

EDU•brief

@UJ

VOLUME 6 NO 1 ~ 2010

CATCHING THE BEAT!

INVESTING IN OUR STUDENTS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The mission statement of the Faculty of Education states regarding teaching and learning that "...we are committed to the preparation of caring, accountable and critical-reflective educational practitioners who are able to support and nurture learning and development in diverse educational contexts"- a very ambitious undertaking, which asks for creativity and innovation in its teaching programmes. This commitment to a great extent summarizes what the excursion to Achterbergh in April 2010 was all about. And students rose to the occasion, and the UJ beat will be felt in schools throughout the country in years to come, with a new generation of creative and reflective teachers.

Nearly four hundred first year BEd and PGCE students, Faculty of Education staff and staff from some of the Faculty's partner schools attended the four days excursion.

Judging from students' comments, the envisaged outcomes of the excursion were definitely met:

"I carry a great amount of knowledge and ideas away with me today. I was uncertain of whether I had chosen the right course of study but now I am certain (after this camp) that I am meant to be a teacher."

"The excursion made me realize how important we as teachers are, and it assisted me in my personal growth, because knowledge is power."

"I am inspired! I was a bit skeptical with the career I chose but now realize that I have made a wonderful and good choice."

"I wrote my pledge and I want to stick to it. The "life lessons" we had on the camp inspired me to be the best teacher possible."



Drumming session

"I enrolled for PGCE not because I had a passion for it but because I couldn't find a job. My attitude was so negative. I was just doing the work to pass and get out of the university. This excursion changed my attitude. I learned that there is more to teaching than money and I will now do my best. Seeing how the professors were passionate about their job changed my attitude."

Some teachers also reflected on their experience:

I observed that there was a high level of cooperation and interest in the activity (building a solar cooker) that I facilitated. I emphasised that what matters most is how one applies theoretical knowledge in the classroom. Good planning, organisation, guidance and control make up a good teacher. T.T.Ntshiwa

I found the foot print activity interesting because it really helped me to understand that as teachers we must be able to teach, love and guide learners in every situation, and give moral support to learners.

M Moshome

Another visitor, who also contributed significantly to the student experience, was Dr Katherine Merseth. She reflects on her time at Achterbergh:

As I sit in my office on the campus of Harvard University and reflect on my wonderful visit to South Africa and the special time that I had with so many of you, what floods my mind are colours.

The green of the grass surrounding the lake on the campus...

The silver of the solar cookers...

The pink of the liquid in the HIV/AIDS risk exercise...

The grey of the clay made into so many wonderful symbols of hope and harmony...

The yellow hats in the initial introduction of the de Bono Hat exercise...

The blue page handed out with international statistics as part of the food banquet experience...

The light brown of the animal skins that made the drum heads and produced a cacophony of sound...

The white of Professor Ben-Erik van Wyk's hat during the hikes on the grounds of Achterbergh...

Amid all of these colours, I also recall vividly the footprints that were so carefully made, so full of symbolism and commitment, so passionate. Thank you so much for sharing your thoughts and hopes and aspirations with me.

*I hope that everyone who participated in the Excursion will remember what is so poignantly displayed above: **To Teach is to Touch a Life Forever***



RETHINK EDUCATION.
REINVENT YOURSELF.





Orientation day with the Executive Dean, Prof Sarah Gravett, BEd programme lecturers, and students.

A new BEd Foundation Phase programme in the Faculty of Education at UJ

In January the first cohort of students and their lecturers met on the Soweto campus. 70 students enrolled for this new programme, which aims to address the dire need for a new generation of teachers for the early school grades.

The approach to the education of teachers for this school phase is innovative at UJ. The programme is part of the Institute for Childhood Education (UJICE - www.uj.ac.za/ujice). This organisational structure includes the programme, the Funda UJabule school on the Soweto campus, multi-faceted research programmes, in-service teacher development projects, and community service projects for families and care providers of young children at the school and in the area.

