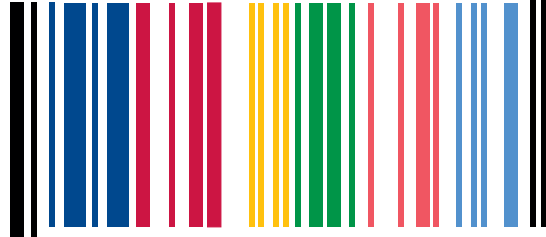




Vaal University of Technology

Your world to a better future



issue 2

NEWSLETTER

2018



CENTRE FOR ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

WORKSHOPS THAT
HAPPENED WITHIN

CAD

UPCOMING
WORKSHOPS
WITHIN CAD

AFRICAN LANGUAGES SYMPOSIUM

UNLOCKING GREAT MINDS

First Year experience
Motivational Seminar

BIG DATA SYMPOSIUM

Message from about the **PS-Building**:

The new PS building is one of the buildings that brings pride and joy to VUT as an institution. Its structure is magnificent. This building is the home to the Centre for Academic Development (CAD) and all its sub-units. This building is commonly known as the African Languages Development Building. It is in this building were units such as E-Learning, Staff Development, FYE, Writing Lab, etc are found. It is a user friendly building and even disabled students find it easy to access. It is indeed an eye catching monumental building.



DVC: Prof Peter Dzvimbo -
Academic and Research

UNLOCKING GREAT MINDS

First Year experience
Motivational Seminar



Hazel Mtshontshi - Coordinator FYE

Motivational seminar was held on the 18th April 2018. The guest Speaker was Satch Muchiriri from Anglo Ashanti Gold, who spoke on life changing decisions and what motivation can do to a student. He related how some of this historical site have been abandoned and that has rich history that students could draw lessons from. He gave an example of one US President who failed many times in his endeavors to claim victory as the President of the United States. We also had two local students motivating students about their experiences and how important it is to choose friends wisely and time management. We had an attendance of 200 students on the day.

We would also like to thank the following sponsors:

- Romans Pizza
- VTCB – Vaal Triangle Computer and Books
- Van Schaik bookstore

For their contributions and support, it really brought value on to our event. Through their sponsorship we managed to give prizes to our students, via game completions and asking them questions on what they were motivated on during the seminar.

AFRICAN LANGUAGES DEVELOPMENT

Dr Tebogo Kekana -
Manager: African Languages



In 2017, VUT established the African Languages Development Unit within the Centre for Academic Development (CAD). This Unit is led by Dr Kekana TJ who is very passionate about the development of African Languages and as well as Multilingualism in general. This unit among other things, is established because African Languages should not be left in the periphery when it comes to Teaching and Learning in institutions of Higher Learning. It is important to mention that the African Languages Development unit in trying to help VUT realizes its multilingualism dream, it uses among other things, an array of various multilingual activities such as the provision of subtitles to video recorded

lectures, translation of learner, tutor guides and as well as lecturers teaching guides and hosting of symposium, conferences and language awareness campaigns. This is a growing unit within VUT and we hope that soon it will be function to its maximum. As mentioned above, the unit held its first annual African Languages Development Symposium on the 20 April 2018 as part of its mandate to the realization of multilingualism learning environment at VUT. The main theme of the Symposium was 'the role of African Languages in decolonizing the curriculum in Institutions of Higher Learning: Insights into Implications, Lessons and Considerations'.

The keynote speakers for this symposium were from wide spectrum so that the theme can be interrogated and discussed from different paradigms.

The keynote speakers were:



Dr Rammala JR :
University of Limpopo:
Director of School of Languages and
Communication Studies




Dr Langa Khumalo:
University of KwaZulu Natal:
Director of Language Planning and
Development Office (LPDO)



Prof Mbulungeni Madiba:
University of Cape Town: Deputy Dean;
Coordinator: Multilingualism Education Project

