
Keywords: Education, literature, blended teaching methodology, engineering, values

Novel Connections: Engineers and Literature

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The concept of blending the study of literature with engineering exposes a critical point of departure: that the engineer is a member of a community first, one in which he will need some knowledge of the liberal arts in order to be a balanced person. One's wellness will be reflected in the values that one practises; the books and newspapers that one reads; the integrity with which one deals with others at home and in the workplace… among a myriad of other community based activities. Collaboration between faculties, cross-disciplinary partnerships and innovation of the curriculum allow teaching and learning within higher education to break out of traditional practice. This study investigated the before and after effects of the reading of a novel on the immediate written language proficiency of a sample of engineering students, as well as their comprehension proficiency and value choices. Focus was on integrity and ubuntu as reflected in the themes and plot of the novel, and in keeping with the NMMU's Vision 2020 values and ethical related behaviours. The novel of choice was Lord of the Flies.

Digital storytelling and reflection in higher education: A case of pre-service student teachers at a University of Technology

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Employers in South Africa are calling for students graduating from higher education institutions to exhibit the capacity for reflection and higher order thinking. However, many tertiary institutions fall short in allowing opportunities for reflection. As a result, higher education institutions are grappling to find ways of fostering reflection and development of higher order thinking skills amongst their students. This paper argues that digital storytelling if implemented properly is one of the ways which can be used to help higher education institutions in this accomplishment. The paper documents results of the development of digital stories by 29 final year pre-service student teachers at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), South Africa, as part of their assessment in their final year professional development course. The study was informed by structuration theory and levels of reflection and cognitive processing, to help the researchers understand the potential of digital storytelling in enhancing reflection and deep learning. Qualitative methods of collecting data were utilized. Focus group interviews were conducted with the students and their facilitators to elicit whether the development of digital stories led to reflection and deep learning. Findings of the study showed that the development of digital stories promoted deep learning and to varied degree the three levels of reflection.

Computer-assisted Learning: Are we creating a double disadvantage for some students?

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The promotion of computer assisted learning is partly aimed at making learning material more accessible to the majority of students. This includes students who are often unable to buy text books. Unfortunately, there is a part of the student population which is already disadvantaged by the 'digital divide' when they come to university. These are students from schools with little or no computer access and often from digitally limited home backgrounds. Some universities seem to assume that students have the necessary experience and confidence to cope with academic computer demands. This paper reports on an investigation into the impact of limited digital literacy on the development of students' academic identities. The research is part of a bigger project which aims to find effective ways of addressing the need for computer literacy for student success. Through questionnaires, focus groups and interviews, the study attempts to understand the subjective experiences of new students with little previous exposure to computers as they adjust to university. How do they experience the demand for immediate computer proficiency and how does their previous disadvantage affect the way in which their academic identity develops?

Teaching to disrupt

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The core social knowledge that students bring into higher education environments is often damaging and dangerous in the quest to build decency, foster dialogue and advance democracy within South African universities. How can such knowledge be engaged and confronted or, in the terms of Knowledge in the Blood, disrupted? And what are the consequences of epistemological disruption in the emotional and political lives of undergraduate students? The presentation will focus on a compulsory core curriculum for all first-year students at the University of the Free State and the results of a recent pilot in which senior professors (including the presenter) engaged students on five big questions drawn from history, astronomy, law, nanotechnology and theology. The results of this experiential study have major implications for dealing with second generation knowledge in the wake of apartheid.

Improving student performance in large classes teaching - challenges of an external funding and development agent.

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Arising out of a national study on student retention and graduation in higher education in South Africa (Scott, Yeld & Hendry, 2007) and in anticipation of a national system of teaching development grants, the Centre for Higher Education Development (CHED) at UCT submitted a successful application to the Mellon Foundation for funding to initiate, manage and sponsor educational development projects that would contribute to improving student performance in mainstream university curricula and increasing educational expertise among the academics involved. In 2008 the CHED Large Classes Project began its work with four educational development initiatives in large class contexts across four institutions.

This paper reflects on the experience of directing this project over the past three years and seeks to comment on the challenges and opportunities that face a centrally driven strategy aimed at improving student performance. The paper draws on the perceptions of the director, the project participants across four institutions and the institutional leadership that supported their involvement in the project. It seeks to draw out lessons on what structural elements need to be in place and on the role of the external development agent in helping to establish enabling conditions for a project aimed at improving student performance to succeed.

Scott I, Yeld N & Hendry J 2007. A Case for Improving Teaching and Learning in South African Higher Education. Higher Education Monitor No. 6. Council on Higher Education, Pretoria.

Enhancement of mathematical skills to improve teaching and learning in the Extended Curriculum Program (ECP) in the engineering field at MUT

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I have been an extended curriculum program lecturer for the past four years. I have noticed that ECP students have gaps in their mathematical skills. This might be because the mathematics program in secondary school and higher education differ. The mathematics that is taught at ECP foundation is necessary to close gaps that the students had after their secondary education and at the same time prepare them for university mathematics by the end of their first year. This mathematics also service the students with mathematics skill needed for their specific engineering fields.

The study aims at promoting the use of e-learning to address the gap in mathematics skills. These are students with societal backgrounds where the language barrier (Zulu and Xhosa) misleads the true conceptual meaning in mathematical language. They lose meaning whilst translating from English to their mother tongues and back to English used in a mathematical problem. In this paper I discuss the challenges faced by underprepared learners in mathematics in the ECP. Cognitive education combined with other strategies, approaches and practices used to improve their problem solving skills are discussed and analyzed. The challenges and opportunities on some of my interventions as a researcher are highlighted in this paper. Critical reflections are also cited so as to turn the engineering students' challenges into opportunities that will help them towards excellence.

Transformation Challenges in Effective Sexuality Education Teaching of Life Orientation Teachers for Diverse communities.

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The Department of Education introduced South Africa's first Life Orientation curriculum for schools in 2002 mainly as a result of acknowledging the role of schools in the fight against HIV and AIDS. The need for sexuality education in schools was further necessitated by the high rates of teenage pregnancy amongst young school girls in South Africa.

The Life Orientation curriculum includes sexuality education and Life Orientation teachers thus have an obligation to teach it. Learners need sexuality education to enable them to make informed decisions about their sexual health and to assist them with developing their sexual identities.

Despite pressing reasons why sexuality education should be taught at schools and the fact that it has been part of the school curriculum since 2002, recent literature and research indicate that sexuality education at schools is not effective. Some of the main identified difficulties in delivering successful sexuality education are; teachers' personal sexual identities and approach to sexuality, parental resistance, conservative cultural and religious education, poor policy and inadequately trained or poorly motivated teachers and even covert sexual relationships between teachers and learners. Sexuality is also deeply gendered and this means that sexuality education should be informed by knowledge of gender and a commitment to gender equality.

Above all effective sexuality education also appears to be restricted by personal sexual identities, perceptions and cultural background of teachers involved in sexuality education. These aspects appear to be neglected and not adequately addressed during Life Orientation teacher training and education.

The aim of this research is to investigate, interpret and evaluate personal perceptions and cultural beliefs of a sample group of 30 Life Orientation PGCE student teachers at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in order to facilitate transformation of sexuality education in order to make it relevant and responsive to the needs of the...

The case for formal visual literacy teaching in higher education

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Visual literacy is crucially important in a contemporary society dominated by visual media, yet visual literacy education has not (yet) achieved sufficient recognition in terms of tertiary education curricula. Elkins (2008:3) finds it amazing that, given the enormous literature on the visual nature of our world, university curricula "continue to be mainly text-based, with intermittent excursions into visual art and culture".

One criticism against the use of social media technologies is the perceived inability of participants to distinguish between virtual and real worlds and virtual and biological identity. This is the result of an education system that has not given adequate prominence to the development of critical visual literacy. Just as the ability to passively read simple language texts is not considered adequate for an individual to function optimally in current late capitalist society, basic functional visual literacy does not equip people to engage meaningfully with their worlds, contributing to an uncritical consumer society where the distinction between reality and representation fades.

The answer is not to try and resist the new paradigm of a mediated society driven by social media where the virtual has taken the place of face-to-face human interaction, but to embrace visual technologies in a critically aware state that allows people to not only make meaning of images, but also know and understand the codes of its production and reception.

Critical visual literacy is not something that students "pick up" along the way, but requires a well researched syllabus, and teachers trained in the pedagogy of visual communication.

What literacy skills are required for Auditing?

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The notion of some kind of support services for most tertiary students is an accepted fact within the higher education landscape. University of Venda (Univen) has such a course, English Communication Skills (ECS) intended to enhance language literacy levels. As a compulsory course, ECS is ideally intended to support first-entering students to undertake the academic rigours of subsequent tertiary studies. Various challenges have resulted in the possibility of ECS being completed any year in a student's academic career, even after the completion of their degrees.

This picture implies that the notion of ECS as a facilitating course needs to be assessed. The focus of this paper is an evaluation of ECS as a supporting course for the first year Auditing course in the School of Management Science, at Univen. Among the stages in this evaluation process will be the ascertaining of the literacy-enhancing potential of the ECS course and ECS's ability to support the curriculum of a specific career, Auditing. The results have indicated the need for ongoing review of generic and specialised literacy support to respond to Univen students' profile.

Can multilingual interventions assist students' cognitive development in the Extended Accountancy Programme at NMMU?

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The Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University has adopted an additive bilingualism approach as part of their language policy. This allows lecturers to utilise students' mother tongues in the lecture room, to facilitate understanding, while at the same time, lecturing through the official medium of English. One of the ways to harness students' mother tongues is through multilingual interventions. By consolidating in the mother tongue, the lecturer ensures the student reaches Cummins' (1977) Cognitive Academic Language proficiency (CALP), or deep understanding.

In the past, parallel bilingualism was encouraged, where bilingual speakers used one language at a time. However, with the strong trend of global migration in recent years, more and more people are being educated in their second language, and are mixing with speakers of many different languages. This trend has meant that parallel bilingualism has given way to multilingualism, especially in social contexts, where discourse choices must meet the needs of the situated context. Inevitably, people in this situation will mix the languages known to them to ensure understanding. The terms 'Translanguaging' (Creese and Blackledge 2008) and 'Polylingual languaging' (Jorgensen 2010) have been coined to describe this trend.

The use of multilingual interventions as educational tools has been extensively researched internationally, with meaningful results. The trend has also been researched to some extent at primary school level in South Africa, through the Additive Bilingualism Education (ABLE) Project. However, very little research has been done on the topic at tertiary level.

Thus, as multilingual interventions are permissible within the NMMU language policy, the author decided to research the use of these interventions within the Extended NHC Accountancy programme. The research focused on the following issues:
- The number of lecturers who utilised multi-lingual interventions to aid cognitive development
- How the interventions were utilised
- Student views of the value of multilingual interventions
- The impact, if any, on student performance

Orientation: The contribution of the Writing Centre to a collaborative process and student integration

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Orientation is widely accepted as an integral mechanism in assisting students to adjust to the demands of Higher Education (HE). In support of this, the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) made an institutional decision to expand the academic orientation activities provided to students from 2011. The Writing Centre played an integral role in this revised program on the George campus of the NMMU by being involved in two focal areas. The first focus was on the orientation of all first year students, providing a basic introduction to university life and the development of writing and academic skills.

The second focus was on a set of embedded orientation activities in a specific academic program. These activities were largely focussed on the development of writing and academic skills during the course of the first semester and were facilitated by the Writing Centre practitioners.

This paper will provide a wider background to the orientation activities. It will offer a brief summary of the activities presented in both the general and embedded activities and provide preliminary feedback on the perceptions of the broader program, as well as providing some evidence of changes in student performance.

The collaborative nature of this orientation programme is highlighted by the involvement of the Writing Centre, academics and professional staff.

Teaching awards and teaching portfolio development

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There is a perception in universities that research is the privileged function and that teaching is not adequately recognized or rewarded. Part of the problem relates to the appointment and promotion systems within universities, and that needs to be addressed. Many universities in South Africa and elsewhere have resorted to awarding various types of teaching awards to address the problem. In South Africa, most but not all universities have teaching awards and their criteria and processes are openly available online. For those universities which do not have such awards, this workshop would address the what, why and how of instituting them. For both teaching awards and promotion purposes, a teaching portfolio is a useful tool for evaluating candidates. It is also used in the National Teaching Awards instituted in 2009 by Heltasa and the Council on Higher Education (CHE). There is no one-to-one alignment of university's awards criteria and the criteria for the national award, unlike the system in Australia. Teachers who do well within the university context do not necessarily have a national profile. Such a profile is often only achievable through publication yet many excellent teachers feel they do not have time to publish even on the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL). The criteria for SoTL, as for other forms of scholarship, are that there is rigorous documentation of evidence, that it is made public and that it is peer reviewed. The teaching portfolio submitted for evaluation to a committee thus becomes the SoTL artifact rather than there being a need to produce additional publications. The workshop will thus look at how to develop a teaching portfolio for awards or promotion purposes that would meet the criteria for SoTL. The challenge then becomes one of change management: persuading institutions of the status of teaching portfolios.

A New Space for Learning: Designing Process Objectives for Transformative Learning

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In addition to traditional product objectives, we must create space in the design of our learning experiences for process objectives. What are the experiences, encounters, awakenings, and transformations that we want to facilitate (or at least create conducive opportunities for) in the lives of our students in any given course? In this workshop, descriptions and examples of transformative process objectives and approaches to their evaluation will be introduced. A proposed taxonomy of process learning objectives will be introduced. Participants will begin to develop both such objectives and evaluation plans for a course they teach.

Presentation Objectives:

1. Introduce the concept of transformative process learning objectives to participants.

2. Encourage participants to reflect on a course(s) they teach, to consider the unspoken, assumed transformative process objectives they have, and to facilitate their making such explicit.

3. To facilitate participants' skills in purposively building in transformative process objectives in their course design.

Activities:

1. A short introduction to the concept of writing transformative process objectives, including the rationale for such, how to construct them, and how to make evaluation plans for the same.

2. Examples of transformative process objectives and their evaluation plans will be provided. Participants will analyse and critique these in small groups.

3. Working individually, participants will construct a transformative process objective and evaluation plan for a course that they teach.

4. Working in dyads, (or possibly larger groups if the number of participants is high) participants will critique each other's work and collaborate on improving them.

5. Finally, participants who wish to present their transformative process objectives to the entire session will be given a chance to do so.

In their own voice – facilitating nursing learner access to manipulation of authentically meaningful words.

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In this article, I explore my experience of helping learners registered for a nursing degree in their struggle to avoid plagiarism. In the past, the language support course that I teach focused on textual genre based strategies that managed to scaffold learner access to textual conventions at genre, register and discourse semantics level but mostly failed to facilitate expertise in express subject-specific concepts in syntactically appropriate units at lexicogrammar (word and word group level). In the case study described in this article learners were given time to use interlanguage (an emerging linguistic system developed by a learner who has not yet mastered an appropriate target language) as a bridge to forging authentic meaning and thus avoid copying chunks of text. Then from there with strong support and editing, learners transformed their own words into appropriate language at sentence level. In my discussion, I shall refer to typical work samples as well as observations I have made and types of statements made to me by learners during my pedagogical intervention.

How effective are our online discussions? Answers provided by Content Analysis.

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An increasing number of Unisa modules are currently being conceptualised as online offerings and a number are already being offered as online only or blended learning modules. myUnisa, a Learning Management System, offers an asynchronous discussion forum facility that is still largely unutilised.

Lecturers and students alike now find themselves in an educational space which has its own requirements for success. Lecturers must acquire and master the skills that good online facilitators exhibit and students from different educational and cultural backgrounds have to learn how to interpret postings by others and how to react in a constructive manner.

Different theories underscore the importance of social interaction in the development of cognition, for instance Bandura's (1971) social learning theory, situated learning theory (Lave and Wenger, 1991) and conversation theory (Pask, 1975). Online discussions between facilitators and students and students amongst themselves indisputably have a social dimension and are therefore a realisation of social interaction. The effectiveness of students' participation in discussions can be determined by categorising postings according to Bloom's taxonomy. In this study a number of active discussion forums were chosen for investigation and a content analysis tool was used to determine the effectiveness of online discussions. The degree of effectiveness is determined by the degree to which learning outcomes were achieved.

The analysis highlights the need for the training/improved training of lecturers as online facilitators which includes the communication of important information to students regarding discussion forum practice, procedure and importance. The outcome of the investigation will be used to inform the training of facilitators as a first step because it has been shown that providing scaffolding and structure to online discussions can be a beneficial technique (Ng, Cheung & Hew, 2010; Gao, Baylor & Shen, 2005; Shaw, 2005; Chadwick & Ralston, 2010).

Challenges in the developing of multimedia for disadvantaged distance learning students.

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While the inclusion of multimedia materials in the study packages for distance learning students from a disadvantaged background has educational value (cf. Siemens, 2004), it brings with it major challenges and obstacles. The internet has become a major source of information (including multimedia materials) which can be utilised for educational purposes and distance education students can particularly benefit from this resource.

Unfortunately South African internet users have been plagued with problems such as lack of bandwidth and the high costs associated with data packages available to consumers. Students from a disadvantaged background will therefore mostly be excluded from any benefits to be scored from internet sources. Another issue facing lecturers in referring students to the internet, is that of broken links and lost content on web pages.