HANDOVER OF A GIFT FROM THE FACULTY OF ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL SCIENCES TO THE FUNDA UJABULE SCHOOL IN SOWETO



Prof Amanda Dempsey (Executive Dean of the Faculty of Economic and Financial Sciences), Jackie Bence (Marketing Coordinator of the Faculty of Economic and Financial Sciences) and Prof Saartjie Gravett (Executive Dean of the Faculty of Education).



Back row: Refilwe Ntsoane, Elisa Modau (School Principal), Lara Ragpot, Irma de Jager.
Front row: Mbavhi Moshwane, Dikaledi Sekhukhune, Innocentia Obochioma, Prof Sarah Gravett (Executive Dean of the Faculty of Education), Prof Amanda Dempsey (Executive Dean of the Faculty of Economic and Financial Sciences), Petro van Rooyen, Chantel Wakeford.

The Faculty of Economic and Financial Sciences handed over a rug and Lego blocks from the Cultural Integration day, to the Funda UJabule School, as a contribution to the school's learning space on Wednesday 21, April 2010.

The Faculty of Education at the UJ started a new Institute on the Soweto campus at the beginning of 2010. This is part of our brief to contribute to innovation in school education. The UJ's hybrid of a 'charter school' is the Funda UJabule School, a foundation phase school on the Soweto campus. This is a public school in the Gauteng Department of Education system – the school serves more than the purpose of educating young children, it is an inherent part of the Institute and integrates various functions of training, research, and service.



Children in outside activity with their teachers

Research and training in the UJ's Funda UJabule school

The Funda UJabule foundation phase school opened its doors on 1 Feb. This UJ and GDE collaborative education project started with two Grade R classes, two teachers (one of whom is an ECD practitioner), an administrative assistant and a school principal, all of whom were seconded for one year by the GDE. The posts for the school, including two Grade One teaching positions, will be advertised later this year.

This school is on the Soweto campus of the UJ and also serves as training site for the students in the BEd Foundation Phase Degree programme (see also the article about this new programme in this issue of Edubrief@uj). Students alternate as observers and as classroom helpers.

The University also employs a full-time school researcher at the school. She is conducting her doctoral research in Educational Psychology on the "Grade R Experience." Other research projects include the cognitive and social development of the school's children for four years. Prof Max Bergman, visiting professor in the Centre for Education Practice Research, leads this panel research currently with four masters students in the Med Educational Psychology programme. Dr Helen Dunbar-Krige supervises the students with him.

Prof Elizabeth Henning coordinates all research of students and staff in the UJ Institute of Childhood Education (UJICE), which includes inquiries in the school. Ms Lara Ragpot, a lecturer in the BEd Foundation Phase programme is writing an ethnographic study of the school's first year of existence and Ms Kamala Peter, also a lecturer in the programme, is studying the impact of the programme on aspects of students' pedagogy over two years. Dr Pinky Makoe will study the development of the children's proficiency in their home language and in English.



Mrs Dikaledi Sekhukuni – the school researcher

WORKSHOP FOR SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNALS IN THE CEPR



The Editors in discussion



Ronel Ferreira, Liesel Ebersohn, Max Bergman and Kobus Maree

On 23 February 15 editors of research journals gathered in the CEPR for a workshop and discussion on shared challenges. They were joined by Prof Max Bergman, visiting professor at the UJ and editors of two leading journals in Europe.

Topics of discussion included the dearth of reviewers and continuous struggle to get manuscripts reviewed, the quality of the submissions, and the high rate of rejection. One editor admitted that more than 90% of manuscripts submitted to their journal do not get published.

The editors decided to not only meet regularly, but to foreground the work of academic editors and to what some of them referred to as the "cottage industry" that they run in their institutions. In many cases they have little administrative and management support.

The group also undertook to establish a special interest group (SIG) that can meet at SA conferences, including at the launch of the envisaged SA Educational Research Association (SAERA) – which will merge the Education Associations of this country into one body.