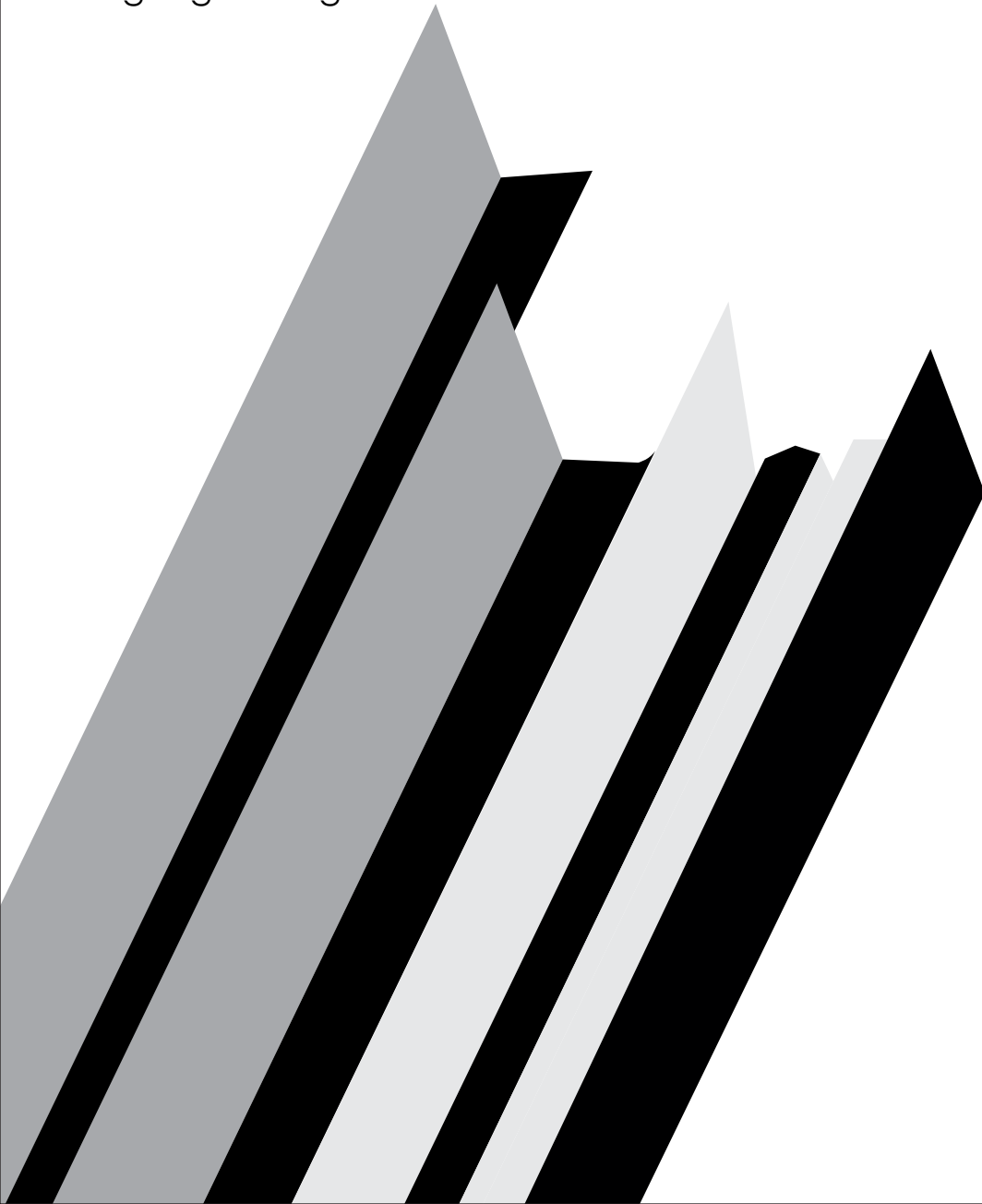


Dr Monareng RGM:
Chief Executive Officer of
PanSALB



The Symposium attracted audience from a wide spectrum. We had government representatives from the department such as the Department of Arts and Culture, we had representatives from various languages units in various universities (e.g. University of Pretoria, University of Johannesburg). In addition, we had a good number of audience coming from within VUT. In general, the Symposium was a success. It has shown that there are various intertwined challenges but not insurmountable as far as the development of these languages is concerned.

Through this symposium, it has been shown that VUT as an institution does not capitulate to the idea of Monolinguals as far as Teaching is concerned. In conclusion, the Symposium is the first step and the beginning of the VUT footprint in the HE landscape with regards to the promotion and development of African Languages in Higher Education.





1-day symposium – Big Data – hosted by e-learning unit within the Center for Academic Development (CAD) Vaal University of Technology in collaboration with The South Africa – Sweden University Forum (SASUF), held at the Quest Conference Centre, Vanderbijlpark on the 15th May 2018. The South Africa – Sweden University Forum is a new strategic internationalization project running from 2017 – 2020 with the overall aim of strengthening ties between Sweden and South Africa in research, education and innovation.