In order to overcome these obstacles, it was decided to make a compact disc with multimedia files downloaded from the internet available with the study package of a post graduate module. A big concern however, is that copyright holders do not respond to requests for fair use distribution. In an attempt to overcome the legal implications of copying the work of others without acquiring the necessary permission, full reference and direct links to web sites have also been provided on the discs so that students connected to the internet could visit the sites. A disclaimer stating that the work is used for educational purposes only and not for financial or other gains, is published on the discs.

The development of this kind of multimedia solution, is hopefully an interim measure while South Africans are looking forward to the fulfillment of promises of high speed, broadband internet available to everyone soon.

Reference"

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Knowledge Management 2.0 an approach to knowledge sharing in curriculum development

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University of Technologies (UoT's) will be facing various new challenges as a result of the new Higher Education Qualification Framework (HEQF) of South Africa. The change in the higher education landscape will necessitate the re-assessing and redesign of programmes offered at Universities of Technology. It is therefore crucial that all stakeholders be involved in the curriculum development or re-curriculuation phase to ensure that the programme offered is as responsive as possible and will meet the needs of industry.

Knowledge can be classified as explicit and tacit. Explicit knowledge is knowledge that has been codified and it is easier to share this knowledge whereas tacit knowledge is more difficult to codify. Therefore the best way to share this type of knowledge is through social interactions. A central tenet of Knowledge Management is that knowledge must be shared in order to add value to an organisation.

In order to meet this demand it is very important for all stakeholders to invest time and effort in a project of this nature, which can be time consuming. It is believed that technology more specifically social media / web 2.0 tools can assist in this regard. KM 2.0 technologies is the use of Web 2.0 technologies to facilitate knowledge sharing. The collaborative and inclusive nature of social computing practice serves to reduce the barriers and provides alternative bridges.

This paper will look at how knowledge is shared in curriculum development to ascertain the flow of knowledge in curriculum development. Variables that need to be taken into consideration to ensure effective knowledge sharing will occur. To identify the KM 2.0 tools that are best suited for knowledge sharing in curriculum development.

How collaborative groupwork affects students' writing

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Student writing not only serves to demonstrate their understanding of a subject but is key to the process of constructing that understanding (Archer 2010:502) . Group assignments can offer increased opportunities for reflection on this crucial process, especially if the writing tasks are discussed at each stage.

In a shared initiative between the Department of Marketing Management and the Writing Centre of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, this research examines the impact of an eight-month collaborative group writing process on the academic writing experience of 50 B Tech (Marketing) students. The study uses questionnaires, group journals and group reports to explore students' pre-process expectations, their experience of the process and their post-process perceptions.

Using Margaret Archer's Social Realism (structure, culture & agency) as an analytical framework in Higher Education research

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This paper will outline the way in which Social Realism can be used as an effective analytical tool to frame data collected during a particular research project conducted at a tertiary institution. Margaret Archer, building on the layered ontology of Critical Realism as developed by Roy Bhasker, divides the level of the Real into three separate but interlinked domains of Structure, Culture and Agency. Archer argues that it is key to any research into how society functions to examine structure (the "parts"), culture and agency (the "people") separately as well as in terms of their interplay. People (agents) act within a structural and cultural context and if these structural and cultural factors are examined in isolation it is possible to understand how they can affect the actions of agents (e.g. by enabling or constraining these) – which in turn may affect the structural and cultural contexts out of which they emerge. The structural and/or cultural contexts may be transformed or maintained over time and space depending on the nature of the interaction of the agents within those contexts. Using Archer's framework and the morphogenetic approach, it is possible to analyse and understand the interplay between both structural and cultural conditions over time so that researchers can account for the ways in which "discursive struggles are socially organized and... social struggles are culturally conditioned" (Archer, 1996:xxix). This presentation will argue that using Archer as an analytical framework provides a useful tool for the kinds of deep theorising about teaching and learning which is often lacking in more descriptive accounts of our practice.

Archer, M.S. (1996). Culture and Agency: The place of culture in social theory. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

A collaborative project between in-service and pre-service teachers to address the different needs of these different communities of learners.

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Universities around South Africa are grappling with the language crisis that is facing the country. Students are often ill-equipped for university studies due to their lack of English skills. Embury Institute for Teacher Education (EITE) has identified this as a pressing issue facing all students, but especially the Department of Basic Education students who are enrolled in a Foundation Phase Bachelor of Education degree at EITE while teaching full time. These students, who predominantly speak isiZulu as their mother tongue, live and teach in rural schools in KwaZulu-Natal and therefore their access to English is limited. Full time EITE students who are completing the same degree are largely English mother tongue speakers, live in Durban and have done their teaching practice at urban schools. These students have little experience of isiZulu and no experience teaching in rural classrooms.

EITE has piloted a peer learning project between these two groups of students that is underpinned by aspects of service learning. Through four sessions over the course of the year the students have met with the aim of improving their English / isiZulu communication in a classroom context and developing sensitivity to different cultures. In addition the peer learning project has aimed to develop greater insight and understanding of diverse teaching and learning environments and the impact that these have on equal education opportunities. Addressing one of the criteria of service learning, each session culminates in a reflective activity to increase awareness.

This paper will be presented by a final year BEd student who in addition to taking part in the project also used the project as a basis for her 4th year undergraduate research project. This paper proposes to reflect on and evaluate the success of the project in terms of achieving the desired outcomes this project.

Context, structure and agency: a focus on academics' professional development

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Why are some opportunities for the professional development of academics popular in institution X, but not as popular in institution Y? Why do academics take advantage of opportunities that are provided? These are some of the questions giving rise to the research project which is the focus of this presentation

In 2011 a research team comprising eight South African universities was awarded a three-year grant from the NRF to investigate the relationship between context and individual agency, with regard to the professional development of academics as teachers. The research questions we are asking in this multisite study are:

1. What can be learnt about the interplay of structure, culture and agency with regard to the professional development of academics as teachers, from a series of case studies in South African higher education settings?

2. What are the conditions which enable and constrain the professional development of academics in their role as teachers for academics in these settings?

3. To what extent are these conditions context-specific?

4. Can one develop profiles of the kinds of academics that take advantage of these opportunities and are these profiles context specific?

We believe that answers to these questions will facilitate the enhancement of our approaches towards professional development at participating universities, and in addition, will provide contextually-sensitive advice for appropriate orientations towards professional development of academics in South Africa.

In this presentation we will focus on the theoretical approach, which is based on the notion of the interplay between structure and agency, as described by Margaret Archer. We will share findings from previous research conducted at our universities. Finally, we will share the research design and reflect upon some of the opportunities and constraints provided by conducting multi-site collaborative research in the field of academic development in South Africa.

A a first-year retention and success project at the University of Pretoria in 2010

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The University of Pretoria initiated a first-year retention and success project early 2010 to understand the diverse students that enter the institution. A generic faculty-based student support model was negotiated with deans of faculty to identify key drivers to support student transition. Various sources of information would be used to function as an early warning system within the support model. The Student Academic Readiness Survey (STARS) was identified as a psycho-social survey within the early warning system. The STARS was administered to students during the orientation week and 'at-risk' students were short listed for various support needs. A follow-up survey, the First Year Experience Survey (FYES), measuring similar psycho-social constructs as well as learning experience, was administered to the same cohort of first-year students. A Rasch model analysis of the constructs indicates that the two surveys are reliable and valid and can therefore be used as part of the early warning system. A test-retest format analyses tend to show maturity in students over time. Pearson correlation alpha was used to measure STARS and FYES factor scores with first semester marks. Implications of the research can be seen in the universities' allocation of student mentors to 'at-risk' students in 2011.

Realities of Quality Assurance practices at the course level in an Open Distance university - tutors' and students' perceptions

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The implementation of Quality Assurance policies in South Africa universities tends to be driven as a top-down process that is likely to marginalize stakeholders at the course level. In response to the question how do tutors and students experience quality assurance at the course level, this paper highlights some of the realities, challenges and implications of implementing quality assurance policies in an Open Distance university, in particular individual understandings and experiences at the course level. Critical realism (Bhaskar, 1975) asserts that because individuals experience reality differently it is important that these understandings are made explicit from the onset. Building on this view of reality is the social realism perspective, as proposed by Archer (1995), which argues against the conflation of reality into a single entity but categorises it into three layers - agency, culture and structure. Using critical and social realism perspective as a lens, this paper shows that because tutors and students understandings of quality assurance differ, the implementation process is likely to remain an external and misunderstood process that is not owned and driven by these stakeholders. Without doubt, quality and quality assurance are problematic concepts and will remain so in Higher Education and Open Distance Learning contexts especially at the teaching and learning level where the stakeholder population is not static but continuously changing. For these reasons, this paper argues that, to implement quality assurance policies effectively, it is critical for stakeholders at the course level to continuously interrogate the individual understandings and come up with accepted, acknowledged and agreed upon common understandings of what quality assurance entails in practice.

Bhaskar R, 1975. A Realist Theory of Science. Brighton: Harvester

Archer M S, 1995. Realist Social Theory: The Morphogenetic Approach. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

ID: **248**
Interactive Demonstration (60 min)
Topics: Innovative ways of using technology to promote teaching and learning and student success.
Keywords:

Innovative ways to promote teaching and learning within large classes: using technology to develop students' understanding of the business environment

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Students' understanding of the practical operation of business activities within the theoretical framework of the accounting discipline is problematic due to the limited exposure of undergraduate students to the business environment. This problem is exacerbated by the challenges associated with teaching large, diverse classes such as poor lecture attendance, student reluctance or inability to engage with prescribed texts and student passivity, to name a few.

This collective teaching innovation involves the integration of outcomes of three related undergraduate courses with the aim to demonstrate to students the inter-relationship of the contents of these courses within the professional Accounting programme and develop their understanding of the physical operations and activities within a business environment. This study aims to investigate the impact of using a custom-made video presentation and an inter-active workbook as simulated teaching interventions to develop student understanding and learning of principles of accounting entries and control concepts by exposing them to a practical business environment.

The study investigates students' experience of this teaching intervention (within the challenges of large classes) in scheduled interviews with students and questions (in the form of evaluations) designed to: measure students' ability to relate to the physical operation of a business; their understanding of the interaction of business activities; and their appreciation of the inter-relationship of the contents of the courses within the undergraduate professional Accounting programme. A further study of any correlation in student performance and assessments in these courses may also be considered.

A Research Methdology to inform Curriculum Reform in Post-apartheid South Africa

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This paper will outline a methodology for analysing curriculum knowledge and design in post-apartheid S.A. - with a view to responding to current transformation and diversity challenges. By utilising the stratified and differentiated view of reality posited by the philosophy of critical realism, it will demonstrate a multi-method research design appropriate for curriculum analysis and review. The analytical separation of the ontological and epistemological domains enables for example phenomenological and interpretive methods to be used for researching student opinion (experience), empirical methods to be used for analysing through-put rate data (observation), a realist sociology of knowledge when analysing curriculum documents (the products of events) and the use of retroduction to posit structuralist explanations, when moving from description to explanation (causal mechanisms). This multi-method approach to curriculum studies will be illustrated by reference to the (re)development of a first year course in the discipline of sociology in South Africa.

Perceptions of Problem Based Learning (PBL) Group Effectiveness in a Diverse Pharmacy Student Population

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BACKGROUND: Since 1999, the BPharm course at the University of Limpopo, Medunsa Campus has been a problem-oriented, integrated, thematic, modular-based programme. The student population has been diverse in terms of academic, social, socioeconomic and cultural status. Thus we find it important to examine the teaching and learning process in our holistic program. Focusing on the small group session (scenarios) as the main aspect of assessing the effectiveness of PBL curriculum implementation.

OBJECTIVE: To determine how BPharm students perceive the effectiveness of the process and content of PBL scenario sessions. Compare the perceptions of different year groups. Explore the relationship between students' perceptions of their PBL sessions and their gender, age, language, secondary schooling and prior learning.

METHODS: Data were collected voluntarily from 262 students enrolled in the BPharm programme at the University of Limpopo, Medunsa Campus in 2011. Exploratory factor analysis will be conducted to verify scale constructs in the questionnaire. Descriptive statistic will be used to determine the relationship between independent and dependent variables will be investigated in an analyses variance.

RESULTS: Study in progress at this stage

The bpharm mentoring programme at the university of limpopo, medunsa campus: perceptions of students and staff

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BACKGROUND: According to literature, mentoring is a proven practice for improving students' academic success. The objective of the BPharm mentoring programme is to support students and to address academic and/or social difficulties with the aim of improving pass- and throughput rates.

APPROACH: Academic progress of students is monitored on a continuous basis and students with academic difficulties are assigned to a mentor. Mentors and mentees sign an agreement and the relationship between them is evaluated with a questionnaire completed by both parties twice a semester. Mentors' progress reports and mentees' academic performance are reviewed on a regular basis by the BPharm Mentor Coordinator. Individual counselling sessions are conducted with mentees with academic as well as social difficulties. Challenges are identified and remedial action plans are formulated. Records of individual counselling sessions are kept on students' personal files.

OUTCOME: Perceptions of the mentoring programme were determined by reviewing all questionnaires completed by mentors and mentees during 2008 and 2009 as well as records of individual counselling sessions conducted by the Mentor Coordinator. Majority of mentors and mentees meet at the students' residence 2-3 times per week. The mentor's role was identified to facilitate learning, recommend study resources, observe progress, guide and give feedback. The mentee's role included working with the mentor and attending all scheduled meetings. Maintaining confidentiality of information was regarded as important. Overall, relationship between mentors and mentees was positive and mentees felt they had a lot in common with their mentors. Mentors were dedicated, encouraged and assisted mentees with academic and social problems. Challenges identified included mentors and mentees being at different institutions, limited time to meet and time-table clashes. Reasons for negative mentor-mentee relationships were mainly because mentors did not have time for their mentees or because they did not like one another.

RECOMMENDATIONS: More support, guidance...

ID: **285**
Comprehensive Paper (40 min)
Topics: Access and articulation: Exploring linkages and articulation between schools, universities and FET colleges.
Keywords: access, equity, higher education, equal opportunity

Is access to higher education a sufficient condition for social equity in south africa? A critical analysis

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Access to higher education (HE) in South Africa has become an urgent imperative after the demise of apartheid in South Africa so as to redress the inequities of the past. This has given rise to the massification of higher education and the phenomenal increase in the number of students participating in HE. As a direct consequence, debates and discourses in HE have foregrounded access as a key component of successful higher education transformation. However, critics have argued that debates and discourses in HE that are only driven by access as measured by rates of participation remain largely ineffective if they do not pay sufficient attention to access as measured by success and graduation rates as well as the quality of graduates produced. This, in other words is equal to saying that students of all races and social classes who participate in HE should have equal chances of success in HE so as to bring about social equity and equal educational opportunity in society. This paper therefore argues that while the issue of access to HE is a necessary step towards social equity in South Africa, it is however, not sufficient on its own to bring about the much needed social equity. The research is on the main theoretical, analytical and reflective and therefore proceeds through the method of critical analysis. It is based on secondary data collected through reviews of studies, reports and national, regional and international documents on higher education.

Investigating the issues of multi-disciplinary and specialisation in qualification design and delivery

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This paper will explore issues and challenges facing multi-disciplinary programmes and those with multiple areas of specialisation. As noted in the SAQA 'Call for proposals: Preparation of a concept paper to inform the development, registration and publication of qualifications and part-qualifications on the South African National Qualifications Framework' (April 2011) one of the pressure points in the HEQF review process is on the area of 'super-specialisations'. A degree qualification is designed around three components: type, designator, and qualifier (specialisation area). Distinguishing between qualifiers and specialisations/majors is critical; it is not just about names and naming- the impact reaches far into the overall teaching and learning improvement agenda. It forms the basis for good curriculum design and it is one of those critical issues that affect student learning and success . For example, in cases (1) where the designator does not share the disciplinary area with the qualifier and (2) where the qualifier implicates more than one area, it becomes more challenging to manage the design and to avoid redundancies in the curriculum. When a specific lens (and many more) such as this is applied to a number of programmes it exposes a number of challenges and loopholes.

Using curriculum mapping as both a concept and (an electronic) system provides ways to apply the relevant lenses to investigate these and similar issues that may threaten the quality of programme design and delivery. Working through a number of programme-based case studies forms the basis from which answers to questions such as the following can be sought: How can we identify and deal with what can be labeled as "credit wars' and (unnecessary) 'credit fillers'.

Students' acceptance level and experiences of the new learning management system (LMS)-WiSeUp

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E-learning Management System (LMS) known as Blackboard, which has been customized as WiSeUp, was introduced at Walter Sisulu University (WSU) in 2008 after its funding partners, Nuffic, realized high failure rate in the faculty of Science and Engineering Technology (FSET). The acceptance level of this LMS, particularly, in Queenstown campus-one of WSU campuses, has not been good because of unavailability of resources and insufficient time, and because of unavailability of residences within the campus. The unavailability of resources negatively affects the level of acceptance of Learning Management System. The insufficiency of time has a negative impact on the students' experiences with the LMS. Many students (47% from 100 randomly selected students) complain about unavailability of resources whilst acknowledging the role of the institution in trying to provide an excellent support system towards this new LMS. The support system, in this case, includes: people, E-learning centres, Internet, time and computers. statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) software has been used for the analysis of the collected data.

The integration of academic literacy skills into mainstream core curriculum of extended curriculum programmes at Free State University to improve academic success.

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The Free State University (UFS) implemented nine extended curriculum programmes in six faculties. In 2011, 930 students were registered in extended curriculum programmes.