The editors undertook to make their developmental role more prominent and to advertise writing and publication workshops more widely. One of these will focus on the techniques and processes involved in composing an article from a dissertation text. This was seen by the meeting as a major problem in their desk review process and a main reason for the high number of manuscripts that do not survive this process. The bulk of these articles maintain dissertation discourse and form. The editors agreed that articles have to be written originally and cannot be copied or 'cut' from dissertation texts.

The discussion also included the options of commercial publishing and open source dissemination. Ms Janet Remington from Taylor and Francis presented a paper that surprised most of the participants when it showed that much of the work done in the "cottage industry" of educational publishing is not likely to be pro amico, without much consideration by university administrations for the amount of time and skill involved.

The group will meet annually and also during the conference of the envisaged SAERA.

Visiting PhD student and local collaborators in NRF project

Henning Hues, a PhD student from the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research in affiliation with the Technische Universität Braunschweig, came to UJ as a collaborator on an NRF Research Niche Area research project, led by Prof Elizabeth Henning. He did ethnographic work at a local school where the daily lives of the children and youth as well as the teachers and the management have been captured. The school is home to mostly children from shelters and for refugee children and youth.

Research at this school also includes a collaborative book with teachers and learners, focusing partly on the history of the current school and the school building, which is a heritage site. The two local research and development collaborators are Ms Megan Godsell, who produces and researches school plays, and Ms Sarah Godsell (Wits), who will be first editor of a book capturing the history and current dynamic of the school.

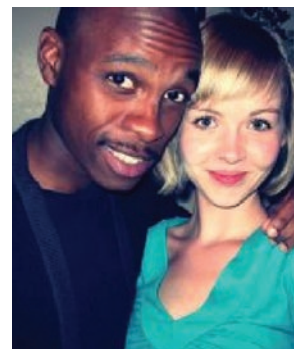
Mr Hues has also published an article with Kathy Morgan, a PhD student in the same project, in the latest issue of the Faculty journal, "Education as Change."

This article is about an analysis of a flag-raising ceremony at a school in a separatist community, voicing concern about school ceremonies and their possible 'ritualistic' influence on school practices.

The second member of the German visiting student research team was Ms Maria Hoffmann, from the Humboldt University in Berlin, who worked with the assistance of UJ student Fezi Fredh.



Prof Elizabeth Henning, Henning Hues and Katalin Morgan



Fezi Fredh and Maria Hoffmann

Prof Terrence Lovat examines the Troika of Values Education, Quality Teaching and Service Learning in a UJ Public lecture

On 24 April the Faculty of Education in co-operation with the University of Newcastle, Australia and the UNESCO/UNITWIN Chair at UJ hosted a public lecture by the Pro- Vice Chancellor of the University of Newcastle, Prof Terrence Lovat. His public lecture was based on a co-authored book: "Values Education, Quality Teaching and Service Learning: A Troika for effective teaching and teacher education". The public lecture was arranged by Dr Nazreen Dasoo, the UNESCO/UNITWIN CHAIR and Mrs Petro van Rooyen, the marketing co-coordinator of the Faculty. Professor Lovat's lecture focused on ways of accomplishing a better citizenry built on personal integrity through schooling that puts emphasis on Values Education in all areas of the curriculum, and does not relegate this important subject to specialised classes, such as religion or ethics (or Life Orientation in South Africa). The lecture was attended by about 142 people comprising delegates from the office of the Presidency and the Deputy President, the Australian High Commission, representatives from the DoE and GDE, UJ staff, students, principals from various schools and educational psychologists. Prof Lovat's main message was that extensive research has shown that Values Education can strengthen school learners' optimism, self-esteem, commitment to personal fulfillment and ethical judgement. These principles in turn shape learners' development into becoming responsible and accountable citizens, and with such principles as a foundation, academic achievement happens almost as a by-product.

Participants at the public lecture were given a copy Prof Lovat's book as well as paper entitled "The New Values Education: a pedagogical imperative for student wellbeing", taken from Lovat, T, Toomey, R and Clement N (2010 (Eds) International research handbook on values education and student wellbeing, Dordrecht, Netherlands, Springer Press.