The main theme of the symposium was “Digital Technologies, Big Data and Cyber security”. The overall symposium goal was to explore how digital technologies and big data can be used to address the critical societal challenges in areas such as health, transport, energy, food and education. Academics, researchers from Universities in South Africa, Sweden and as well as industries in South Africa in such areas were invited. The keynote speakers and the panelist were professional experts within the fields of the main theme. A symposium webpage was developed within VUT website for registrations and abstract submissions to reach widely-

ranged population. For further communication and advertisements, a call for abstract was placed on the website as well as advertised on e-communication to reach wide community of VUT. Invitation e-mails were also circulated to delegates and representatives from universities across South Africa and Sweden as well as organizations in this regard.

Attendance was satisfactory, comprehensively, 132 attended. The symposium had four keynote presenters. Introductory statement was done by Prof. Simone Fischer-Hübner from Sweden who as well was part of the keynote presenters. Dr. P.C. Machika, Executive Director of CAD, gave an opening address that set the scene in particular by noting the agenda and the purpose of the symposium. A word of welcome was provided by Prof. K.P. Dzvimbo who warmly welcomed the guests, followed by keynote presenter's presentations which framed, shaped, and informed much of the panel discussions and audience participation.

The keynote speakers were:



Dr Yaseera Ismail:
University of KwaZulu-Natal



Prof. Simone Fischer-Hübner:
Karlstad University, Sweden



Prof Thomas W. Thurner:
CPUT, RSA



Prof Paul Prinsloo:
UNISA, RSA

The exhibition played a crucial role during the symposium. Organizations and/or companies showcased their wide range of products and services to the audience. VUT lecturers also had an opportunity to present their posters and further, poster adjudication process recognized best posters by a token of an appreciation award. Organizing this symposium from the ground up achieved a number of milestones. From hosting considerations, designing a symposium banner, poster presentations for lecturers, setting up venue as well as designing the QR coded name tags, to mention the few.



Mothusi Samosamo -
Blended Learning Facilitator

WORKSHOPS THAT HAPPENED WITHIN CAD



Hazel Mtshontshi - Coordinator FYE

Workshop for first years support:

This is a workshop designed to assist Lecturers Teaching First Year Students to support and adapt their teaching styles to suit the needs of the demographic needs of our student community at the Vaal University of Technology (VUT), and to develop a culture of academic writing skills within the LFYS. The facilitator Dr Joey Serekoane from the University of the Free State, emphasized the need for lecturers to publish on the journal to bridge the shortfall that universities across South Africa are facing after the announcement of the Free Education for First Year Students. The workshop took place on the 24th and 25th April 2018 with two groups of Lecturers teaching first year students. On the 24th a total of 15 lecturers attended the workshop and had 16 lecturers attending the second day. In total, out of the 80 lecturers teaching first years across all four campus, 31 attended the workshop. The main objective of the workshop is to +prepare lecturers for the upcoming Symposium in August so that they can present papers and ultimately publish a book on their experiences teaching at VUT. Dr Joey Serekoane is already communicating with the groups, to support them in their journey of academic writing.





Sibongile Hlubi - Tutors Coordinator

Tutor training:

The aim of the tutor training is to prepare tutors for their role in facilitating learning in tutorial groups based on supplemental instruction model. In these sessions, tutors are equipped with knowledge and skills that empowers them to make academic encounters accessible to most students including students with learning disabilities. The topics addressed covers a range of areas from how Learning Works", facilitation skills, to raising awareness about students with learning disabilities. The practical component of the program introduced them the basics of lesson planning followed by a mini lesson presented in groups. The session ended with discussion and way forward for tutor development at VUT. This session came up with constructive ideas that contributes to the overall improvement of the program. The tutors emphasized the importance of dissemination information at institutional level of tutor development particularly awareness of student with learning disabilities. The tutor with creative ideas suggested the formation of a Tutor development Magazine that would share best practice in the topic with the VUT community.





POSTER COMPILATION WORKSHOP



Esmerie Guglielmi -
Graphic Designer



Dr Masebala Tjabane -
Academic Staff Development

Poster Compilation Workshop:

The aim of this workshop is to provide support and guidance for lecturers and academic staff who are looking to present a poster of their research at upcoming events. Professional conference posters can be difficult and stressful to create thus this workshop hopes to provide tips for all stages of this process, from the initial preparation stage, to the presentation on the day of the event. We are all aware that the most interesting research is presented in the posters. However the information is often well hidden behind poorly designed posters. That is why less than 5% of the posters are actually read at conferences. Clearly, this is a complete waste and needs to be changed.