All modules in the extended programmes related to foundational provision were developed to equip underprepared students with academic foundations that will enable them to successfully complete a higher education undergraduate qualification. These development modules focus on basic concepts, content and learning approaches that foster advanced learning and facilitate equity of access and of outcomes. All foundational provision is additional to the coursework prescribed for the regular programmes and is designed to articulate effectively with the regular programmes.

To improve academic success of students, the UFS implemented a project to integrate foundational provision within mainstream first year modules in the extended programmes to create a bigger awareness amongst academics regarding the importance of an integrated teaching and learning approach. Furthermore, the specific academic needs of students are addressed by means of the integration of skills they have learnt within the academic content of a specific mainstream module as well as to enable them to actively participate in academic support contact sessions with exposure to peer collaborative learning approaches/strategies.

Based on the above-mentioned strategy, this workshop will enable participants effectively to:

• integrate generic skills learnt in the skills modules with the academic content of mainstream modules with specific emphasis on Economic and Management Sciences. Practical examples of how to achieve the integration and how it is facilitated in contact sessions will be provided. Students comments will also be reflected upon;

• make use of the constructivist model of teaching and learning to scaffold the learning of underprepared students in Anthropology (Humanities);

• integrate academic literacy skills for second or additional language speakers in mainstream modules across all disciplines.

The interests of the students in becoming mentors at the University of Limpopo, Medunsa Campus.

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The Student Mentorship Programme (SMP) is a flagship student support programme of the Medunsa campus where senior students mentor first entering students (mentees) in the same programme. Mentors support their mentees adjust both socially and academically to the University life. This is a voluntary Peer Support Programme for which there is no payment but mentors receive training on a range of personal development skills.

There are challenges within this programme which mentors are facing such as insufficient time to meet with their mentees, environment not conducive for mentor-mentee sessions to run smoothly and pressure in mentor's academic performance.

This paper seeks to investigate the reason/s why students are still interested in becoming mentors, even though there are challenges. The qualitative (and to some extent, also quantitative approach) approach will be used to investigate the reasons of the students in becoming mentors.

An exploration of the first year students' needs at the university of South Africa.

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In recent years there has been an increasing concern about the readiness of first year students to enter higher education. The level of preparedness that the first year students come with plays an important role to the throughput and success rates at universities and colleges. Many studies have been done on the students' transition from high school to universities and the factors of preparedness determined. This paper presents a report on the study done to determine the needs of the students as they begin with higher education. A sample of 657 newly registered students was selected at an orientation session at Unisa. After the students had attended the orientation session, a questionnaire to determine their needs was distributed. The results from this study categorized areas that the students identified as their needs ranging from counselling, academic, social and administrative. This will be helpful in guiding the university to develop relevant and appropriate interventions based on the students' views themselves.

Reflections on how the Professional Excellence Programme has Shaped the Teaching Practices of WSU Engineering Lecturers

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ABSTRACT FOR A SHORT PAPER

Theme: Professionalising teaching and learning in higher education and establishing communities of practice

Reflections on How the Professional Excellence Programme (PEP) has Shaped the Teaching Practices of WSU Engineering Lecturers

The professionalization of teaching at Walter Sisulu University has taken centre stage as the University makes a concerted effort to raise throughput rates and improve lecturer effectiveness. The mandate of the Centre for Learning and Teaching Development (CLTD) is to prioritise staff development issues, and a policy framework that is aimed at developing teaching competence is in place. The CLTD has, in collaboration with the RUG partners in the Netherlands, developed a Professional Excellence Programme (PEP) which targets newly-appointed lecturers and academic staff without a teaching qualification. The unit standard-based PEP programme which comprises the three modules: Learning and Teaching in Higher Education, Assessment of Student Learning and Curriculum Development, was piloted in the School of Engineering in 2010 and will carry credits towards the Post-graduate Certificate in Higher Education and Training (PGCHET).

The present study aims at uncovering the impact of the PEP on teaching practice. It investigates how the beneficiaries of the programme have translated the knowledge and skills gained in the Learning and Teaching in Higher Education Module into practice by encouraging them to reflect critically on their current classroom practice and its effects on student learning. In order to establish how the 23 participants experienced the first module in the programme, an evaluation questionnaire was administered. A convenience sample was interviewed in order to gain a micro-perspective on their teaching practices.

The results of the study will be used to improve teaching practice and strengthen staff development initiatives.

Key words: professionalization, staff development, teaching competence, lecturer effectiveness, professional excellence

Introducing meaning-centred research: Understanding student behaviour through a logotherapeutic lens

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The White Paper on Higher Education Transformation (1997) states that higher education is an allocator of life chances. More specifically, higher education is meant to furnish students with the skills, knowledge and abilities to create and live meaningful lives. Furthermore, higher education equips individuals to make the best use of their talents and of the opportunities offered by society for self-transcendence.

According to Frankl (1988), founder of logotherapy, the foremost mission of education is to assist young people to develop the abilities to search for and discover meaning in the world. Meaning, according to Frankl (1988), is the foremost motivator in human life. For young people, who may include students, meaning can be discovered, or frustrated, in the domain of higher education. When meaning is frustrated, students may appear bored, apathetic and lethargic - conditions that may negatively impinge on student success. When students discover meaning, they begin to realise their potential and acknowledge the opportunities offered by society for self-transcendence - they begin to embrace higher education as an allocator of life chances.

The purpose of this paper is to reflect on the pursuit of the logotherapeutic mission of education at Tshwane University of Technology. The concept, meaning-centred student development and support, is introduced, defined and elaborated upon. The findings from three meaning-centred student development and support research studies are presented and discussed. Suggestions for future meaning-centred student development and support research that could foster academic success are presented.

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Drawing on psychology's forgotten mission to foster student success

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From a historical perspective the field of psychology has been consumed by a single topic - mental illness (Keyes, 2005). Criticism in response to the aforementioned led to the conceptualisation of 'positive psychology.' Positive psychology refers to the scientific study of optimal human functioning. Research on positive psychology provides evidence that individuals can increase, amongst others, their resilience by identifying and engaging their strengths. It appears that positive psychology may hold great potential for helping individuals live more meaningful and productive lives.

Researchers are increasingly focussing on the use of positive psychology in, amongst others, university contexts (Sawka-Miller & Miller, 2007). Within a South African context, Strümpfer (1995) expresses the need for a psychology concerned with strength and hope. It is in the spirit of Strümpfer's call, as well as against the backdrop of positive psychology's optimistic view of being human, that the following question emerges: "How can positive psychology be utilised to inform student development and support services within the context of higher education as a means of facilitating and fostering optimal student success?"

The purpose of this paper is to: (1) introduce the concept, positive psychology, as a potential theoretical approach to inform certain to student development and support services, (2) report on initial research conducted at Tshwane University of Technology, and (3) explore and reflect on the efforts to move from theoretical abstraction to pragmatic application.

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ID: **127**
Short Paper (20 min)
Topics: Creating new spaces for dynamic teaching and learning to foster student success.
Keywords: learning design, instructional design, learning spaces, communities of enquiry, learning materials

Adapting to the contemporary learning environment: From instructional design to learning design

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Various authors argue that the advent of online education have forced educators to reflect on current teaching practices and to adopt a new teaching paradigm. But given the radical changes, the question could be asked what would be the most appropriate paradigm to teach and help students learn in this technological age. The purpose of this article is to investigate the impact of technology on the learning environment and the effect that this has on the design of learning. The literature indicates that there is a movement towards a new learning theory, namely connectivism and this also necessitates a movement away from "instructional design" to "learning design". Three key implications of this movement towards "learning design" are discussed, namely creating various learning spaces, creating communities of inquiry and rethinking traditional learning materials. By taking cognisance of the movement towards a new paradigm, teaching practices can be adapted and redesigned to optimalise the technology and provide better support to students in this new learning environment.

The Design of a Continuous Professional Development Model for University of Technology Lecturers

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The classification of former Technikons to Universities of Technology created a challenge for Academic Development Centers to provide professional development support for lecturers. This necessitated the design of a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) model that would meet the needs of lecturers.

Interviews were conducted with lecturers and academic development practitioners at three Universities of Technology. Data collected was used to design a CPD model. A survey was then conducted with lectures to establish the viability of aspects suggested in the model. Data collected from lecturers was used to reshape the suggested CPD model.

The results indicate the acceptance of specific aspects of the CPD model. These are orientation program, pedagogic development, subject content knowledge development, leadership enhancement, research development, personal development and participation in professional bodies. These aspects of CPD activities are viable for implementation and will contribute towards the enhancement of teaching practice within Universities of Technology. Academic Development Centers will find the use of the CPD model helpful in designing support programs for lecturers.

University learning: A bumpy road for first year students yet a strong tool that widens scope across borders

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This paper examines the root cause of learning problems found to be characteristic of first year students at North West University, Mafikeng campus. After passing Matric first year students are enrolled into University with high expectations to perform as they did at school level. However, the realization of huge differences between school and university teaching and learning can be overwhelming. During contact with students in different faculties at Mafikeng campus for a period of 8 months, it became quite clear that students experience major various learning problems especially in the first year. Often times they struggle to write assignments. This paper analyses and reports on the type of problems first year students encounter. It also reflects on the Faculties and modules in which most students encounter problems based on the number of students that consult at academic development centre (ADC) for academic support. Mixed methods approach was used to collect data from 120 first year students who consult at ADC. Emerging results show that the problem is multidimensional and cuts across academic, social, emotional, and psychological factors that impact on the teaching and learning process. Although arguments are presented to show that the problems are common to all students, first year students are the most affected.

Students and Information and Communication Technology in Higher Education: A Case Study of North West University Mafikeng Campus

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Information and Communications Technology has become an integral part of human's lives. The development of new technologies presents higher education institutions with opportunities to review their teaching-learning processes. The main challenge faced by institutions of higher learning is how to effectively use opportunities presented by the development of new technologies and how to support students in the use thereof. The perception is that modern-day students often take technology for granted and that they integrate it seamlessly into their everyday lives. An investigation of students' expectations and experiences with information and communication technology may provide insight into the challenge. This paper will examine types of information and communication technologies used by students at Mafikeng Campus of the North West University, their preferences, identified opportunities and practical support mechanisms.

ID: **330**
Comprehensive Paper (40 min)
Topics: Innovative ways of using technology to promote teaching and learning and student success.
Keywords:

Using Mobile Technology To Improve Participation In A Blended Learning Course

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Mobile technology is increasingly being used to support blended learning beyond the computer laboratory. This study explores the use of mobile devices such as laptops and cell phones in a blended learning environment. The main purpose of this study is to investigate how mobility and communication enhances learning. This is a quantitative study where a questionnaire was used to ascertain the impact of using mobile technology in a blended learning guided Computer Science course. The main problem is that these Computer Science students have limited access to computers in the University computer laboratories. Survey results show that students with access to mobile devices use them to interact with their learning material beyond the computer laboratory. These devices also allowed students the opportunity to communicate with their lecturer anytime, even after hours. From an instructor perspective, mobile learning has improved the students' participation in the course and has afforded them an increased opportunity for mentoring. Further research could be conducted to determine how student learning styles could influence the way mobile technologies are used to provide the same content, to different users, in different presentation formats.

Effective Teaching and Learning Approach: use of visualization software/tools in the classroom

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With the exponential growth of the Internet coupled with the increase in the size of data resources in the network, it is vital for every organization to have well-trained staffs to support its Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructures. This is essential because without the required skills, time, effort and money could be wasted in trying to solve seemingly complex or difficult to understand problems. This can be achieved by equipping learners with the necessary skills to withstand and remain effective outside the classroom. In today modern world, there are many existing teaching/learning approaches that are used in impacting knowledge into the learners, but however, many of such approaches are only effective in the classroom and cannot be manifested on the learners outside the classroom due to lack of visual practical guidance thereby resulting in having many ICTs graduates without the necessary practical skills to support the dynamic ICT world. In this paper, we propose a learning/teaching approach that makes use of visualization software/tools in order to keep ICT graduates effective and fit in their work places and aid instructors as well. To achieve this, the introduction of new curricula and learning tools are indispensible in aiding students acquire the necessary skills and understand the complexities of ICT and its application outside the classroom. We also discuss why this tool is more effective than other teaching/learning tools.

Analysing Teaching and Learning at Five Comprehensive Universities

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This paper draws on a large piece of commissioned research that provides a meta-analysis of teaching and learning in South Africa's public higher education system (Boughey 2009, 2010). The previous work reported on teaching and learning at research-intensive traditional universities and at universities of technology. At this HELTASA conference, Boughey will also report on historically disadvantaged universities. This paper adds to that body of work by analyzing the mechanisms that constrain or enable teaching and learning at the six comprehensive universities in South Africa.

The paper provides an overview of the various discursive constructions within audit documentation of institutional identity as a 'comprehensive university'. Issues of access and articulation into and between different knowledge structures are theorized, as is the way in which students are constructed in these universities. The use of Archer's framework of structure, culture and agency for analytical purposes provides a suggested means for future analysis of our higher education sector.

Structure, agency, and the role of emotion in transition to university

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Background and purpose

School to university transition is experienced by most new university students as challenging. First generation students are particularly vulnerable. Christie (2009) argues for understandings of transition that acknowledge individual agency, structural constraint, and emotion. Such insights allow universities to put appropriate supportive mechanisms in place.

Methodology

From the first year cohort of dentistry students at a university in South Africa (n=80), one class (n=20) was selected for qualitative study. Fifteen students participated. Three focus group interviews, constituted of friendship groups associated with social class (4 students with at least one professional parent; 4 rural first generation university students, 7 students with non-professional/working-class backgrounds) probed students' experiences of transition. Semi-structured interviews explored "coming to university", "being a student" and "being a dentist". Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Issues identified in the literature as significant to transition were used to analyze the data.

Results and discussion

Twenty-six descriptive tags were identified from the data. These were clustered into five themes: "outside support and constraints"; "influences"; "career choice"; "academic challenges" and "agency and identity". Students, irrespective of social location, experienced transition challenges related to each of these themes. Sixteen of the twenty-six tags, and tags for all five themes, were associated with emotions. Social location nuanced how emotion was associated with transition. First generation students associated negative emotion with finances, transport, accommodation, prior academic knowledge, study skills and workload.

Conclusions

Powerful emotions were associated with transition to university for all students. However, unlike students with university parents, first generation university students associated these emotions with barriers to learning. Findings suggest that mechanisms to support student transition need to engage with the interface between academic support and development and socio-emotional components of transition. They also signal the specific kinds of emotional and practical support required by first generation university students.

Using a beginning university survey to proactively manage pathways to success in the first year of study

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Proactively managing the pathways to success in the first year of study has become an imperative for institutions aiming to create the conditions that promote access with success for increasing numbers of diverse students. It is widely acknowledged that inadequate preparation at school contributes to poor academic performance and drop out in the first-year. However, the quality of effort students invest in their academic endeavour at the institution (i.e. student engagement) makes a significant difference to whether they will eventually graduate – even after past academic performance has been accounted for. It is therefore in the interest of the institution to create environments that elicit high levels of engagement during the first year.

However, the quality of effort invested by an individual is not solely influenced by institutional effort, but also by numerous other factors, for example the student's past behaviour in educational settings (e.g. high school) and their expectations of new educational settings (e.g. higher education institutions). By systematically gaining a more comprehensive understanding of entering students' past academic behaviours and expectations, institutions can empower themselves with the capacity to tailor the student experience in ways that challenge students to do their best, whilst simultaneously providing adequate support structures inside and outside the classroom.

However, the majority of information obtained about first-year students is collected after the fact, rather than at the time of entry. Effective interventions aimed at improving the odds of success in higher education will require information management systems to proactively obtain relevant information as early as the time of entry at the institution. This paper shares how data from a beginning university survey (BUSSE) can be used in the context of cohort and individualised support by promoting reasonable expectations, encouraging increased engagement in the academic curriculum and ultimately contributing to improved learning, persistence and performance.

Curriculum Innovation in Higher Education Teaching & Learning

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ABSTRACT:

Background: A synopsis suggested that the quality of students' essays did not befits written course-work at postgraduate level, hence there was a need for deeper investigations and possible innovations.

Purpose: The purpose of the study was to conduct a curriculum review of one of the on-line courses for Masters Degree (Public Health) at MEDUNSA; based on the outcomes, design and apply appropriate curriculum innovations.

Design: The study engaged a descriptive-design in evaluating the selected course.

Results: The findings indicated that: The course-objectives were properly constructed; the teaching/learning activities were poorly developed; the course assessment-tasks were fairly designed; there was poor understanding of the course-curriculum by learners.

Conclusion: Based on the diagnosed problems, a curriculum-discourse module for students was designed and partially-implemented as a teaching/learning and assessment innovation for the specified course (HSMP 801). Evaluation of these innovations showed remarkable improvement in the overall teaching/learning and assessment of the course.

ID: **220**
Poster Presentation
Topics: Creating new spaces for dynamic teaching and learning to foster student success.
Keywords: Higher Education Teaching/Learning; Curriculum innovation; Assessment and Moderation

Curriclum Innovations in Higher Education T/L

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ABSTRACT:

Background: There has been indications of poor quality in students' discussion assignments for postgraduate level; hence there was a need for deeper investigations with possible teaching/learning and curriculum innovations.

Purpose: An extended-assignment project in Higher Education Assessment and Moderator Development course to review the teaching/learning and curriculum of one of our on-line MPH courses; and based on the outcomes, design appropriate innovations.

