

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Edubrief | December 2021



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The Faculty of Education bids farewell to its Executive Dean: Prof Sarah Gravett



At the end of 2021, the faculty will see the cessation of 15 years of leadership under the extremely capable stewardship of Prof Sarah Gravett. Before joining the former Rand Afrikaans University (RAU) (now the University of Johannesburg) at the Bureau for University Education as researcher in 1993 Sarah was a high school teacher for eleven years. She joined the Faculty of Education at RAU in 1996, and she was promoted to Professor in 1999. She served as Chair of the Department of Educational Sciences from 2002 to 2004.

Sarah took up the reigns of leadership with the faculty first as deputy dean in 2004 at the height of the merger between RAU and TWR (including the incorporation of two campuses of Vista University); it was through her in-depth knowledge of the faculty, that her efforts to ensure an inclusive and embracing working environment for all participants coming into this developing entity, were enabled.

Prof Gravett was appointed as Executive Dean at the beginning of 2007 for an initial five-year term. However, she was requested by the Council of the University to make herself available for two more terms (2012 – 2016; 2017 – 2021). She also served as Acting Deputy Vice Chancellor Research in 2017.

Under Prof Gravett's leadership as executive dean, the faculty has made significant strides, in the areas of teaching and learning and research. Long before the dawn of the Covid 19 pandemic, Prof Gravett was instrumental in piloting new ways of teaching with technologies. When hit by the pandemic in 2021, this preparation enabled the faculty to swiftly move into remote teaching and learning. In the research sphere, Prof Gravett improved the faculty's Research Output Units (ROU) from 88 units in 2014 to 192 units in 2020. Likewise, Prof Gravett has been able to increase the number of PDRFs in the faculty from 12 in 2016 to 36 fellows in 2021. Prof Gravett has seen the faculty featuring in international rankings and growing its international stature. The faculty was for instance recently ranked in the 301-400 bracket in the Shanghai rankings.

Prof Gravett has facilitated the establishment of four SARCHI Chairs (Integrated Studies of Learning Language, Science and Mathematics in the primary school; Education and Care in Childhood; Teaching and learning (Post-Secondary Education and Training); Community, Adult and Workers Education) and two research centres (Ali Mazrui Centre for Higher Education Studies, Centre

for Education Rights and Transformation), and the upcoming Centre for Neurodevelopmental Learning Needs, which will be based at the Soweto Campus as a national hub for the training, development and support of different stakeholders in the field of neurodevelopment). These entities enable the stature of the faculty as a well renowned educational entity in the national and international arenas.

When asked what she views as one of her greatest achievements in as dean, Prof Gravett rates her involvement in establishing a school at UJ's Soweto campus as the most gratifying. The Funda UJabule Primary School (FUJS) was established in 2010 through a memorandum of agreement with the Gauteng Department of Education to serve the education needs of young children in close proximity to the UJ Soweto campus, as a learning site for the education of teachers and as an education laboratory. Research emanating from this initiative includes innovative work in developing a teacher education model, incorporating a "teaching school" which has been widely published. Another highlight was securing a grant from the South African Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) to establish a Centre for African Languages Teaching at the UJ Soweto Campus. Her work was supported via considerable external funding.

She also led a major project aimed at serving education more broadly, in Siyabuswa – a rural area in the Mpumalanga Province of South Africa, drawing on lessons learned from the implementation of the FUJS. This project was commissioned by the South African Department of Higher Education and Training. Under her stewardship a new foundation phase (elementary school) teacher education programme was established at the Siyabuswa campus of the University of Mpumalanga, thereby bringing teacher education incorporating a 'teaching school' to a rural area in South Africa. The work started in 2012. After the first cohort of students graduated (2016), the programme was taken over by the University of Mpumalanga. She continued to oversee a school development project in Siyabuswa and

work related to development of Siswati and isiNdebele (South African languages) as languages of teaching and learning in the foundation phase until July 2018.

Apart from her role as dean and UJ academic – Sarah remained research active and has widely published in the field of education and served as supervisor to numerous masters and doctoral students. She also served education more broadly in South Africa: representing teacher education institutions at the National Teacher Education and Development Committee for many years and being involved in developing the "Strategic Framework for Teacher Education and Development"

– a framework that steers teacher education and development in the country (2011-2025). She also chaired the Education Deans' Forum in South Africa for several years. In 2013-2017 she was appointed by the Minister of Basic Education Ms AM Motshekga, as Chairperson of the Education Sector Committee of the South African National Commission for UNESCO (SANATCOM). This role entailed providing the necessary leadership to enable the Education Sector Committee (Edcom) to carry out its advisory, facilitative, liaison and coordination role between UNESCO and the South African Government and Civil Society.