An effective poster is one that draws an audience to it, and allows for a clear and logical presentation of the story it wants to tell.





UPCOMING WORKSHOPS WITHIN CAD

Vision for VUTela:

The Blended learning unit in the Centre for Academic Development, strives to be a leading unit that supports innovation within a blended learning environment to reach a common goal of knowledge generation both locally and globally.

VUTela Step by step build your own Module:

It is a 2 half days course. The strategic vision and objectives of the use of VUTela is dealt with. Your own context and teaching practice is used as a foundation to build your module. Bring your own content in electronic format, e.g. Learner guides, presentations of material, etc.

Outcomes for the first 2 days:

The two half days (09:00 – 13:00) will be spent on the general introduction to VUTela tools within your real module context. This is a general introduction and practical application of a maximum of 3 tools offered in VUTela to support teaching and learning. We will be using one of your 2018 modules throughout the workshop to practice the use of VUTela tools.

Dates for Step by step build your own Module: Upcoming event:

- **20th and 21st June 2018**

For more information please don't hesitate to contact,

E-Learning: Lecture Trainer and Support

Thando Rathabe ext. 7642

thando@vut.ac.za

Room: PS 106

Thando Rathebe -

Queries Vutela (E-Learning)

Needs-based VUTela workshop per department:

It is a 1 day departmental training workshop. Our Instructional Designer use their learning design expertise to collaborate with faculty to practically implement the modules on VUTela. The needs-based training will be customized as per the departmental need and suitability of specific VUTela tools in relation to the content and context of the module.

The workshop will cover but limited to the following topics:

- TurnItIn
- Collaboration Tools
- MashUp (YouTube, SlideShare, etc.) and Social Media
- Instructional Technology

Dates for these workshops will be arranged through the Instructional Designer:

Mphonyana Wessels All faculties; VUTela faculty Representative, and Mphonyana Wessels will engage with lecturers to schedule suitable training dates. Venues will be booked as per availability.

Manage your module / one on one sessions:

These consultation sessions are scheduled through Mphonyana Wessels to cater for staff members who need individual attention to instructionally design and practically build their modules.

A training session designed to address the management of your module: It will cover the following topics:

- Refresher tool training
- Creating groups
- Adaptive Release
- Course copy
- Smart Views in Grade Centre
- Grade Centre
- Teaching Styles