For more information about upcoming public lectures, please visit: www.uj.ac.za



Prof Terrence Lovat giving a public lecture at UJ



Prof Terrence Lovat and Dr Nazreen Dasoo



Graham Bloch signing copies of his book "Toxic Mix What is wrong with education in South Africa?"



Nomusa a member of Sadtu National Executive Committee speaking to one of the participants at the first Principal Network Conversation

DBSA SUPPORT UJ'S EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

The Faculty of Education (UJ) and Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE) are involved in a collaborative partnership called the Education Leadership Initiative. Part of this initiative is the Principal Network, which is one of those initiatives that have the potential to be as pivotal to the transformation of South African society and the systematic improvement of schools.

In support of this network the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) announced a technical assistance grant of half-a-million rand. The Network aims to raise the professional standards for South African educational leadership. The Network serves as both, a physical and virtual convener for school leaders. It provides educational leaders with opportunities to build their knowledge, develop important leadership skills, access role models, reduce the sense of isolation that they often experience, increase their professional confidence and competence, and expose them to fresh ideas and problem-solving peer support. The grant will be used to develop a website that will contain an online newsletter and provide resources for education leaders like articles, case studies, and research and policy papers on school leadership. It will also offer opportunities for on-line professional development.

Graham Bloch, Education Specialist of the DBSA summed up this initiative in these words: "DBSA is very excited to be working with such high-profile, consistent and well-regarded partners as University of Johannesburg and Harvard. The task of improving the work of principals, and of synergizing our school improvement efforts is exciting and timely. There is tremendous energy amongst South Africans broadly and government specifically, to make education our national priority number one, and to find ways to fix our ailing, failing school and education system. We in DBSA are ready to offer our energies and skills to help put education on track; we believe that the kind of focused initiative that you have taken, provides one of the routes to getting education right. We are proud to be a partner with UJ and others on this journey. Together, we will do more."



Vice Chancellor of UJ, Prof Ihron Rensburg; Minister of Higher Education, Dr Blade Nzimande and President of Harvard University, Dr Drew Faust

UJ AND HARVARD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

In November 2009 Prof Drew Faust, the president of Harvard University, visited the UJ. In an address on the Soweto campus she said that their Graduate School of Education's collaboration with the Faculty of Education at UJ is historical as much as was her visit as first president of Harvard to come to South Africa during presidential tenure.

The leadership initiative involves principals and administrators in a programme that includes *instructional leadership*. The first in a series of interventions is conducted in the Central Johannesburg District of the GDE.

The UJ leadership of this project is the Executive Dean of the Faculty of Education, Prof Sarah Gravett.

Research and Teaching Awards for Dr De Beer, Dr Makoe and Prof Henning

Three colleagues were awarded in different categories for their outstanding work recently.

Prof Elizabeth (Elbie) Henning, director of the UJ's Centre for Education Practice Research, received one of Education's highest international awards when she was selected as Fellow in the *Fellow's Programme* of the American Educational Research Association in February (www.aera.net). 67 Fellows were selected in the 2010. This programme acknowledges contributions for research and the development of research capacity. Prof Henning will be inducted as Fellow on 1 May at the AERA annual meeting (conference) in Denver, CO.

Dr Josef de Beer, senior lecturer in Life Sciences Education, was honoured by the SA Association of Higher Education with an award for teaching excellence. Previously he also received the Vice Chancellor's award for teaching at UJ.

Dr Pinky Makoe, newly appointed senior lecturer in Literacy and Language Education in the BEd Foundation Phase Education programme, was awarded "best thesis" prize for her PhD dissertation when she graduated from The Institute of Education at London University in April.