Design and Approach: The project engaged a four-level conceptual model including: reviews, identification and educational diagnosis, design/development of innovations, and evaluation processes.

Educational Diagnosis: Key problems included: students' ignorance on curriculum aspects; insufficient assessment tools engaging all 3-domains of learning; imbalance in teaching/learning and assessment tasks; less intensiveness of the e-learning mode; and superficial feedback on students' work.

Innovations: Development of a "Student Curriculum Discourse" self-tutorial module; Improving formative assessment feedback; and engaging a criterion-referenced assessment.

Evaluation: A student's self-evaluation tool indicated that all 19 students who participated in the exercise rated themselves as being "highly" competent in the unit-course that was used as proxy for the "Student Curriculum Discourse" self-tutorial module. Students' discussion assignments began demonstrating: good introductions, well argued views, and well crafted conclusions.

Mentees as Mentoring Determinants: Subscribers crossing to be prescribers

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The traditional mentoring approach is mostly one-way directional in that it focuses more on the perceived needs of the mentee whilst being oblivious of the desires of the same. Although it is commonly expected that a patient would not prescribe its medication, it is however rather normal that a physician will heavily rely on the patient's report for proper diagnosis and relevant subsequent prescription.

Using the approach of crossing into the other's terrain, this paper presents on the findings of research designed to coax out first-entering students' perception and attitudes towards the Student Mentoring Programme at the University of Limpopo's Medunsa and Turfloop Campuses. Even though the programme is voluntarily available to all first-year students, some students do not make use of it; a phenomenon to be addressed from the latter's perspective. As such, the questionnaire used elicits perceptions of first-entering students categorised in terms of (a) regular mentoring sessions attendees, (b) irregular attendees and (c) those who never attend.

ID: **322**

Poster Presentation

Topics: Peer collaborative learning: Mentoring, Tutoring and Supplemental Instruction.

Keywords:

Organization of student support at the University of Limpopo, Medunsa campus.

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Student support is a priority at the Medunsa campus, where a large proportion of students are from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. Over the past decade the Student Support System has evolved into a comprehensive and highly structured system. The support mechanisms include student mentoring, an academic skills course, student workshops, student support network, and individual support.

This poster depicts the organization of the support system, and reports on the findings of a review of the system conducted recently. All stakeholders were surveyed using various data collection methods. Strengths, challenges and recommendations for improvement of the current system are also outlined.

Blended-Learning: Exploiting the potential of key Blackboard tools to enhance student engagement

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The emergence of Web 2.0 technologies has offered higher education institutions an opportunity to develop innovative learning environments that have the potential to effectively address the diversities in learning styles and other personal attributes of students that may affect their active engagement in the learning process. This paper reports on an investigation on the use of information communication technologies (ICT), in the form of blended learning, in enhancing students' learning experience in a Computer Networks module. The purpose of the research was to identify the potential of key tools available in the online component of a blended-learning environment (such as discussion forums, blogs and group activities) in making this learning environment more successful than a traditional classroom in enhancing student engagement in the learning process. An action research approach, involving cycles of plan-act-reflect/evaluate-adapt was deemed mostly appropriate in achieving the research goals. Blackboard 9.1 was the e-learning platform of choice due to its support of various Web 2.0 tools, and it's ubiquity in the University of the Free State learning space. Students periodically reflected on their learning experiences by means of focus group interviews, online discussions and blog postings. Preliminary analysis by means of content analysis procedures indicated that an appropriate selection and use of learning tools available in Blackboard 9.1 can lead to increased student involvement in learning activities. This was confirmed by data on the changes in the frequency of individual student participation in learning activities, using the previous cycle as a benchmark. It was also found that, students who dominate classroom participation were not necessarily those who dominated online activities. A more balanced and desired level of learner engagement emerged in the module used for the study. Research in progress attempts to determine the effectiveness of the various tools in enhancing the academic performance of students.

Innovative Teaching and Learning Approaches for Drawing in a Continuous Assessment Environment

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Technical skills can be very difficult to transfer from the teacher to the learner. Especially if it involves altering deep rooted artistic skills and competencies, these can be as hard as changing values, norms and habits embedded since birth. Some graphic and artistic skills in drawing courses at Universities of Technologies (UoTs) are one good example were such a challenge is faced daily. This paper describes a suite of approaches, techniques and innovations the lecturer employed to turn a below 50% pass rate to an above 90% in one year in a continuous assessment environment while maintaining the same standard and attaining the same outcomes. It describes the role of technology coupled with a dynamic cycle were not only the students are learning, but also the lecturer learns from student interactions, feedbacks, responses and assessment performance in a cycle of improvement. Finally, it summarizes benefits accruing to continuous assessments, provides recommendations for improvements and discusses lessons learnt from the failures identify in personal reflective learning.

Complementary teaching and learning roles in an extended programme in the Humanities.

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Both first year students and lecturers (their fellow learners) are often underprepared for the challenges of higher education. Many voices in the higher education arena call for the implementation of educational scaffolding to ensure access with success. The Faculty of the Humanities at the University of the Free State invested in an Academic Facilitation programme (AFS) with the aim of providing first year students with a supportive platform for integrating crucial developmental skills (such as academic literacy and life skills) with the academic content of disciplinary mainstream modules.

This presentation reports the findings from empirical research that result from a three year mixed method action research project that was conducted parallel with the implementation of the programme. Embedded in the overarching philosophical and theoretical perspectives of developmental and social psychology, as well as transformative and experiential learning, this research project is specifically intended to explore the underlying determinants of success in the AFS and involves the investigation of both student and staff responses in the AFS.

Quantitative data regarding the predictors of success will form the first part of the discussion. Next, the presentation will report on the qualitative experiences of both students and lecturers. From this information, the presentation continues with an explanatory appraisal of the reciprocal learning between students and lecturers. An argument will be made for building capacity through this pedagogic model and how the extent and depth of reciprocal learning can be mobilised and energised.

Word count: 239

EXPLAINING, NAMING AND CROSSING BORDERS IN SOUTHERN AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION (HE)?

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In this presentation an attempt will be made to explain the paradigmatic functioning of "borders" in both the positive ("designation") and negative ("exclusion") senses of the word. This will be followed by a proposal on which "borders" we should currently focus, and what "crossing" strategies we could employ to enhance HE in Africa.

ID: **219**
Poster Presentation
Topics: Professionalising teaching and learning in higher education and establishing collaborative communities of practice.
Keywords: structure, culture, agency, professional development

Approach towards the professional development of academics as espoused in institutional policy documents; a case study at a Historically Disadvantaged University.

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This presentation, which is work in progress and part of a wider NRF Research project involving nine universities, seeks to investigate the relationship between context, structure and agency, with regard to the professional development of academics as teachers. As part of phase two of the NRF project, each participating institution is expected to conduct a document analysis of the institution's teaching and learning agenda focusing specifically on the approach towards the development of academics as teachers. Of particular interest is the role, status and understanding of teaching, and the approach towards the professional development of academics in these documents. Using the Archerian social realist theoretical framework, this presentation analyses the contextual and structural mechanisms in relation to the professional development of academics as espoused in institutional policy documents at a Historically Disadvantaged University. The findings of this study provide recommendations for further study and for policy development on the professional development of academics.

Profiling students with disabilities in the e-learning landscape at the University of the Free State

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Subsequent to the widening of access to university study programmes, a diverse student population has characterised South African universities. This diversity has implications on teaching and learning processes, for instance, addressing the diverse learning experiences, abilities as well as disabilities brought by the students. The implementation of learner-centred approaches that enhance learning has, therefore, become critical to ensure student success. Amongst some of the important adjustments that need to be made are the design and implementation of e-learning spaces and learning materials that are accessible to all students, including those with physical and learning disabilities.

In order to be relevant in interventions, as well as to achieve teaching and learning objectives there is a need to know and understand the characteristics of the students (clients). Specifically relating to students with disabilities in higher education, it has been found that "learners' needs are not recognized or not recognized early enough for effective interventions such as enabling technologies to be put in place" (Chips Supplement 2007, 10). Regarding e-learning, the early identification of barriers could consequently facilitate solutions towards making e-learning more accessible and inclusive. Thus, this paper is about determining the e-learning–related characteristics of students with disabilities at the University of the Free State.

By means of a qualitative survey and focus group discussions, the study investigated e-learning–related characteristics including access to and ownership of e-learning resources, the use of assistive technology, e-learning skills, attitudes, needs and expectations to be met for successful e-learning experiences. Findings of this study indicate characteristics that enable students to access e-learning, as well as some barriers hindering students with disabilities in gaining full access to e-learning environments. Recommendations to address unfavourable characteristics to e-learning environments are discussed.

ID: **217**
Poster Presentation
Topics: Peer collaborative learning: Mentoring, Tutoring and Supplemental Instruction.
Keywords: Supplemental Instruction, unpreparedness, high-risk modules, high attrition rates, graduate skills

Applying reflective practice to identify and address challenges in the pilot implementation of Supplemental Instruction at the University of Pretoria

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The quality of student academic abilities and preparedness on entering Universities is currently a concern nation-wide and a point of discussion at the Faculty of Natural Sciences (NAS), University of Pretoria. The Departments of Chemistry and Mathematics' first year modules have been identified as High Risk Modules (HIMs) and complicated by the large enrolments as the two modules are also service modules.

Furthermore, the Resource for Improving Teaching and Learning, on Student Development and Support (resource no: 4) recommends that academic development should target all students for the development of specified graduate skills and/or to improve the quality of learning across an institution (CHE, 2003). For self-evaluating the quality of student development, support services and student academic development provision (CHE, 2003) reads: "What student development and support services does the institution provide and how well are these resourced and managed? How have the student support services been adapted to serve a diversity of students?" This need for accountability to stakeholders, a responsibility towards the high attrition rates of first years and their lack of knowledge about how to learn gave impetus to this particular research project.

After much review, reports and exploration of the current practice within the university, national and international trends, the Vice-Principal – Undergraduate Programmes, Prof N. Ogude, recommended that a Supplemental Instruction (SI) pilot project be undertaken within NAS in the Departments of Chemistry and Mathematics. The Vice-Principal chose SI based on the substantial research reports of the impact that SI has had in a variety of institutions, globally. The project's objective is to target all Chemistry and Maths students in order to lower the attrition rates, develop students' academic literacy skills and prepare them for post-graduate studies. The abstract will highlight the challenges faced in the implementation phase of the first semester and preliminary research findings.

Does investment always yield interest?' The use of clickers in the teaching of Law

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Considerable research has been done in Sciences and Mathematics on the use of clickers, but not much on utilizing the tool in teaching Law. In legal education there is extended use of Case and Socratic methods in the exploration of problems as opposed to transmitting content. This could be seen as meaningful student engagement, yet the nature of the exploration is, often than not, focusing on comprehension of content. This does not entail genuine student engagement through analysis and critically thinking about issues. Thus it cannot be assumed that lecturers' mindset is geared for appropriate use of clickers. This presentation looks into the training to support lecturers to use clickers in teaching law. It is a reflective piece on issues emerging from practice and not a research report. Innovative use of technology has much to offer on students' engagement which could lead to improvements in learning. The challenge here is that an appropriate use of technology is not only about engaging in correct activities but also implies a certain way in which the academic using the tool thinks and understands the pedagogic principles that underpin the use of the technology together with the selected strategies. The argument is, training should pay attention to what the focus of students' interaction is. This therefore requires more than just familiarity with the tool but also a deeper understanding and alignment of the pedagogic principles that underpin the use of the tool together with the lecturer's conceptions of teaching and learning. Without a focused, well-planned transformation of the pedagogical goals by the lecturer, the technology provides no advantage. It is only when the paradigm shift has happened that the lecturer could be in a position to redesign the learning space in a way that would ensure activities organised facilitate student's cognitive and meta-cognitive development.

Collaborating for student success: Informing teaching and learning initiatives through a developmentally focused access assessment programme

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The Centre for Access Assessment & Research (CAAR) at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University provides an alternative access route to students who do not meet the admissions criteria based on their matriculation results. The access assessment programme has developed over an extended period and is characterised by on-going research into appropriate admissions criteria, programme placement, developmental needs and student success related to academic performance. The student-centred approach established by the programme has evolved into a model that is not only used for admissions and placement decisions but importantly for the provision of developmental recommendations for individual students. This paper will discuss the mechanisms employed for making developmental recommendations based on performance on the Access Assessment Battery (AAB). It will include a detailed discussion of developmental needs identified at a student level and how this information is disseminated to, and implemented by, the relevant stakeholders. As NMMU is a comprehensive institution many developmental initiatives exist to meet developmental needs. These range on continua from informal to formal, from faculty-centred to support-services centred, and from student initiated to faculty initiated. Using a case study approach this paper will present some of these initiatives to illustrate how the access assessment programme, through making developmental recommendations, has been able to impact on teaching and learning.

The Digital Age: Changing Roles for Educators in Universities of Technology in South Africa.

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In the era of rapid technological advancements and increase in knowledge, there is a growing demand for educators in Higher Education to be technologically literate. This growing demand is linked to the prevailing globalization context world-wide, the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in all human activities and the nature of learners in our school system.

This paper examines the changing roles of educators in Universities of Technology in South Africa in the digital age. Several key issues are explored, including the effects of ICT on teaching and learning, the changing role of educators in constructivist learning environments, and the new skills educators are expected to acquire in order to make fruitful use of the new technologies. The author argues that the introduction of ICT in universities is raising fundamental questions about the nature of teaching and learning, and may even be challenging our conception of 'time and place'. The paper offers evaluation of ICT uses in Higher Education in South Africa. It concludes by proposing different ways of supporting teachers in dealing with many challenges related to the use of ICT in the classroom.

The Higher Certificate, a tentative solution to the South African Higher Education conundrum.

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"Jobs, jobs, jobs" says the president, should be the theme for both government and business for 2011. Industry responds with the difficulties of the South African labour laws and the unskilled nature of the vast majority of SA youth. Higher Education institutions are pressurised to accept more students while at the same time improving graduation rates to the level that the graduates will significantly boost the SA economy, as has happened in some other countries. The great conundrum for higher education is to successfully marry these two ideals faced with the difficulty that students entering institutions are being less and less educated in a manner which will enable them to succeed with graduating in a reasonable time. There is, however, a possible solution to a major aspect of this problem which is available to the Universities of Technology (former Technikons) which offer higher education which is more career focussed and vocational in nature. This paper will present a practical curriculum proposal for a Higher Certificate in Laboratory Science which will be of a year duration and also be Foundational in nature. The year will be both contact and learning intensive and based on the industry working hour standard and not that of the traditional higher education template. It will incorporate more than the required minimum of 120 credits. It will give the successful student both access to additional higher educational opportunities as well as employment opportunities in the scientific laboratory environment at an entry level. The structure, content and presentation modes will contain comments, contributions and hopefully approval from some major industry players in this particular field of employment in SA. This is considered essential for the qualification to have any chance of success, as well as a prerequisite of the HEQF.

University-based mentoring programmes for high-risk first year students: enabling an effective crossing of higher education borders

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The development, implementation and perpetuation of student development programmes have become an essential strategy at South African universities, to meet the increasing massification of higher education head on. As a result of the diversification of this sector, previously disadvantaged groupings now frequent campuses, many of whom are underprepared and therefore need additional support to enhance their chances of success. Based on these conditions universities are under increasing pressure to improve student outcomes such as retention, persistence and completion. Mentoring is one mechanism used by universities to foster those outcomes. Mentoring has received considerable exposure in recent decades and this is evident by the proliferation of research covering the topic. The proposed poster will outline the broad strokes of my Masters research. The literature on this ubiquitous yet elusive concept is reviewed. Firstly, an orientation to the problem is outlined. Secondly, the methodology for excavating secondary data sources is summarised. Lastly, a critical review of literature is mapped out with the aim of harvesting key tenets to enable a 'best practice' mentoring programme capable of addressing transitional challenges of high-risk underprepared students. As a result, the meaning of mentoring is explored; the roles, categories, and typologies are defined; and theories reinforcing mentoring impact are delineated. Research demonstrates that mentoring is associated with a wide range of favourable cognitive, conative and affective outcomes. However, although higher incidence of positive outcomes associated with mentoring is found, sufficient evidence suggests that the 'dark side' of mentoring does exist.

Interrogation of lecturers idiosyncrasies toward student centered approach conception: A case study of University of Limpopo

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Promoting success and striving for excellence has become a controversial debate in higher education circles. With the rise in a movement towards Student-Centered teaching methods and evaluation of teaching and learning, lecturers' conceptions of teaching and learning become more important. According to (Pratt, 1997), lecturer's philosophy of teaching and their beliefs of what constitute good and bad teaching often influence the methods that they use to teach in class as well as the methods they prefer in evaluating teaching and courses. In most institution whenever Student-Centered methods of evaluating teaching and learning are introduced, most academics often complain about the inability of students to make appropriate judgments of teaching and learning (Kember & Wong, 2000). In this paper, lectures' conceptions of teaching and learning and their attitudes towards Student-Centered evaluation system are examined using a group of academic staff inductees at the University of Limpopo. Inductees were asked to fill in a questionnaire focusing on lecturers' conceptions of teaching and learning on the fourth day of the week-long induction programme. According to the findings, conceptions of teaching and learning can be placed on a continuum ranging from traditional lecture approach to teaching and Students Centered Learning, with more preference towards Student Centered Learning. However, the results might have been biased and influenced by the presentations that had just taken place on Students Centered Learning and evaluation systems.