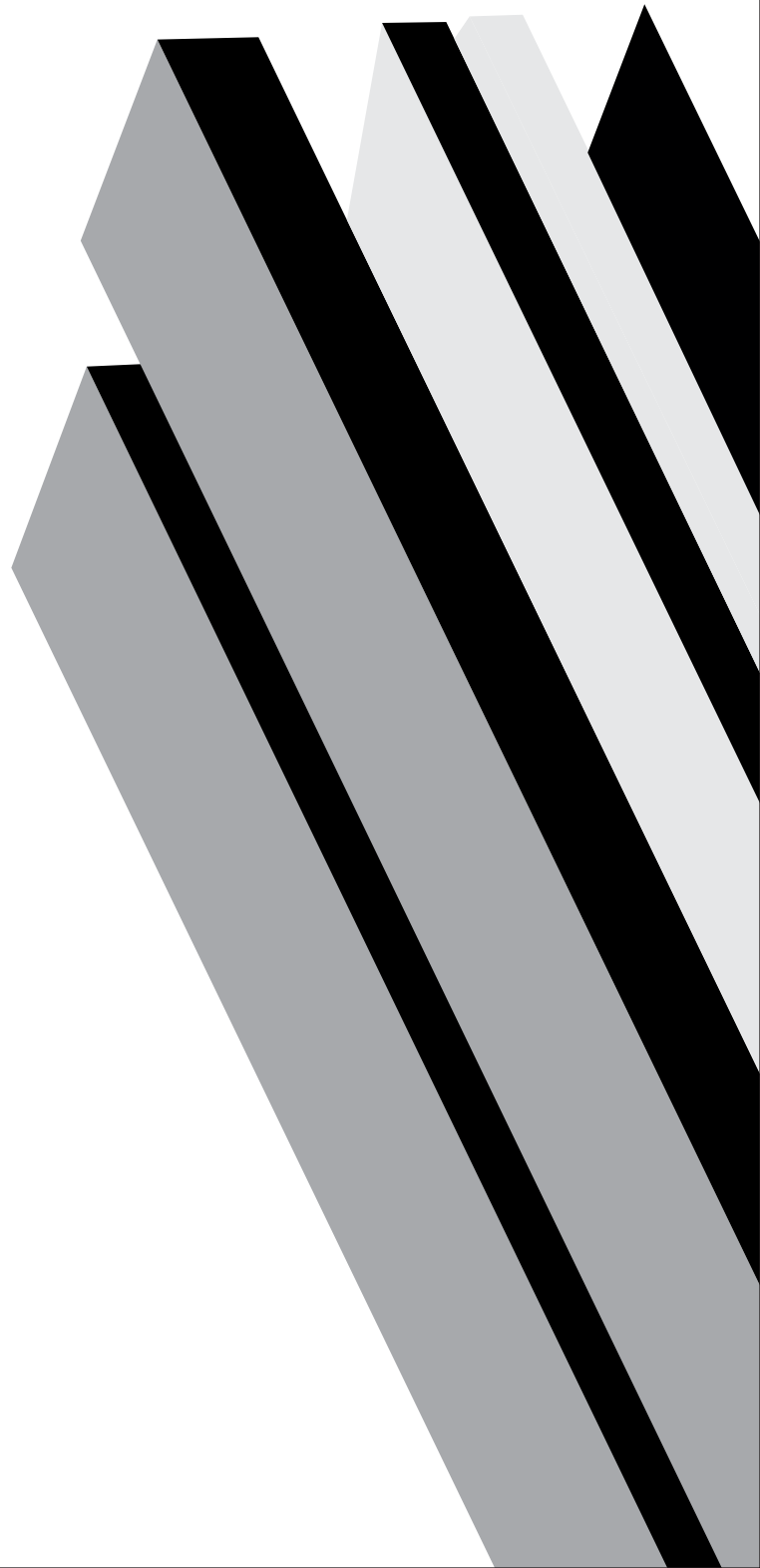
E-Learning Instructional Designer

Prudence Wessels ext.: 7656

mphonyanaw@vut.ac.za

Room PS111

Mphonyana Wessels - Instructional Designer



Dina Msiza completes the Comrades marathon



The Centre for Academic Development would like to congratulate our very own Dina Msiza for having successfully completed the Comrades Marathon in 11 hours and 39 minutes before the final cut-off gun was fired on 12 hours.

Dina was awarded a Vic Clap-ham medal.

Ordinary people know their limits BUT Marathoners know how to push them.

Everyone can run a few miles, only winners can run a marathon.

Well done Dina Msiza!

This is how she described the race in her own words "On the 10th of June 2018 I joined thousands of ultra-marathon runners by doing my first Comrades marathon. I can definitely attest to Comrades marathon being the ultimate human race. The encouragement and support from ordinary people who sacrifice their time to be on the side of the road is just out of this world. We were well taken care of from start to finish, be it by sponsors, volunteers or supporters on the side of the road. Runners were taking care of one another too. If you think humanity is dead, then you have not been part of the Comrades marathon. I am truly thankful to my family and friends who believed in me even when I was not confident. I am more than grateful to everyone for the support and encouragement throughout. Thank you for all the congratulatory messages, media features and presents.



So on the evening before the race I was quite paranoid. My biggest fear was oversleeping and waking up at 8am or so the next day. I set up about five alarms and asked a friend to set two more (now that's being paranoid, yes). I managed to wake up on time after the first alarm and I made it to Durban ICC on time to catch the Comrades bus to Pietermaritzburg. The bus arrived quite early so I was able to chill with other friendly seasoned Comrades runners I got acquainted with in the bus. We chatted until it was time to walk to the start. The first few kilometers were challenging because the road was narrow and congested with runners. I made it to the first cut off after 15km and I had to change my strategy ASAP when I realized I was running after the last bus (12-hour bus). I managed to increase my pace a bit so that I can be in front of the 11 hour 45 minutes bus. This proved to have been good for my brain because afterwards I delivered the best run of my life.

I was eating, hydrating and smiling, saying thank you and often tempted to dance in some water points throughout the race. I drank a protein shake a little after 50km and that really restored my energy. I did not feel the race until the last 20km. In the last 15km I was going like "can this thing end already". In the last 10km I was swearing to never ever run marathons again, never mind ultra-marathons. I can only thank God for the strength I had that day, I am still amazed at how I managed to maintain a consistent run walk pace throughout when I have never been able to do so in a 42km race. They say "if you want to run, run a mile. If you want to experience a different life, run a marathon, if you want to talk to God, run an ultra-marathon". I made it to Moses Mabhida stadium and I was just overwhelmed with joy. The feeling of making it to the finish line in my first attempt is just indescribable. I was too excited, running and waving to the crowd that was just as motivated and excited. Now the only disadvantage was walking out of the pitch after 90km with a penguin walk, exiting points for runners were just too far and it felt like another race on those finished legs. It was a struggle for all of us to find family and friends. One runner said "running the 90km was not a problem, the problem was getting out after running 90km".