Dr Josef de Beer



Dr Pinky Makoe

An Alumnus to be proud of: Anna Motaung

Dr Anna Motaung graduated with a D Ed in 2009, supervised by Prof Duan van der Westhuizen. She examined the role of ICT in the transformation of teaching practices. The research tools were generated from activity theory concepts such as of the Eight Step Model, the Activity Checklist, historical types of activity, contradictions, and boundary crossing. These research tools were employed to explore the teachers' emerging practices and their epistemologies or beliefs regarding ICT in the classroom. Anna is of the view that the findings of this study provide insight into the challenges that the teachers face when they use mediational tools of ICT.

Anna currently works as the Chief Education Specialist in the North West Department of Education. She leads a team of 50 officials including Circuit Managers, Subject Specialist; Education Management Development and Governance; Employee Health and Wellness; and Education Development Service Centre Managers (resource centre) responsible for the implementation of the integration of computers into teaching and learning and for administration purposes in 112 schools.



IN BRIEF

The faculty hosted a "Time to Talk to UJ (T2T2UJ)" twice this year. The aim was to introduce the programmes to Grade 12 learners and final year students who may wish to take up teaching as a profession. Both events resulted in prospective students' showing an interest in teaching as a career.

The winter school is taking place again this year from 21-26 June. UJ Masters and Doctoral students are sponsored by the university and can register for free for as many courses as they wish. For more info, please visit www.uj.ac.za/winterschool



Prof Coert Lookk

NEW VICE DEAN

The Faculty of Education has appointed a new Vice Dean, Prof Coert Lookk, to take the reins from Prof Jace Pillay, who is going on Sabbatical. Prof Lookk, has a strong research profile in the domain of examinations and assessment, systems innovation and educational policy development. He has published a number of academic articles and peer-reviewed conference papers since 2003 and has co-authored 5 books on Educational Management and Leadership. Prof. Lookk is committed to organisational values such as fairness, trust, openness, acceptance, willingness to take responsibility for mistakes, and personal commitment. His message is that these values should be "lived" and not just be stated in policy paper. The Faculty wishes Prof Lookk much success in all his endeavours.

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST AND HER STUDENTS AT WORK IN THE ELANDSPARK SCHOOL EXCURSION

In March 2010 Dr Elzette Fritz and six Educational Psychology masters and PhD students accompanied a Special Secondary school on an orientation excursion for their new intake of learners. The retreat was at Kwaggasrus. The students and Dr. Fritz are involved in a research project that aims to explore how creative expressive arts therapy can be used as a whole school intervention. The aim of the excursion was to give teachers and researchers the opportunity to get to know the children in a 'retreat' environment, finding out more about their personal narratives and exploring their interests. The team members are specifically interested in the type of music and recreational activities of the learners. When they plan expressive arts-based interventions they can then tailored these to the learner's life world .

The data collected during the excursion weekend will also be used in the annual school play, which is planned for the third term. In 2009 a school play was introduced as part of the pilot study for a research project that is investigating ways to use expressive art as therapy in the social context of the school.

For many of the learners this outing was their first experience of camping.



Elandspark School excursion.

THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

- PROF SARAH GRAVETT
- DR DIRK POSTMA
- DR DINAH MAGANO
- MRS PETRO VAN ROOYEN
- MR GEORGE MAKUBALO
- MS KATALIN MORGAN (EDITOR)

FROM THE EDITOR

This issue of EduBrief marks the beginning of a newly constituted editorial committee and a new editor of this newsletter, Katalin Morgan. She would like to thank this committee for their support and also thank Ms Tshepiso Kekae and Prof Elizabeth Henning for their contributions to this edition.

In this issue we foreground the annual excursion of first year and PGCE students, which is a highlight every year on the faculty's teaching and learning calendar. In terms of research, developments at the FundaUJabule school, together with the new BEd foundations phase degree will provide multi-faceted research opportunities and programmes in years to come and you can read about this in this edition. We also introduce you to some of our visiting scholars and professors from afar and let you in on what happens when the editors of top educational journals meet and discuss their concerns. We hope you enjoy this edition of EduBrief. If you would like to make any comments, please contact us via e-mail: kmorgan@uj.ac.za and visit our website for more news and information: www.uj.ac.za/education.