ARTICULATION BETWEEN FET COLLEGES AND COMPREHENSIVE UNIVERSITIES: THE CASE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AT NELSON MANDELA METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

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The Higher Education (HE) and Further Education and Training (FET) College sectors have been subject to major restructuring in the last decade, including changes in the learning programmes. For example, the National Certificate Vocational [NC (V)] was introduced at FET colleges from 2007. One of the career areas in which this certificate can be obtained is Information Technology (IT). In the HE band of the Higher Education Qualifications Framework (HEQF), the industry-oriented Higher Certificates and Diplomas in Information Technology offer an articulation option for qualifying students.

This paper reports on the results of a case study to determine the viability of learners articulating between the FET and the HE bands in the specific case of IT. The curricula of four learning programmes were analyzed, viz. the NC (V) IT and Computer Science and the Higher Certificate, National Diploma and BTech Degree in Information Technology as offered at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. The analysis was undertaken using a newly-developed, explanatory framework based on identifying principled (conceptual) and procedural (contextual) knowledge as the two extremities of a continuum along which different forms of curricular logic can be identified within the learning components of the programmes.

The key question posed is: what is the dominant logic of the curriculum? This was applied to the analyses of the four IT programmes. Further analyses allowed the researchers to determine the cognitive complexity in the programmes, and to make a distinction between modules which simply require recall (low complexity), explanation (medium complexity) or application of the concepts (high complexity).

The result of the analysis reveals that qualifying learners from the FET band, should be able to articulate into the HE (IT) programmes analysed for this study. The study considers only curricular issues and not others such as attitudinal, institutional or financial barriers to articulation.

Using the Whole Brain® Model to innovate teaching and learning for Information Literacy learners

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All first year students at the University of Pretoriua have to complete a module on Information Literacy to develop students' information literacy skills to become lifelong learners. The Department of Information Science, in their quest to achieve this introduced a project entitled "Facilitating Whole Brain® Information Literacy: An interdisciplinary Research Project". A multidisciplinary team participated in a collaborative process to design and develop a lecturers "toolkit" to enhance the learning and increase students' motivation. The "toolkit" was developed to enhance the blended learning environment and consisted of a Learning Opportunity Plan as well as contact and online learning activities. The Herrmann "Whole Brain®" model (Herrmann, 1996) was selected as it has been identified by Coffield, Moseley, Hall & Ecclestone (2004) as one of the most influential models, is well established and numerous articles have been published on it (Herrmann International, 2011).

The status of the module was determined through focus group interviews and a questionnaire to gain insight into students' perceptions and what learning challenges existed within the module. The "Facilitating Whole Brain®" model (De Boer, Bothma & Du Toit, 2009) was used to evaluate the learning material and activities. These results indicated that existing learning material and activities primarily addressed certain thinking preferences but left students with other thinking styles in the lurch.

The paper will show how the "Facilitating Whole Brain®" model was used to innovate teaching and learning within the module to respond to thinking preference diversity in the student population. Examples from the "toolkit" will be provided. It will also indicate how the Whole Brain® creative process (Herrmann, 1996) was used during the course of the project. Results from focus groups and questionnaires will be shared to illustrate the impact of this intervention on lecturers teaching practice, as well as on learning and increasing students' motivation.

Border crossing: promoting conversation between self and other

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Working in the Extended Program for Art and Design at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in Port Elizabeth one is presented with students from a wide diversity of backgrounds reflecting the full spectrum of South African society. The core conditions for facilitative practice that is the aim of this augmented course is congruence, acceptance and empathy from both students and lecturer, directed towards self and other. This is facilitated through 'conversation' (Roger). In this context conversation refers to working to bring together insights and questions which entails the fusion of a number of perspectives, not entering into of one (Gadamer). It is suggested that this only becomes possible if both student and lecturer embrace the role of 'border crosser' (Giroux), leaving the safety of 'those places and spaces we inherit and occupy, which frame our lives in very specific and concrete ways" (Borsa 36 IN Giroux). This paper will interrogate these spaces focusing on how, through the structuring of this course, the traditional dichotomy of self and other become interchangeable, both are encouraged to occupy and explore different spaces, resulting in a transformative learning experience (Duker) which enables these students to confidently occupy a space within the academy.

Conceptualising Staff Development

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In this paper, as academic development practitioners of many years experience, we explore our conceptualisation of teaching and learning in the context of a postgraduate diploma in higher education (PGDHE) offered to lecturers in a South African institution. The PGDHE in question has been offered for more than a decade. This paper is an overview and analysis of the evolving theoretical frameworks underpinning the PGDHE. The PGDHE involves disrupting academics' every day, common sense notions of teaching and learning and creating spaces for them to develop theoretically sound understandings and practices in relation to teaching and learning in their disciplines.

We argue that a PGDHE needs to work towards lasting and sustainable change in the ways in which teaching and learning are conceptualised and practised in higher education. It is about institutions and lecturers moving away from considering students as deficient to critical examination of institutional structures and cultures. These critical explorations lead to changed understandings about teaching as well as changes in lecturers' conceptions of their own identities.

Teaching in our view is not only the exercise of a set of skills and techniques. In the PGDHE we create the spaces for lecturers to explore the interplay between the ontological, epistemological and methodological foundations of their disciplines. In addition we encourage them to engage in the scholarship of teaching, learning, curriculum, assessment, etc. in their disciplines. Throughout the course lecturers are required to integrate their developing knowledge and understanding of the scholarship of teaching and learning with their reflections on their teaching practices. This model of the critically reflexive practitioner enables lecturers to position themselves and their practice in relation to theories presented in the course. This process contributes to making explicit the relationship between lecturers' identities as discipline experts and as teachers of their disciplines.

Developing a pedagogical approach to plagiarism

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This paper seeks to examine the importance of a sound pedagogical approach to plagiarism at higher education institutions in South Africa. It takes into account the changing context within which higher education exists. It also acknowledges the diverse backgrounds from which students emerge and the learning constructs which they are taught at schools. It considers the different understandings, contexts and approaches to plagiarism that exist. This paper specifically analyses the pedagogy of the plagiarism policy at Rhodes University as a case study. It provides a brief overview of ways in which the Rhodes University plagiarism policy can be structured in order to afford a more sound and holistic approach to plagiarism prevention and treatment. Ultimately, this paper supports an approach that focuses less on the punishment aspect associated with plagiarism and pays more specific attention on teaching students how to read and write without plagiarising.

The characteristics and development of academic fields and disciplines.

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There is a push within Higher Education for greater collaboration and interdisciplinary work both in research and in teaching. Ironically, these conditions have led to an increased interest in the nature and characteristics of various traditional and less traditional disciplines in order to better understand the possibilities and requirements of interdisciplinary work. This paper looks at a range of typologies of disciplines or fields and also at some ways of considering how different disciplines and fields develop over time. Typologies of disciplines or fields include C.P. Snows "two cultures", Biglan's distinction between "hard" and "soft," and "pure" and "applied" disciplines and Becher's recognition of the more social aspects of disciplinary work. Bernstein provides ideas about how sciences develop over time and refers to them as "hierarchical knowledge structures". His description is rather different from Kuhn's notion of periods of "normal science" interspersed with "scientific revolutions" which lead to paradigm shifts. Bernstein also provides a description of how what he calls "horizontal knowledge structures," such as social sciences and humanities disciplines, develop over time by adding more "languages" (e.g. Marxism, functionalism, post-structuralism). Wignell draws on Bernstein's notions of vertical and horizontal knowledge structures but shows that in many cases disciplines are a mixture of the two. Abbot provides a potential way of understanding the relationships between what Bernstein calls the "languages" of social sciences. Abbot argues that the dichotomies inherent in social science disciplines lead to "fractal distinctions". While much work on academic disciplines makes brief reference to a range of ideas about how disciplines or fields can be distinguished from each other, this paper attempts to make explicit comparisons between these typologies and ideas.

ID: **154**
Short Paper (20 min)
Topics: Creating new spaces for dynamic teaching and learning to foster student success.
Keywords: entrepreneurship, integrate, holistic, self-employment

An integrated approach to teaching and learning

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Academic institutions, colleges and training centres should be geared to meet national objectives of providing a resource base that stimulates entrepreneurship, and in so doing contribute towards the creation of employment. The high percentage of students dropping out from tertiary institutions is alarming, and increases the unemployment rate even further. The under-preparedness of students entering tertiary education is one of the factors which contributes to the drop-out rate of students. The challenges facing South Africa with regard to unemployment are daunting. A continuing inability to find work will propel future generations of youth to find self employment.

The target set by government is to create five million jobs, yet how these objectives are going to be met, has yet to be determined. This paper will address one way in which the curriculum in the first year of study at a tertiary institution integrates national concerns with regard to the promotion of entrepreneurship, by adopting a holistic approach. In so doing, the inclusion of business is also an important aspect, as these stakeholders provide requisite information so as to guide students in their journey of entrepreneurship. Knowledge should not only be equal to content, but recognized as having an interdependent relationship with skills and attitudes which contributes towards competence. The input from various stakeholders is essential in ensuring that the skills acquired by the students in this integrated project, facilitates the required learning for the acquisition of competencies.

The aim of the study is to assess the effectiveness of the methodology, and whether the approach will contribute to addressing the challenges faced by the youth with regard to unemployment, and creating entrepreneurial awareness and skills to meet the demands of self employment.

Peer Learning across Continents: Exploring Innovation and Best Practice within Supplemental Instruction

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This practical and hands on workshop will explore, compare and disseminate best practice and innovation within Supplemental Instruction, or PASS (Peer Assisted Study Sessions) as the program is known in Australia. The context of PASS at the University of Wollongong (UOW), the National Centre for PASS / SI in Australia will be outlined and an overview of the operation and rapid growth of PASS within the Australasia region will be discussed. The presenters will then outline a number of key practices at institutional level. These include excellence in managing collaborative learning dynamics, professional development of SI/PASS Leaders, marketing to maximise attendance, reporting and evaluation and obtaining high level buy in / funding. The presenters and participants will debate and benchmark the Australian experience against their own and explore transferable elements. Resources will be compared, contrasted and shared. The workshop will also explore issues of broader strategic importance such as the use of SI/PASS at postgraduate level; as a tool of social inclusion and the benefits of peer learning programs for both domestic and international students.

A Practical Approach to Teaching in Multilingual contexts

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This workshop provides a practical approach to teaching in multilingual contexts. The approach is curriculum-based, meaning we look at the sum total of students' learning experiences (lectures, tutorials and materials) to plan and allocate languages used. The workshop utilises a dummy module as a context for planning language allocation over a term or semester. It then focuses on the arrangements, for example some classes in English, some in Afrikaans (separation), using two languages in the same lecture (flexibility) or a combination of both approaches. We also look at related classroom practices and teaching approaches that you could use, and share experiences of good practice in this context. The workshop concludes by identifying exciting areas for research.

Opportunities and Affordances of collaborative language teaching: 3 Instances of tertiary practice

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This paper will explore three instances of collaborative language teaching and use these as a means to extrapolate criteria for good practice. In doing so, we will highlight the differences between team teaching and collaborative teaching. Through unpacking these differences, aspects of power, time and space amongst others will be discussed. In addition the ongoing iterative discussions which resulted in continuous reflection and growth will be highlighted. Research in this field (Levine, 1990) claims that the collaborative partnership brings different vested interests together in a dialogical relationship with in-built reflective spaces. In addition Nunan (1992) claims that as a model collaborative teaching is leaner-centered and enabling

This paper reflects on collaboration as a methodology in a short learning programme, a one month Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) certificate course, and a mainstream Language and Linguistics semester course

In the TESOL course, collaboration was modeled as a as a practice for participants to take up and internalise throughout the course whereas in the short learning programme collaboration enabled presenters to reflect and modify content to meet the needs of industry. In contrast, collaboration developed in the mainstream course as presenters planned content together, shared and adapted slides, and engaged in an ongoing enriching reflective dialogue allowing them to refine and focus the course.

This multi-voiced teaching echoes Bahktin's polyphonic theories and demonstrates diversity as a productive resource for both teachers and learners. We believe that it is therefore a means of empowering all participants. In addition while acknowledging the time and planning required in achieving the seamless presentation, we feel that there are developmental spinoffs for lecturers in adding to their pedagogical repertoire.

Participant Experiences and Motivational Factors in a Pan-South African Universities' Collaboration towards Effective Practices in Technology Assisted Learning

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A collaborative study with the overall goal to enhance the implementation and integration of technology-assisted learning (TAL) at higher education institutions was initiated. The Universities of Johannesburg and Edge Hill in the UK convened an inter-institutional project focused on effective practices in TAL in South African universities. The aims in 2008 were to:

• enhance the quality of learning provision in participant universities through TAL;

• provide facility to meet needs identified in self-evaluation and review by creating sightlines of knowledge transfer between participant universities, including identification of research themes;

• test such a collaborative model, through research, as a basis for meeting the demands of other challenges in the South African higher education system.

The experiences and the needs of the group were used to identify a series of lenses for self-evaluation of aspects of TAL and to provide data to convene six knowledge exchange groups within a matrix of matched interests, expressed needs for development and areas of expertise for cross-fertilisation.

The outcomes of collaboration and learning within the emerging community of practice have included ongoing interchange, including face to face colloquia in Bloemfontein and Johannesburg.

This paper charts the process of establishing the collaboration and its infrastructure and follows with analysis of data from thematic analyses of semi-structured interviews from TAL leaders who participated in the period 2008-11. The research outcomes focus on:

• identifying and describing factors contributing towards the decisions of TAL leaders to collaborate in the developmental study

• identifying and describing characteristics of TAL leaders that facilitated the integration of innovative and transformative teaching and learning practices in HEIs

• exploring the experiences of the dynamics and structure of such a collaborate to elicit lessons for future enterprises centred on mutually expressed needs and priorities in South African learning and teaching in universities.

A Competency Based Framework for the Adoption of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Systems in Higher Education

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Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) specialists are highly sought after globally and in South Africa there is a shortage of Information Communication Technology (ICT) practitioner skills as well as ERP specialist skills. In order to address this need for ERP graduates several studies propose that ERP systems should be adopted in Information Systems (IS) curricula for instructional purposes. Whilst many higher education institutions in the United States, Australia and Europe have successfully adopted an ERP system in their curricula, in South Africa less than twenty percent of HEIs have followed this trend. The adoption of ERP systems is a challenging process as ERP systems are resource-intensive, costly, complex and have a steep learning curve. Educators are faced with resource problems and a dearth of options relating to the adoption process. In addition it is critical that the skills and knowledge competencies attained in these courses are industry relevant. Several education frameworks have been recommended that propose to assist educators with ERP program design, but these frameworks are limited and do not consider all the factors relating to the adoption of an ERP system. A comprehensive, competency based framework is proposed which can assist educators with the design of an ERP program for IS graduates who will possess industry relevant competencies. Empirical data on the implementation of the competency based ERP education framework in a higher education institution in South Africa is provided. The results of this study can assist in narrowing the gap between industry requirements and IS education programs. This is a major contribution to both government and academic initiatives in South Africa to address both the ICT skills problem as well as the need for ERP specialists.

The National Benchmark Test: Lecturers' Perspectives and Responses

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One of the key imperatives of higher education in South Africa is to foster and promote access, equity and success of a diverse student profile. Although the National Senior Certificate serves as the primary admissions criterion to university entrance, many institutions have included alternative admissions instruments such as proficiency tests in an attempt to broaden participation and to provide support for students who might be considered `at risk' of under-performance. The proficiency tests might therefore be used for diagnostic purposes and/or for appropriate placement of students. However, proficiency tests are only effective if the results are used judiciously to assist students to improve their academic performance. The value of alternative admissions lies in how higher education institutions, departments and lecturers respond to the results that will promote access and achieve success. This study explores the perceptions and responses of lecturers in four departments at a university of technology with reference to an Academic/Quantitative literacy proficiency test in terms of its purpose, use, and the academic responses that emerged. The focus of this research is fourfold, viz. (1) how the test is perceived by the lecturers, (2) the purpose of the test, (3) how the results are perceived and interpreted, and (4) what academic responses have been put in place to assist students deemed to be at risk. Data generation is primarily by means of interviews with lecturers who are involved dealing with proficiency test results at first year level. The themes that emerge will show what premium lecturers place on the test and test results, and how test results might elicit curriculum adaptations in the various departments. The findings of this study provide insight into the role that academics play in responding to results of proficiency tests and how these responses impact on student participation in the academic sphere.

The college sector and access to higher education: myths, realities and possibilities

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It is now widely accepted that growth in good quality graduate output is critical for South Africa's social and economic development. Research on student performance patterns indicates that South African higher education is a low-participation, high-attrition system, so there is a pressing need for improvement. However, there are very disparate views on how this might best be achieved.

It is clear that the well-documented shortcomings of the South African schooling system, linked to persistent social and economic inequalities, are primary reasons for under-performance in higher education, and many in the academic community do not look outside of such external conditions for solutions to the problems in higher education. However, as it has become apparent that there continue to be major obstacles in the way of substantial improvement in the school sector, there has been a renewed focus on whether other non-university institutions, particularly FET and/or community colleges, can offer alternative forms of provision that will address the systemic problem of student under-preparedness. A central advantage of such provision is seen to be that it would offer viable access routes into higher education that would not entail significant change in the universities themselves.