In 2022, after a short well-deserved sabbatical, Sarah will join the Department of Childhood Education at the Soweto campus. She looks forward to being a full-time academic again and to pursuing her research interests. These are currently mainly focused on education imperatives for a fast-changing world, in the field of teacher education and development.

The Faculty of Education is deeply grateful for the leadership of Prof Gravett over many years that has enabled the us to become one of the foremost teacher education institutions in South Africa. We look forward to the contributions Prof Gravett is sure to make to the teacher education project in this new capacity.

Prof Tumi Diale (Vice-Dean: Teaching and Learning)

Prof Nadine Petersen (Dean Designate: Faculty of Education)

Prof Mdu Ndlovu (Vice-Dean: Research and Postgraduate Studies)



TEACHING AND LEARNING



COVID-19

Student teachers as successful app designers: an experiment of risk-taking in a self-organised online learning engagement

Prof Kat Yassim, Department of Education Leadership and Management

The COVID-19 pandemic brought with it the kind of disruption needed to propel rethinking of learning environments. When traditional face-to-face learning became impossible, digital learning spaces became the most plausible substitute. Considering this, I embarked on a journey into the unknown with a large group of final year student teachers. Having no coding or App development expertise personally, I co-opted Prof Grace Leung from the Computer Science department into the module design space.

I designed the module as a two-stage process. The first stage constituted a series of online classroom engagements (or disruptors) that were thematically analysed, resulting in the co-creation of 12 principles for an innovative digital learning environment from students' perspectives. These principles formed the basis of the second stage, the App creation stage, which aimed to develop skills in App creation without the need for coding. In this stage, students were introduced to design thinking and an App development freeware called GLIDE. While an initial dummies guide to GLIDE was provided, it was not too long before students took

on the challenge of self-directed learning and created their own functional Apps, delighting at every interval of the development process. Some unintended outcomes included a moment of "ubuntu" when a small group of tech inclined students developed a community of practice online to support their less able colleagues, and when students gained employment after demonstrating their Apps at job interviews. At the end of this learning journey, 402 App prototypes were successfully created (an example of one student's App <https://tan-cannon-2904.glideapp.io/> and a video tour can be accessed through these links **TST APP tour.mp4**).

This learning journey shows that successful risk-taking is dependent on two factors. The first is the belief that students (no matter who they are), are capable, each coming into the learning community with their own funds of knowledge and an inherent potential to learn to do anything expected of them. The second is that learning must happen in a nurturing, self-organised learning environment that offers students the freedom to explore, make mistakes, collaborate, and experiment.

Online teaching and learning could spell the end to *Incidental Learning*

Dr Viren Ramdhany, Department of Science and Technology Education

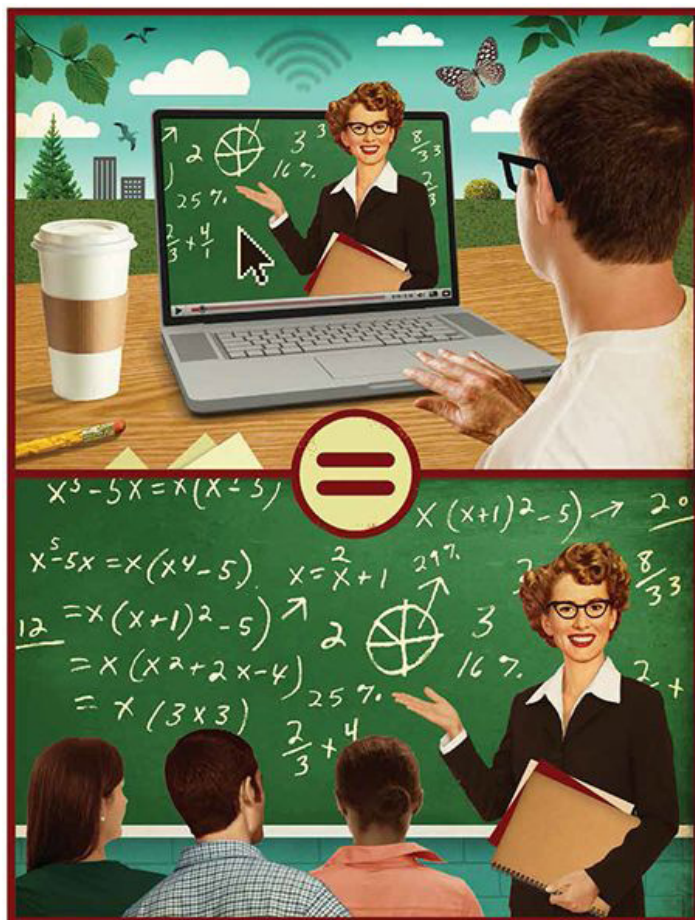
With the increasing move to online teaching and learning, teachers at all levels have startlingly varied experiences and responses. This is true for university teaching staff, as well. While some revel in what they perceive to be academic and professional freedom, there are those who bemoan the continued lack of face-to-face interaction with their students.