Few days after completing the ultimate human race, I was looking forward to returning to Comrades in 2020 but definitely not for the up run next year. However, numerous experienced runners have encouraged me to run again in 2019. They say I will probably do even better if I train well for those steep hills. After resting enough and the penguin walk has faded, I believe FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) is going to kill me completely than those steep hills to Pietermaritzburg. So I'm definitely going to register for Comrades 2019. If I can't run for reasons beyond my control, I will be more than happy to support others or volunteer on the day but I just cannot imagine not being part of Comrades. After adequate training, I hope to come back with two medals that are awarded to runners in their second consecutive finish".



FAREWELL TO LINDA MANDEWO

Learning communities

Our Mother we called her Mam Linda...

A mentor at Centre for Academic Development, served at VUT for 7 years (2012-2018), a vibrant, intelligent, knowledgeable and soft hearted fellow. She brought 'life' to all student activities especially Learning communities(mentorship programme which focused on first years) by motivating and inspiring students to do their university work and as well as to consult with their mentees. It was really an amazing experience having such a lady in our midst.



Upcoming events



VUT

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CENTRE FOR ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT



Vaal Triangle Computers and Books

31 July 2018

POPUP MONTH

KNOW WHO'S THERE FOR YOU



Learning Communities, First Year Experience, Maths Centre, Writing Lab, Tutor Development, e-Learning, Staff Development
VENUE: Main Gate, Sun City, Amphitheater, Student Parking



VUT

Vaal University of Technology

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CENTRE FOR ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

8, 23, 29 August 2018



Vaal Triangle Computers and Books

PopUp MONTH

KNOW WHO'S THERE FOR YOU



Learning Communities, First Year Experience, Maths Centre, Writing Lab, Tutor Development, e-Learning, Staff Development
VENUE: Main Gate, Sun City, Amphitheater, Student Parking

Closing Date: 31 July 2018

Call for abstracts

DECONSTRUCTING FREE EDUCATION: Disaster or Solution?

Conference Date: 14-15 November 2018
Emerald Resort & Casino



Creating an employment work force (Are students being equipped with the right skills for the future?)
What are the roles, responsibilities and duties of students? How can the University produce entrepreneurs?)
Education Leadership (New concepts and ideas are needed to strategically guide the University.
What practices might inform this?)
Educational inequality in RSA (Is the gap widening? How can VUT catch up to the top ten Universities in South Africa?)
Teacher Quality & Professionalism (Reflections on individual teaching practices)
African Languages in the Academy/ Culture and Diversity in Higher Education & Curriculum Transformation

SUBTHEMES

The effects of former President Jacob Zuma's call for Free Education in December 2017 are starting to take shape. In February 2018, the government announced a 1% increase in the VAT rate, which is expected to increase government coffers by R22 billion annually. In April 2018, the government approved of Eskom's tariff hike to recover R66 Billion lost through rampant corruption, dubious contracting and poor management. Despite a petrol hike in April, another one is expected in May to keep up with the increase in government levies. The message is clear; the government needs money to fund free education. However, the call for Free Education has not resulted in an increase in University budgets for teaching and learning, which is the main business of the university. Consequently, academics become overstretched, tasked with taking on more classes and students. The idea that universities are supposed to open their doors to thousands of more students annually but make leeway with already tight teaching and learning budgets highlights the complexities of the situation.

The University landscape is now being shaped by new terminology such as Free Education, Africanization and decolonial theory. These Ambiguous concepts must be deconstructed in relation to teaching and learning and how must students, staff and management reposition themselves contextually? How will these terms define educational spaces and academic practices? Will these concepts enable or constrain the execution of academic practices institutionally?

Responses which critically reflect on these questions and the subthemes below are welcome. Abstracts of 300 Words can be submitted to antonp@vut.ac.za. Abstracts must contain author name and surname, affiliated institutions and contacts details.



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"The real test is not whether you avoid this failure, because you won't. It's whether you let it harden or shame you into inaction, or whether you learn from it; whether you choose to persevere." - **Barack Obama**