Whatever the apparent pros and cons of this conception, the investment needed for major expansion of the scope of the college sector, and the possible consequences of failure to achieve the intended goals, make it essential for the potential of this sector to be rigorously analysed, in terms of its capacity to provide education that enhances individuals' life-chances, contributes directly to development, and offers pathways to successful participation in higher education. This presentation aims to contribute to such analysis by examining relevant policy and quantitative data that can inform realistic expectations about the college sector's role.

Chemistry is 'Difficult': Designing Instructional Structures that Students will find Easy to Learn

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The purpose in this paper is to report about how understanding students' conceptual representation may be used to design appropriate instructional structures to enhance learning of specific concepts in learners' knowledge bases. Generally teachers teach from instructional structures designed on the basis of what the learner was taught and not their prior knowledge. In fact, previous teaching and prior knowledge should be seen as having different meaning because teaching does not always lead to learning or knowledge acquisition. In many instances the teacher assumes that with the previous teaching the learner has acquired knowledge relevant and sufficient to comprehend new learning material. What the teacher usually 'misses' is how the learner is able or unable to represent concepts previously learned. Sometimes the teacher's apparent lack of understanding of the learner's conceptions constrains his/her ability to design instructional structures that are appropriate to the learner's level of conceptualisation. This disjuncture between the teacher's understandings of the learner's prerequisite knowledge or conceptual understanding may lead to teaching-learning misalignment. The teacher's in-depth understanding of conceptual representation of what the learner already knows and what he/she attempts to teach is important for the selection of material (information) to be processed during teaching. The teacher can use the learner's representation of concepts to design instructional structures that cascade learning progression from simple to complex concepts. This progression eases comprehension of complex learning material and enhances learning during teaching. Therefore the paper informs the teacher on the origin, nature and how learners use concepts. In addition the paper is informative about learners existing knowledge and how it may be reorganised for purposes of designing learning material meaningful to the learner's level of understanding.

Tradition- modernity and South African Academic Development (AD) interventions

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Higher Education plays an important role in the human development of any country. On the other hand, it faces a daunting and seemingly insurmountable task of dealing with the diverse nature of its clients especially during this time of globalisation. It is difficult in the sense that under-preparedness does not only refer to the academic situation but to other aspects as well. It becomes increasingly important during this process of human development to ensure physical, mental, social, political, economic and cultural paradigm shift in Higher Education (HE) AD. The paper would like to argue that South African HE seems to be consciously or unconsciously homogenizing its AD interventions. This is witnessed in a number of interventions given especially to first time entering students, starting from the new students orientation programme up to and including academic literacy courses that are offered. Due to this homogenization, most if not all interventions are academic in nature and other various dimensions pertaining student's socio cultural challenges are often ignored. The reason why the effects of academic intervention strategies are not always evident enough might be because other facets that are not primarily academic in nature are often ignored. In the light of this state of affairs, the paper argues that it is imperative to cross boarders in HE AD if academic intervention strategies are to be effective and relevant. What this means is that, amongst others HE should try to keep balance between modernity and the traditional background of its clientele.

ID: **158**
Panel Discussion (80 min)
Topics: Creating new spaces for dynamic teaching and learning to foster student success.
Keywords: curriculum, knowledge, epistemic access

Attending to knowledge in higher education curriculum

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There appears to be in South Africa and more globally a growing interest in higher education curriculum. In particular sociologists of education have drawn our attention to the general neglect in curriculum scholarship to the differentiated forms of knowledge which constitute these curricula. They argue that social access to higher education is meaningless unless we enable epistemic access. The key question which this panel will address is, how we design higher education curricula which enable epistemic access? In other words, how to we design curricula which enable access to powerful forms of knowledge? The panel inputs will all be framed by a broad critical realist set of assumptions about the nature of knowledge and the panelists will draw on social theoretical and analytical tools. Each panelists will present on the basis of empirical work-in-progress from a particular disciplinary or multi-disciplinary field. Some of the panelists will expose the challenges of epistemic access into the Humanities in a traditional general-formative degree. Others will examine the challenges of epistemic access in more vocationally and professionally-oriented fields of Journalism, Design and Mechatronics. The panel will conclude with a cross-cutting discussion about the implications for these studies for curriculum design.

Towards a principled basis for curriculum differentiation

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Post-apartheid policies for the Higher Education and Training have focused on dismantling the institutional differentiation of the apartheid imagination that was based on racially-defined institutional types. These policies have acknowledged the need for a principled framework for functional differentiation. However, the implementation of post-1994 policies has largely failed to directly address the vexed question of the nature of the curriculum knowledge, and therefore has failed to provide a principled basis for curriculum differentiation and articulation across vocational, professional and general-formative qualifications. This is a particular pressing matter for the Comprehensive HEI's for also relevant to Universities of Technology in the midst of recurriculation. The key question is how do we create higher education 'pathways' which enable epistemic access? In this panel we will present a set of conceptual and analytical tools which we have developed for the analysis of 10 curriculum case studies at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. We will present the findings of the analysis and the implications of this analysis for issues of curriculum design (e.g. access, progression and articulation) as well as the implications for broader policy issues (e.g. the review of the Higher Education Qualifications Framework).

"Enhancing literacy through voluntary reading programme for first year varsity students."

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Lecturers in the English Department at the University of Fort Hare share the concern in academia for incoming varsity students who lack the literacy competence to succeed in their courses. In 2010 a relationship was forged with an American novelist who offered to send copies of her selected fiction works for student leisure reading.

This paper will discuss the resultant voluntary reading programme that was organized for first year students enrolled in English language classes, the theoretical methodology of the programme, its implementation and positive results. It will also explore ways to configure this programme to extend beyond university boundaries into effective community engagement.

Is the grade 12 pass rate the only indicator for quality standards of the NSC?

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Learner achievement is generally considered to be a key indicator of educational quality and standards. In particular, learner's results in large scale examinations or assessments such as the Grade 12 examinations are always the subject of considerable public scrutiny. However, emphasis on single aspects such as examination results creates a skewed impression of the quality of education. The results are in fact just one element of the broader system and can be more meaningfully interpreted by taking into account the whole context of the system in which they occur.

In 2009, Umalusi conducted a study on the indicators for quality standards of the National Senior Certificate (NSC). These indicators are meant to provide a profile of the NSC at a glance and in context. The paper explores other possible indicators for quality standards and shows the dangers of using results as 'the key' indicator of standards.

Becoming a Scientist: first year students perceptions of scientific practice

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A scientific research project has been introduced into the first year extended curriculum earth and life sciences course at the University of Cape Town with the aim of exposing students to some of the processes of scientific research, particularly data analysis and report writing. We believe that it is important for students to develop an understanding of how scientists practice their profession as early as possible in their undergraduate years and that this understanding will be best developed through doing research. Writing and quantitative literacy play an important part in scientific practice and should be developed in the context of learning in the scientific disciplines. This project has brought together the Life Sciences lecturer and teachers from the Numeracy Centre and the Language Development Group who have worked as a collaborative team to ensure that the literacy and numeracy skills are taught in an integrated way and become embedded in the curriculum of this course

In this paper we will discuss the effectiveness of this integration in the first iteration of this project in the curriculum in 2010. Our observations are based on student performance data, the results of student evaluation questions and our own reflections. We will discuss how these observations inform further development of the design of the curriculum as well as the design of our ongoing research and development project.

An evaluation of a heuristic blended learning framework for teaching development at NMMU

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This paper provides an overview of the design, development and evaluation of a structured teaching development programme for lecturers at NMMU in response to needs at national, institutional and faculty levels. This programme focuses on Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in higher education with the aim of promoting the professionalisation of teaching at NMMU and impacting positively on student learning and academic success. The blended learning framework consists of contact as well as online learning opportunities. This paper draws on results obtained from participant, facilitator and programme evaluation processes and aims to contribute to the conference theme by suggesting innovative strategies for professional development of teaching practices in higher education. Specific aspects evaluated include the impact of a blended learning framework, the development of positive teaching identities and the promotion of a scholarly approach to teaching among lecturers.

Electronic Peer Assisted Learning (e-PAL): A potential strategy to address the needs of Y-Generation learners.

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South African student success and graduation rates are a source of concern and the Department of Higher Education and Training has tasked higher education institutions to implement improvement strategies. Of the 25 500 student that The Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) enrols, only 50% finally graduate and 25% graduate in the minimum time period. NMMU has prioritised peer assisted learning as a key strategy to address the differential success rates of its culturally diverse student body and improve graduation rates.

In addition to existing peer assisted programmes (Supplemental Instruction, tutorials, mentoring), a pilot Electronic Peer Assisted Learning (e-PAL) project was implemented in August 2010 at NMMU.

Two factors have necessitated the introduction of e-PAL. Firstly, most NMMU students are Y-generation learners who want information instantly and use technology extensively to network and communicate. E-PAL supports a blended learning strategy, which combines traditional and technology-enabled learning opportunities. Secondly, traditional peer assisted learning cannot reach all students due to constraints such as timeslots available on timetables, timetable clashes, and available small group lecture venues. e- PAL is less constrained by the timetable as the group can be facilitated at any time that is convenient and students only need access to the internet.

The overall strategic objective of the e-PAL project is to implement an expanded project in which learning support is embedded in a module, accessible to all students, and facilitated electronically by trained PAL facilitators working closely with lecturers and professional support staff acting as e-PAL coordinators in order to retain students and assist them toward graduation

The pilot project has been evaluated using contact data and student and facilitator feedback surveys. Feedback from the participants and facilitators informed changes to the programme and e-PAL expanded to 34 modules in 2011. Some 2010 findings and preliminary 2011 findings will be shared.

Motivating staff in building Teaching and Learning expertise and scholarship: a managerial-led initiative

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Research evidence revealed that the quality of Teaching and Learning (T&L) on the UFS: Qwaqwa Campus is unsatisfactory. Data not only pointed to very low pass and throughput rates of students, but surveys highlighted areas of concern in staff motivation, commitment and satisfaction with the working environment. The reluctance of lecturers to participate in staff development activities was also a concern.

The announcement that the next round of the CHE's Institutional Reviews would focus on the quality of T&L and student success, motivated academic leaders to initiate a campus-wide action plan. It had the aim to build the educational expertise of staff which could also serve as a stepping-stone towards the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). The focus was therefore placed on collaborative actions in building lecturers' knowledge and skills, generically as well as in the disciplines, the fostering of deep reflectivity and the promotion of an inquiry orientation towards T&L.

In motivating staff to participate, the project leaders studied and applied principles of intrinsic motivation, in particular the role of participation and team work. A series of workshops, structured according to staff members' preferences and needs, various incentives and the implementation of an annual Prestige Forum are examples of "interventions". The "voice" of staff members was given prominence in consultation and evaluation of actions. A small team of potential T&L "champions" was also recruited to collaboratively investigate their own practices in small-scale action research projects. Lessons learned by these "champions" were shared with all academics during academic forums.

The unfolding of the 2011-phase of the project will be shared at the conference. The significance lies in the potential improvement of T&L on the Campus, as well as the insights gained on applying motivation theories in advancing T&L expertise and scholarship in a challenging South African higher education environment.

Crossing borders between face-to-face and online learning: the evaluation of an online tutoring initiative

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Peer collaborative learning centers around principles such as active involvement, the inclusion of

multiple learning styles, learner diversity and the inherent social nature of learning.

Although students' experiences of online tutoring as part of a blended learning approach may be

largely positive (such as time flexibility), the successful evolution of online tutoring initiatives cannot

rest upon the implementation only, but special attention needs to be paid to the challenges and

perspectives shared by students.

An important link should therefore be established between what online tutoring initiatives offer and

what the students' perceived needs are to facilitate effective learning. Such a linkage may

encourage inclusion, quality assurance and innovation through the critical evaluation of blended

learning practices.

The paper explores survey data, obtained from students enrolled for a first year economics module

at the University of the Free State over a two year period. Student experiences/ perspectives of the

completion of online activities and online tutoring are identified and examined.

Survey data revealed problem areas with regard to time management, typing of responses and self

expression, technology, feedback and social presence.

Practices that could potentially enhance students' experience of online activities and tutoring as part

of a blended learning approach are explored.

ID: **318**
Poster Presentation
Topics: Creating new spaces for dynamic teaching and learning to foster student success.
Keywords:

Teaching and Learning Collaboration Initiative within an Engineering Faculty

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Universities are challenged by literacy levels of their students. Gordimer (2007) rightly says "literacy is the basis of all learning". However, literacy development is often delegated to the Language/Communication divisions servicing the needs of other academic departments.

Literacies acquisition and discourse development depends on literacies practices that students have acquired in the past and those that are specifically extended to them in the present. Therefore, academics and discipline experts can no longer dismiss, take as implied or view literacies and discourse acquisition as issues that are separate from content for language practitioners to fix-up, especially as student cultural and language differences increasingly become challenges for literacies acquisition in HE. The most important factor for academic success is "simply proficiency in the language of instruction" (Blue, 1993:5), and no student acquires literacies naturally (Myles, 2002) or automatically without active intervention (Green, 2010). Therefore, a collaborative project was established at the end of 2009 between Higher Education Access and Development Services (HEADS), Faculty of Engineering, the Built Environment and Information Technology (EBEIT), in particular School of Engineering (SoE) and the Department of Applied Language Studies (DALS) at NMMU. This project enables the collaborators to integrate and embed academic and literacy development into teaching practices and learning activities.

This poster will share the:

• Collaboration origin: concerns of Lecturers, Teaching and Learning (TL) Professionals, Industry and Statutory Body (ECSA) regarding important factors for academic success, namely: throughput and retention, English language proficiencies and academic literacies.

• Actions: various collaboration practices undertaken and collaboration structure

• Purpose: to improve Engineering Teaching and Learning practices

• Results and future challenges: Some of the results will be shared, for example improved performance of students. One of the challenges is to get buy-in from all lecturers.

Deconstructing the rift between university theory and classroom realities: Challenges and possibilities

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Literature abounds on teaching practice as an effective way of providing student teachers with skills, knowledge, competences and opportunities for integrating theory with classroom practice. Student teachers study theory in subject didactics under the assumption that they will link the theories learnt in class with practice during teaching practice and after they receive their teaching credentials. However, there is counter literature which suggests that there is disharmony between the theory taught at university and classroom realities. In South Africa and elsewhere, there is a dearth of literature on this issue. This research used interviews with student teachers, subject didactics lecturers, cooperating teachers and teaching practice coordinators to examine their views on the extent to which theory learnt in teacher education links with practice in schools, and strategies that universities use to link theory with real classroom contexts. The research question was: Is theory in teacher education linked to classroom practice? If so, what strategies do universities use to link these aspects? Results indicated a minimal link between theory taught in university and actual phenomena occurring in classrooms. Results further showed that conflict between teacher education theory and classroom contexts manifests itself in several different ways. Finally, results revealed a widening gap between university theory and impoverished school contexts. A set of recommendations was made to ameliorate this situation for the betterment of student teachers' experiences in the field. A conclusion was drawn that collaborations should be strengthened among schools, Department of Education, Subject Advisors, school principals and universities which offer Teacher Education Programmes.

The NMMU School of Accounting Teaching and Learning Model

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Many students enter university with few of the learning strategies and academic skills, which would enable them to take advantage of the different learning opportunities that are available. The problem, however, is that they also leave university with inappropriate learning strategies and skills because lecturers assume that students will somehow absorb the appropriate skills without being specifically taught them (Terry and Willcocks, 1996). One way of dealing with this problem is to introduce learning strategies in the subject context as early as possible.

Teaching accounting to first year university students at any South African University is today becoming increasingly complex as we deal with increasing class sizes, increasing diversity and a student body which appears to be less inclined to study without external motivating factors, while to be successful in studying accounting requires more than passive learning (Bezuidenhout, 2008).

The School of Accounting has developed a Teaching and Learning Model with a philosophy that both the lecturer as well as the learner has to be actively involved in the process of learning. The role of the lecturer is to provide the learners with learning resources which enable the student to learn efficiently and effectively. The role of the student is to take responsibility for their own learning and thereby acquire the ability to become lifelong learns (learn how to learn).

The Model has been accredited by the South African Institutute for Chartered Accountants (SAICA) as being a benchmark for other universities, and is one of the reasons for the excellent results in the QE 1 board exams.

The Model is based on the underlying principles of teaching and learning in Accounting and in order to acquire the knowledge and skills a variety of learning resources are implemented and applied by the students of the NMMU School of Accounting.

Creating engaging teaching and learning spaces that nurture student success

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Engaging students in their learning is critical for their success. More than a decade of higher education research suggests that, after controlling for student background characteristics, student engagement is also a significant predictor of their satisfaction and success (Pascarella & Terenzini 2005: 417-420; Kuh et al. 2005: 22; Kuh et al. 2007: 22;). Student engagement can be defined by two key components, first, what students do (the time and energy they devote to educationally purposive activities) and second, what institutions do (the extent to which they employ effective educational practices to induce students to do the right things). This paper will share perspectives from a two year national research project on student engagement using the South African Survey of Student Engagement (SASSE) conducted for the Council on Higher Education. The SASSE is based on the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) developed in the USA and now adapted and used at 53 Australian and New Zealand institutions, 40-50 institutions in China, with multi-institutional adaptations currently under way in Mexico and Korea. The perspectives of both students and lecturers on student engagement will be provided and the implications of the research for teaching and learning are explored. It is argued that a focus on student engagement provides higher education institutions with a tool with which to create engaging teaching and learning spaces in the South African context.

Higher-order questions versus lower-order questions in the assessment of student learning!

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Questions, effectively delivered, facilitate student learning and thinking, as they serve to motivate and focus student attention, provide opportunities for practice and rehearsal, and provide the opportunity for academics to assess how well students are mastering content. Academics in Higher Education often make use of examination papers as the final assessment of student learning in terms of retention and application skills. However, the assumption exists that questions relating to application skills should start to dominate higher academic levels in education, with a subsequent drop in questions regarding retention skills, leading to a higher professionalization of the teaching and learning process. These questions may be categorized as either higher-order (critical thinking) or lower-order (simple recall) questions. This workshop attempts to distinguish between these two types of questions in light of Bloom's taxonomy, with similar concepts such as deep and surface learning being examined. An individual exercise is included which aims to ascertain the participant's perception of higher-order and lower-order questions. A group exercise then follows in which academics will be assisted to formulate appropriate higher-order questions. Academics need to promote a culture of critical-thinking, logical-reasoning and problem-solving if students are to develop into successful and competent engineers, scientists, researchers, analysts or managers. The purpose of this workshop is therefore to stimulate awareness in academics of the balance which should exist between higher-order and lower-order questions and to assist them in using appropriate illustrative verbs in the formulation of these questions. It will further provide examples of converting lower-order questions into higher-order ones for different fields of study.

An integrated approach to Information Literacy at the Durban University of Technology

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Information literacy is more than an academic skill but is also a life skill.

The concept of information literacy has been around for quite a while and there are various definitions for the concept but what is common to all of them is the attributes or competencies that they claim an information literate person should have. These are the ability to:

• Recognise the need for information

• Access needed information effectively and efficiently

• Evaluate information critically

• Incorporating relevant information into one's knowledge base

• Use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose

• Access and use information ethically and legally

(de Jager and Nassimbeni 2003)

In an attempt to contribute to empowering learners to becoming lifelong learners, the Durban University of Technology Library aligned itself to the seven critical cross-field outcomes(CCFO) as stipulated by The South African Qualifications Authority(SAQA), with particular emphasis on the fourth CCFO which speaks to the ability "to collect, analyse, organize and critically evaluate information" (SAQA 2003). As is evident, there is a definite correlation between these outcomes and the skills that an information literate person embodies.

A pilot study between the Industrial Engineering department and the Library resulted in a collaborative engagement which saw Industrial Engineering learners engage with an Information Literacy Course run by the library. The poster highlights the integrated approach and partnering between the Library and the academic department at the Durban University of Technology.

A critical reflection on the language proficiency interventions of students at a University of Technology

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There have been many reasons researchers have attributed to contributing towards first year student's poor performance. Learners being unaware of their learning styles and teachers adopting inappropriate and even inflexible teaching styles are just some good examples. However, higher education teaching and learning environments traditionally emphasise reading and writing as an attribute necessary to student success. Such requirements have a tendency to haunt novice first year learners who are required to suddenly adjust from their high school environment to an academic environment. This paper describes a study conducted on first year learners to investigate the relationship between support interventions as well as a review their reflections/ opinions on such interventions. This study is conducted on a convenient sample of learners referred for such interventions in the Student Support department.

Closure of Social Media at Medunsa: A boon or bugaboo

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Technology continues to have a profound effect on education especially in Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs). Students are increasingly using technology for learning via the internet. Access to internet in this era is very easy. The internet can be accessed from homes, internet café and even smart phones. Today's generation is into Social Media (SM), such Twitter, Mixit, Facebook and the newly developed Google+. This poster reports on the use of Facebook by lecturers for communication with students.

Facebook is an example of the Social Medium that was used for communication between lecturers and students in Sciences at the Medunsa Campus. Recently the University Management decided to bar both the students and the staff from accessing the SM during the day. This poster offers a bird's eye view of the benefits and shortcomings of closing the SM for students and staff. Perceptions of the Management, staff and students were elicited through interviews and focus group sessions.

Using observed consultation tool to facilitate medical students' acquisition of primary health care consultation skills.

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Primary Health Care is defined as essential health care based on practical, scientifically sound, and socially acceptable methods and technology made universally accessible to individuals and families in the community through their full participation and at a cost that the community and the country can afford to maintain at every stage of their development in the spirit of self-reliance and self-determination.

Primary Health Care is the health care strategy that has been adopted in the Republic of South Africa since 1994. It is essential health care made accessible and affordable to all population groups and social classes in the country. Preventive, curative and health promotion services are key elements of the health care strategy. In clinical practice in the public health sector, it entails providing medical care to patients at lower level health facilities (Clinics, Community Health Centres and District Hospitals) in a package that includes disease management, disease prevention and health promotion using appropriate basic medical technology. A primary health care physician therefore has to be able to address disease prevention and health promotion during consultation and consider and use basic medical technology to diagnose and manage disease conditions.

Mentor observation of students' live consultations at primary health care facilities and giving feedback using a standardized consultation evaluation form is being found to help acquisition of primary health care consultation skills.

Theorising Classroom Based Research: Exploring games and literacies as potential theoretical frames

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This presentation argues for classroom based research to be more rigorously theorized and proposes two substantive theoretical frames as examples for doing so. Research by the NRF indicates that much education research remains theoretically thin. Shay (2011) further argues the higher education research is frequently contextually rich but conceptually weak. In attempting to respond to this the presentation strives to understand how games, used for teaching Dental Technology, function as pedagogical devices. Bogost, Mateas, Murray and Nitsche assert that "you must make games to study them, and you must study games to make them" (2005, 60). This advice, together with the need to pedagogically understand how games function resulted in my decision to make games the object of my research. Much classroom based research of this kind relies on fairly straightforward evaluations of interventions and there is not always the necessary theorising to allow for a deeper understanding that moves beyond the particular context. The presentation outlines the work of New Literacies Studies and research on the teaching and learning through games to indicate how such theoretical frames assist in the conceptualization and realization of such research in a suitably scholarly way. On a macro level, as this presentation is part of a larger PhD project a deeper understanding on literacies and how knowledge via games is constructed and transmitted will offer valuable insights on the kind of student identities being promoted, specifically in Dental Technology, and how learning happens within particular socio-cultural contexts, specifically a University of Technology.

Does the Distance between Tommy Thumb and Pinky Small Influence Keyboard Skills?

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We live in an era which is "controlled" by computers, an era which is known as the information century. Computers were once regarded as large and strange machines that was kept in special air-conditioned rooms and only operated by trained people. Thus, computers were not part of our general daily lives, but with the continuous technological advancement, computers have become part of our classroom and are being used as an essential tool for learning. Because of this interaction, it is necessary for everyone to understand computers and more important to feel comfortable using it. This reflects not only the prevalence of new technology in the home and in the workplace, but also the necessity for computer literacy in schools, homes and universities that could enhance people's productivity.

Our desire and purpose is simply to assist a learner in the developing of keyboard skills and techniques to becoming proficient on the computer keyboard. At university entry level there is not an official keyboarding curriculum but much time is needed to teach the "touch" method of keyboarding skills and techniques to learners. Therefore, one could ask whether there is a relationship between a learner hand size, gender, speed and accuracy.

The methodology that was used by the researchers included a questionnaire, observation and a practical test done by learners in their first year of a computer subject at university level.

Keyboarding techniques will include good posture, body position, placement of fingers on the keyboard and the eye and hand coordination. Developing keyboarding skills and techniques requires constant reinforcement and teaching in order to maintain the desired skill. Good keyboarding skills and techniques is the first step towards developing effective employees for the future.

(281 words)

From student perception to improved practice: the value of on-line teaching evaluations to improve teaching and learning

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After the restructuring of the higher education landscape in 2004/2005 the University of Johannesburg (UJ) emerged as a multi-campus institution offering a comprehensive range of programmes and modules. In order to address the needs of the new institution and the diversity in terms of its offerings new policies, strategies and procedures were developed. One such development was the introduction of a new Teaching and Learning Strategy to supplement the UJ teaching and learning policy in order to emphasise the importance of quality teaching and learning. This emphasis was further accentuated by the introduction of an institutional policy that made teaching and module evaluation by students of staff mandatory. In order to implement this policy the University developed a new teaching evaluation instrument which was intended to integrate and extend the existing instrument and process.

Student evaluation or student rating of lecturers by students through the use of questionnaires is common practice at universities. This notion is supported by Loeher (2006) who referred to it as "the primary method of evaluating teaching" Despite its popularity, the value of this for lecturer development is debatable (Felder and Brent, 2004) as many staff feel compelled to evaluate their teaching in order to meet the mandatory institutional/policy requirement instead of utilising it to develop their teaching theory and practices.

This paper focusses on:

• Ascertaining staff perception of the newly developed on-line teaching evaluation process

• Eliciting academic staff member views concerning the provision of constructive feedback to facilitate improved teaching and learning through the teaching evaluation instrument

• Developing guidelines to assist staff in improving their teaching through the use of the teaching evaluation instrument and feedback.

Using Social Constructivism in an Introductory Software Development Course

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Students registering for the first time for a software development course at higher education institutions face multiple challenges. Abstract logical reasoning is essential in such a course and students need to rapidly develop strong critical thinking and problem solving skills in order to succeed. In addition, students have to acquire the discipline specific discourse and cope with the fact that in most institutions the language of learning and teaching (usually English) is not their mother tongue.

The challenges are especially acute for those students coming from some of our rural schools. Students emerge from this environment as predominantly passive learners, adept at surface learning but relatively unfamiliar with the notion of active learning. Furthermore, they have not been empowered with the skills to develop "the language required to manipulate abstract concepts and to frame argument in a structured linear form" (van Rensburg and Lamberti in Gravett & Geyser, 2004: 73). It is not surprising then that the success rate of first year students in these courses is generally low.

To respond proactively to these challenges, a facilitator needs to adopt a transformative educational approach, such as social constructivism. In the social constructivist view, learning is seen as an active and social process which occurs when students engage with peers and others to construct their own meaning. Studies by the Russian psychologist, Lev Vygotsky, show that language plays a pivotal role in this process as does the presence in the group of a person with more knowledge.

In my paper I will describe how, in my attempt to stimulate cognitive development and improve student success, I have used social constructivist methodologies to replace lecturing in my classes.

The Computing Studio: Creating a Space for High-Level Teaching and Learning

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Since the beginning of 2010, a group of academics in the Department of Computing Sciences at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University have been working on an action research project, The Computing Studio. The initial aim of the Computing Studio project was to explore how a Learning Systems Model, developed as part of an earlier Masters research project (van der Post, 2010), could be developed as a tool to assist academics to teach for high-level learning.

High-level learning refers to the conceptual and cognitive skills at the higher level of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives in the cognitive domain. These levels, in the revised version of the taxonomy are: Applying, Analysing and Evaluating (Overbaugh & Schultz, 2010). In addition, the department's industry advisory board gave feedback that graduates were lacking in the "soft skills" required in the workplace (Calitz, 2010).

As the project progressed, following an action research methodology, the research aim evolved. The focus shifted from the model itself to the empowerment of the group of computing academics in their enquiry into their teaching and learning practice.

This paper discusses how the action research methodology facilitated the development of clarity leading to the study's main research question: How can we create a space to foster a teaching and learning enquiry, in which academics can develop their own knowledge and educational practice, whilst contributing to and supporting each other's learning? The process of creating the space for the enquiry is also discussed.

Evaluation of the extended LL.B programme of the UFS

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Evaluation of the extended LL.B programme of the UFS

In 2005 the extended curriculum LL.B programme was implemented at the University of the Free State (UFS). The introduction of the extended programme was done in order allow more students access to the LL.B programme.

To be admitted into the main stream (4 year) LL.B programme, students must have an admission score of 33 or higher as well an additional language (70%) and mathematical (50% for mathematics or 70% for mathematical literacy) requirement and therefore not many students gained access to the LL.B programme. In response to this issue the faculty of law introduced the extended curriculum programme. Students only need to have an admission score of 28 to enter the extended programme as well as lower language requirement (50%) and no mathematical requirement.

In 2009 the law faculty of the UFS delivered its first group of extended curriculum LL.B graduates and it therefore became necessary to determine the success of the programme. It is not only necessary to determine the success of the programme but since only a few faculties in the country have an extended programme, it is also necessary to determine if the additional inputs have the intended result on the faculty's competitive basis and the quality of its teaching and learning.

In 2010 an intensive study was launched to answer these questions and evaluate the extended LL.B programme.

The full paper will set out the research aims as well as the findings of this preliminary study. It is the aim of the authors that this research will continue to be a longitudinal study to constantly improve the quality of the extended programme.

Word count: 278

Exploring the national policy environment: spaces for the professional development of academics?

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There is a growing need internationally for the professional development of university teachers, particularly given the increasingly complex context within which we work (Bamber 2002). This is true in South Africa as well where the changing higher education landscape has been well-documented (Boughey XXX; Scott 1995; Scott, Yeld & Henry 2007).For the individual, this changing context manifests on a number of levels – at the level of the department or 'workgroup' (Trowler 2008); at an institutional and, inevitably, national level. This third or macro level is in turn framed largely by policy and legislation – specifically that which relates to higher education and, in particular, issues of quality teaching and the professional learning of those who contribute to it. Such national influences are the focus of this paper which presents the first phase of an NRF funded project seeking to investigate the contextual influences on the professional development of university teaching in South Africa. Our intention is to provide a snapshot of the system, informed by a review of the relevant policy and legislation, and to offer a critical reflection on the extent to which these prevailing conditions serve to enable or constrain academics in the teaching roles. While the larger study draws on the work of Margaret Archer (2001) as it will discern the interplay between structure, culture and agency, our focus in this presentation is specifically the 'structure' at a national level. We believe that a greater understanding of the structural mechanisms at play nationally will provide a basis upon which the investigations at the meso and micro level can be built. Ultimately it is envisaged that the study will provide evidence that can be used to facilitate a greater engagement with professional development opportunities for teaching across the entire system.

Reconsidering the role of the university: graduates for the public good?

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Walker and Maclean (2010:848) argue that universities "have the potential,… to pursue either reproductive or transformative goals". Achieving such goals is incumbent on the extent to which graduates leave university with the attributes that will enable them to contribute to the 'public good' (Walker 2010). However, understanding what these attributes are, when and how they ought to be 'developed', is complex. Bowden et. al. (2000) describe graduate attributes as "[T]he qualities, skills and understanding a university community agrees its students should develop during their time with the institution." They further argue that these are seen to "include, but go beyond, the disciplinary expertise or technical knowledge … [T]hey are the qualities that also prepare graduates as agents for social good in an unknown future" (Bowden et. al 2000). In this paper we report on the first phase of an institution-wide project aimed at revising the university's teaching and learning strategy drawing on a shared understanding of the sort of graduates we would like to produce. While the parent project will ultimately focus on implementing the teaching and learning strategy, an important feature of this early phase has been the analysis of the responses made by graduating students captured in an exit questionnaire. This instrument is administered annually and addresses a range of topics that provide insight into how students perceive the extent to which they have developed specific attributes and skills during their studies. While remaining mindful of the limitations of drawing on self-reported data, we frame our interpretation of the responses in the context of the existing Profile of the SU graduate. The findings of this analysis, which will we be shared during the presentation, are providing an important entry point for the consultative process that is currently ongoing at the university.

Outlining the problem of South African Language in Education policy and addressing academic literacy: a reason and a response.

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The failure of South African Language in Education policy to provide L2 English learners with opportunity to gain cognitive academic language proficiency to succeed in Higher Education, has posed a challenge to tertiary institutions. This paper describes the problem and the response of the University of the Free State (UFS) to these needs of learners. This paper reports on an emergent work in progress to address the needs of L2 students at the UFS who lack the cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) skills in the language of instruction. Government policy purports to provide additive bilingualism, but is, in fact, practising early transition from mother tongue instruction to English for learners who speak African languages as mother tongues.

The UFS now has open access with large numbers of students coming from a schooling system that has failed them as far as CALP is concerned. A rationale put forward by educational authorities for the precedence of English as the dominant medium of instruction is that learners need maximum exposure to English to become fluent and to prepare them for English as medium of instruction at tertiary level. Parents of learners who speak an African language as mother tongue, view English as a means of progress and those who speak it have power as they are connected to the global village and are, therefore, supportive of government policy. Current research on bilingual education programmes with an additive approach, provide different findings. There is strong evidence that bilingual education improves learners' chances of gaining the required CALP skills for academic success.

The rest of the report will outline the approach taken to literacy instruction at the UFS and describe how the challenge is addressed within the context of a transforming Higher Education landscape. Some qualitative data which was gathered on site will be presented.

With whom are we articulating?

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Within the current South African context, the articulation between schools and universities is a crucial issue that is receiving a lot of attention. Articulation between schools and universities is however in essence about the articulation between the characteristics and cultural capital of the students and the habitus of the institution. It is about people trying to fit into and succeed in an existing system. Although the demographic makeup of the student population in all SA institutions has changed, institutions often have a superficial view of the changes and as a result the students and their attributes are misunderstood resulting in articulation efforts that reach to students who do not exist. Most academics know that the demographic changes that have taken place in South African Higher Education goes much deeper than external appearance but they don't know what that might imply. An investigation into student pre-entry attributes has been ongoing at the University of Johannesburg since 2006 to investigate who UJ students actually are. The student population at UJ accurately reflects SA's demographic makeup and as a result the UJ data has relevance to all South African higher educational institutions. A trend analysis was conducted on the 2006 – 2011 (n = 20 707) data from which a variety of interesting trends have emerged. These trends allow for a more nuanced understanding of where a "typical" South African student comes from and what universities can expect from them upon their arrival. A number of recommendations about improving articulation are made based on the results of the trend analysis. The clearer picture of who SA students actually are provided by this study allows institutions to plan their articulation in a more informed and therefor a probably a more effective way.

Masincokole ngempilo ngesiXhosa, isiXhosa for Specific Purposes - Let's chat about health in isiXhosa: A Case Study

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Teaching and Learning an African Language to professionals is always associated with high levels of pre-course enthusiasm, and equally high levels of disappointment or disillusion. A language text, and associated augmentative DVD component were designed to be used as core texts in teaching medical students and qualified professionals isiXhosa in context through an interactive approach based on the specific linguistic elements required to "control" the particular communicative language situation in which the medical and health professional is likely to find herself or himself. In summary, learning focuses on the polite instruction, the direct instruction or command, and the specific question. Restricting the initial learning experience to contextually determined linguistic structures should reduce the potential miscommunication and discomfort associated with open-ended questions which are likely to elicit a magnitude of responses from a culturally different patient in a largely unfamiliar language. Experiencing accurate and authentic responses to simple linguistic phrases will motivate, rather than disappoint, the learner of isiXhosa, and move her or him to venture further into the intricacies of this beautiful African language and the speakers thereof. A brief summary of lecturer and learner experiences of this approach to isiXhosa learning at a particular institution will be recorded.

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Fostering student success through encouraging social responsibility

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Certain Universities have identified the growing need for students to expand their learning experiences to not only include the academic curriculum but to present opportunities for students to enhance their development as fully functional members of society. One way of achieving this is through offering modules that allow for students to conduct community outreach programmes. An example of such a module is the Academic and Life Skills Development Module (ALM) which forms a foundational module of the Extended Programme offered at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU). The ALM module is consistent with the vision/mission of NMMU in promoting equity of access and opportunities so as to give students the best chance of success in their pursuit of lifelong learning and diverse educational goals.

Social Responsibility Project (SRP) forms part of the second year of the ALM module. The SRP is linked to the values of NMMU namely Ubuntu which strives to promote a people-centred university, respect the dignity of others, recognise our mutual interdependence and to promote compassionate and responsible citizenship. "Programmes that include social responsibility as part of the curriculum are, in many instances having a life-changing impact." (talk@nmmu, November 2010). Students are expected to integrate knowledge and skill acquired in the first year of study in their social responsibility project.

The aim of paper is to evaluate and explore the impact, value and effectiveness that the social responsibility project has had on the success of students. A qualitative approach with a contextual, descriptive, explorative design was implemented.

The method of data collection consisted of a brief questionnaire which included seven open-ended questions. Participants were selected through convenience sampling which involved emailing the questionnaire to second year students to complete. In total 60 questionnaires were completed across two campuses i.e. South campus and Vista campus of NMMU.

BECOME COMPUTER LITERATE AND REMOVE THE 'MONSTER' BEHIND TECHNOLOGY

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Initially when computers were created they were scarce and mainly used by the knowledgeable and elite of industry. A few years later, after further developments and rapid technological advances, the size and cost of computers was significantly reduced and today computers and technology, in general, are considered to be an essential tool.

It is expected from everyone in society, citizens of the new digital age, to be computer and technology literate in order to function properly at home and work. Unfortunately a large number of people have never, officially, been taught to effectively work with technologies such as computers, new generation home appliances, cell phones, etc. Some people feel excluded and intimidated and are generally cautious using some of the newer technologies.

To bridge this lack of knowledge, service learning is used as a teaching methodology to enable community participants who lack computer-based knowledge and skills to be trained to effectively interact with these technologies. Unfortunately one soon establish that the average participant have a phobia when it comes to interacting with computers and technology in general. This condition is known as technophobia and causes participants to be scared, insecure and they avoid any aspect related to technology.

This paper looks at a service learning module, previously, offered to promote computer literacy for community members, establishes to what level they experience technophobia and highlights various approaches of addressing this phobia.

Creating 'new spaces' to facilitate the learning of first-year tertiary Mathematics in Southern Africa.

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'Widening access' and 'changes to school curricula' are two of many factors that have impacted negatively on the smooth transition from secondary schools to universities in Southern Africa and internationally. Developed countries such as Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and Canada are also facing the problem of dealing with under-prepared first-year Mathematics students. This paper is a case study of a South African university, the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU), that is also grappling with this particular problem. At NMMU, the first-year student population is particularly diverse. Many students experience the challenges of computer illiteracy and are further disadvantaged by being non native English speakers. The paper explores possible innovative strategies that could enable such mathematically disadvantaged students to cope with the demands of tertiary level Mathematics. It identifies and examines some of the strategies (diagnostic testing, support centres, remediation and school articulation) developed elsewhere that could be applied in various ways to create new spaces for fostering the learning of Mathematics at NMMU and other Southern African higher education institutions. The talk concludes with a brief assessment of the potential gains such strategies could realize for first-year students, their institutions and their countries' economies.

The Impact of Study Methods on Academic Performance in Higher Education:Result from UFS, QwaQwa Campus

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Research evidence revealed that one of the factors that contribute to poor student performance in higher education today is a lack of proper study skills. Poor academic performance is not only painful and expensive, but also discouraging for the department involved, and injurious to an institution's reputation as a whole. For the past four years, the department of Computer Science at the UFS: QwaQwa campus has experienced this impact of low pass and throughput rates. This paper is therefore aimed at providing insight into selected self-study techniques which can potentially improve students' study skills and consequently, their academic performance. The research targeted a first year introduction to computer programming class.

An action research methodology was employed, as it provided an opportunity to implement and evaluate various techniques which could lead to adaptation and improvement of actions. For each cycle of the study, students were exposed to a particular study method, followed by assessment. The impact was assessed quantitatively and qualitatively. The performance changes in terms of pass rate were noted, as well as possible changes in student attitudes and active involvement by means of feedback/reflection reports, open-ended surveys and focus group interviews. Students were regarded as true collaborators in the research and their opinions on the various experiences were deliberately sought and noted. Various self study techniques were used to ensure the integrity of the research results. Preliminary results indicated noteworthy increases in the students' performance and active participation, as well as positive changes in attitude and dedication towards their studies over the course of the implementation period. The study methods, which were more favourable, included time-managed study and study groups. Further research is required to determine whether the more effective self-study techniques (as identified in the study) are applicable to other subject areas in the specific academic context.

An investigation into the design and impact of Advanced Certificates in Education on Mathematical Literacy teachers in KwaZuluNatal

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The aim of this paper is to describe an ongoing study into the design and impact of two Advanced Certificates in Education (ACE) in Mathematical Literacy (ML) offered by two institutions (UKZN & NMMU) in the KwaZuluNatal province. Mathematical Literacy is a new subject that has been introduced into the grade 10, 11 and 12 school curricula as an alternate to Mathematics. Mathematics and ML are two distinct subjects with different objectives. There is thus an urgent need to train pre-service teachers and re-skill in-service teachers to teach ML competently in schools, and not to treat ML as a less sophisticated version of Mathematics. The study described in this paper focuses on approximately 2 200 in-service teachers who have studied ACE:ML on a part-time basis over a period of two years with either institution. The method will follow an explanatory mixed method approach where quantitative data on the students' demographics and performance will be collected and analysed to identify any particular trends relating to uptake and success in these programmes according to where the teachers are based in KZN. Module templates (providing information about the learning outcomes, modes of delivery, assessment strategies and module evaluation requirements), learning materials and tutor training guides will be analysed to provide information about the nature and design of the two ACE programmes. As re-curriculation and realignment of programmes is imminent in all Higher Educational Institutions, lessons from the past could inform decisions in the future.

Student profiling in very large classes: a study of two interventions in teaching first-year accounting.

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One of the major challenges of teaching very large classes is the lack of opportunities for teachers to become familiar with each learner's strengths and weaknesses, and therefore a reduced capacity for teaching to be tailored to the learning needs of each learner. In a small classroom, a teacher can acquire sufficient knowledge about the individual learners to enable effective, differential treatment: appointments after class for those who need further instruction, additional exercises for those who will benefit from repetition, advanced exercises for those who need to be challenged, etc. In a very large class environment, achieving such individualised attention is extremely difficult, if not impossible. This paper will argue that, notwithstanding the challenges, learning in very large classes can be greatly enriched by student profiling: identifying groups of students with different learning needs, and designing and implementing varying learning tools to meet those needs. Two interventions using student profiling in first-year Accounting classes at the University of Cape Town are presented, and their impact on student learning is evaluated. These are: the separation of students into different lecture and tutorial groups, depending on whether they have completed an accounting programme at high school; and a system which takes advantage of developments in technology to monitor each student's progress twice-weekly, and to assign differing sets of weekly assignments according to three categories of progress. The results suggest that interventions such as these can have a significantly positive impact on lecture attendance, students' perceptions of the quality of their learning, students' ability to develop their own sense of their learning needs. Other possible effects, including a reduction of plagiarism on weekly assignments, will also be presented.

Developing a conceptual framework for mapping and formalizing the co-curriculum: An NMMU case study

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In recent years, Higher Education (HE) within South Africa has been defined by major changes, not only through restructuring and subsequent policy reforms, but also in the expectations of what HE institutions (HEIs) are to produce through their graduates. Internationally, organizations, such as Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS), are challenging Universities to reconsider the impact programs and services have on the learning and development of students and creating standards related to holistic student learning. In addition to national governmental initiatives to address skills deficits and CAS Learning Outcomes, some institutions have recently identified additional holistic attributes students should expect to develop while enrolled in university.

With such increased pressure from a variety of sources to produce soft skills related to more holistic learning, South African HEIs have to re-examine how to incorporate these expectations into the fabric of university life. One such avenue for consideration is through the co-curricular activities of a university. For the co-curriculum to be recognized as an innovative option to meet these institutional, national and international CAS Learning Outcomes, a thorough review of the co-curriculum needs to occur. Utilizing concepts of Transformative Learning developed through Learning Reconsidered, a formalized mapping system will be used to conduct a mixed methods analysis of the co-curricular at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. These findings will then be used to develop a conceptual framework addressing how the co-curriculum can meet institutional, national and international CAS Learning outcomes.

Supporting and enabling postgraduate success: building strategies for empowerment, emotional resilience and conceptual critical work.

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This paper explores the findings and lessons to be learned from two research projects which focus on postgraduate students success both in terms of building their emotional resilience and wellbeing , and their development of sound learning and research practices leading to conceptual, critical and creative work. The 'Doctoral learning journeys' project ran 2007-2010. It began with a survey of 350 PhD students across 4 disciplines and then uses interviews, focus groups and learning journals . The project takes a longitudinal approach to the learning development of postgraduate (doctoral) students, discovering ways in which they engage with their research, their learning, and their skills, and cross' conceptual thresholds' (Meyer and Land 2006; Wisker and Kiley 2009) to produce quality work .The project also considers the effective practices of supervisors in enabling and supporting this learning and development process, and the qualities an examiner seeks in the final dissertation or thesis. The postgraduate students wellbeing and emotional resilience project (Morris and Wisker 2011) focuses on identifying challenges which affect students wellbeing during their postgraduate study, and effective ways of developing the emotional resilience to lead to success in their studies, and their own wellbeing overall. Together the two projects offer useful data, findings and suggestions for effective practice to support postgraduate students completion , ontological and epistemological development and wellbeing.

Are we successful if all the students leave?

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Introduction: Compulsory community service (CS) was introduced in 1998 with the objectives of improving healthcare service provision and developing skills. It was also hoped that it would reduce emigration and increase retention in the public service especially in rural hospitals.

Methods: An analysis of five CS doctor surveys since 1999 was done.

Results: Intention to emigrate has fallen from 34% in 1999, to 17% in 2007 and 6.1% in 2009 after peaking at 43% in 2001. However, the percentage of newly qualified doctors not reporting for CS has increased from 6% in 1999 to 17% in 2009; most likely because they have emigrated. The recent global recession may also have limited opportunities abroad. Intention to work in the private sector has increased from 13% in 1999 to 22% in 2009; while the intention to remain in the public sector has increased from 42% in 1999 to 69.7 % in 2009. However 75% of those indicated an intention to specialise and will most likely end up in the private sector. Practise in rural settings has remained constant at 26.3% in 2009. The major factor that has a detrimental impact on promoting a public sector career is the quality of clinical supervision while the quality of hospital management is a push factor for emigration 78% of those intending to leave the country rated management at their CS year facilities as poor.

Conclusion: The CS studies show that there is an opportunity for medical schools to expand their definition of student success which currently focus on production to include focussing on retention. Through expanding their clinical supervision role to the CS year and increasing under graduate educational exposure to rural practice retention will increase. If this is not feasible the continuation of CS in its current form should be reconsidered.

Colouring in the blank spaces of electives for medical students: a brush with community

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The Health Professions Council requires that public health is included in the medical curriculum as a prominent curriculum theme. A challenging requirement in an already full curriculum – one unused opportunity is the one-month elective at the end of the MBChB III at the University of Pretoria. Few students identify a public health elective as students self-design their elective and students cannot choose what they do not know. As much of their experience has either been classroom- or hospital-based, students do not have the social capital to identify community-based organizations that could provide meaningful, rich opportunities for learning.

At the same time medical schools are being asked to answer the question "How do you ensure social accountability?" The concept of social accountability has emerged as a way to repair the increasing alienation between the medical profession and the public. The characteristic of social accountability that considers the priority health concerns of the community as the departure point for education, research and service is well aligned with the values and scope of public health. In a country such as South Africa where a key value of public health – equity – is under pressure, the need to be socially accountable is especially acute. Providing students with the opportunity to choose well-designed community-based electives will not only address the profile of public health in the medical curriculum, it will also advance the other work of the medical school in the need to be socially accountable.

Methods:

An action research study design: Phase I is a student-needs assessment (questionnaire) which will inform the development of the electives (Phase II), followed by a marketing campaign. Phase III is the post-placement evaluation of students (questionnaire) and partners (interview) and analysis of written student reflections.

Results:

Results can only be reported after completion of the elective in mid-November 2011.

Improving teaching and learning in higher education through practitioner self-enquiry action research

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This interactive discussion, led by a panel of academics from various institutions of higher education, will create a space for critical discussion of the notion of action research as a means of professionalizing and improving teaching and learning at tertiary level. Each presenter will offer their individual explanations of how they are contributing to the scholarship of teaching and learning through self-study of their educational practices. They will describe how they use action research methodologies to provide robust evidence to support their claims to having improved their own practice, and of having influenced the learning of colleagues and students. Participants and peers attending this panel discussion are invited to offer their critical comment on the validity of the presenters' claims of having contributed to the growth of educational knowledge. The panel members will address the following aspects of educational practice:

Lesley Wood, NMMU: Creating a living curriculum: an insider approach to curriculum development

Joan Conolly, DUT: Nourishing novice and/or nervous self-study practitioner-researchers: safe spaces, trusted, critical friends, and journeys of awareness.

Pieter du Toit, UP: An asset-based approach to action research for professional development of academic staff.

Omar Esau, SU: Preparing pre-service teachers to become action researchers

Kathleen Pithouse-Morgan, UKZN: exploring critical issues in supporting Masters and Doctoral students' self-study research

Mark Schofield, Edge Hill University, UK: Enhancing academic development of novice researchers through the action research mode

Karin Murris, WITS: Experiential accounts of an epistemological shift, therefore teaching practices, through the implementation of the community of enquiry pedagogy.

And they lived happily ever after…or did they? Searching for success beyond foundations courses

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South African Universities annually report the success rates of their Foundation students in Foundation and regular/mainstream courses to the DHET. While these students generally perform admirably in Foundation courses, success in the regular/mainstream courses is more elusive. However, it is exactly success in the regular courses that is an important indication of the effectiveness of the Foundational offering. This workshop addresses the challenge of promoting success beyond Foundation courses by focusing both on principles and practice related to Extended programmes.

The workshop is intended for anyone involved in Extended programmes or other forms of Foundational work. In the first part of this workshop the focus is on the principles important to promoting success beyond foundational/support modules. The second part of the workshop creates an opportunity for participants to translate these principles into practice. This is done by considering an existing programme from a South African University and revising it to include the principles discussed in the first section of the workshop.

Participants will be sent one paper to read before the workshop. This preparation is essential to the success of the workshop.

Classrooms must be language friendly places where knowledge is discussed and utilized through the media of the best known languages

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Language teaching is more than just teaching knowledge and skills. It includes caring for students' affective needs, developing their language strategies and widening their cultural horizons through the process of language learning. It becomes the responsibility of all teachers to raise the educational level of all students. Language policies must be beneficial to all people in Africa and educational institutions. Students perform poorly if a language that is not well known is used as a medium of teaching and learning. Language policy is officially understood to call for additive multilingualism so that languages complement one another in the experience of the students.

A classroom following a multilingual policy is one of the foremost places to initiate critical transformative pedagogy (Cummins, 1996, 2000). Classrooms must be language friendly places where knowledge is discussed and utilized through the media of the best known languages. This paper argues for a multilingual option as an alternative approach for language teaching and practice in institutions that explore the optional conditions for promoting meaningful educational development in both the indigenous languages as well as in English. The focus of this paper will be on the teaching and use of English and indigenous languages as language of teaching and learning.