As an education lecturer, one of the most important teaching and learning theories I introduce to my students is *social constructivism*, which promotes the ideology that the most effective learning takes place when students/learners engage with the teacher and their peers in a social space and create (construct) their own understanding. This is not possible in online classes in the same way, or to the same extent.

When lecturers plan for online sessions, they need to be overly conscious of including as much information as possible, to “cover all the bases”, lest they forget something important! Everything is very deliberate, and the lecturer has less flexibility to stray from his/her meticulously planned lecture. These constraints result in the lack of opportunities for incidental teaching and learning to take place.

Incidental learning occurs when something unplanned and spontaneous (and therefore unexpected) happens in a learning environment (Marsick and Watkins, 1992). An example is a question from a student, which takes the discussion into another direction for a while. This digression may seem like a waste of time to some, but on closer examination may be more valuable than what the lecturer had originally planned!

What about modelling of best practice? Many students observe their lecturer’s behaviour - words, actions, non-verbal communication - and consciously or unconsciously model this behaviour when they go into schools, especially on practicum. Research (e.g., Marsick and Watkins, 2001; Turner, 2018) shows that incidental learning is especially relevant to the development of a teacher’s professional identity due to the high number of potential unknowns inherent in teaching. Many student teachers are also influenced by their practicum observations and experiences and adopt these as best practice (Crisp, 2018).



Where to from here?

This digital age in which we find ourselves will have long-lasting and far-reaching implications, as did the previous industrial revolutions. In South Africa, online teaching-and-learning has been ‘threatening’ for the past decade or so, and needed something like COVID-19 to provide its catalytic impetus. But until a well-developed, tried-and-tested theory of online teaching and learning is shown to be as effective as, say, social constructivism, many teachers will be silently praying for the ‘old normal’.

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Positive Destructive Leadership: Possibilities of Functional Stupidity in leading schools during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Dr Sadi Seyama, Department of Education Leadership and Management

The COVID-19 pandemic unexpectedly brought the world to its knees, creating health, economic, social, and education crises. The uncertainties, anxieties, and contradictions of the COVID crisis have led to people to turn to leaders for answers, comfort, support, and guidance. However, from a critical leadership lens, I caution that the demand for leadership during crises risks leadership romanticism, causing followers to slip into functional stupidity, a condition under which educated, knowledgeable, intelligent people do not use these capabilities in purposeful ways (Alvesson & Spicer, 2012). Instead, followers unquestioningly accept decisions and fail to reflect on problematic assumptions, thus sanctioning excessive leadership power, which could cause more harm than good. Against the growing research and publications on effective school leadership during COVID-19, I contend that leadership research should also examine the dark side of leadership.

Carrying the responsibility to steer the sinking ship during crises, leaders must be positive in their approach to allay followers' fears and mobilise the collective effort to prevent further harm. The problem arises when leaders enact excessive positivity as inspired by Populist and Prozac leadership, producing what I label Positive Destructive Leadership (PDL). For instance, during crises, Populist leaders are highly energised and appear in control but, because they cannot afford to communicate doom and gloom lest it costs them followers, their

actions are often deceiving. Demonstrated by global political leaders such as Trump, Johnson, and Bolsonaro in responding to COVID-19, excessive positivity can lead to fatal decisions. Similarly, Prozac leaders, as drawn from the metaphor of Prozac, an anti-depressant, create an overly optimistic, in-control persona to exploit the high levels of "social addiction to excessive positivity" (Collinson, 2012, 2020).

In a school context, PDL could cause:

- Failure to communicate a common vision.
- Failure to deliver the correct scientific message about the danger of the virus.
- Engagement in poor communication strategies.
- Limited contextual insights and an inability to develop a holistic understanding of COVID-19.
- Lack of reflexivity.
- Enforcement of one-dimensional perspectives, stifling creativity.
- Keeping up appearances to safeguard the good, impressive image of positivity and control.

Overall, PDL risks confusion, conflict, defiance of safety regulations, and lack of appropriate planning, producing often dangerous outcomes. Ultimately learners, educators, and parents' lives could be exposed to risk, and efforts to save the integrity of the academic year could be undermined.

ADULT EDUCATION: Non-Formal Education and Community Colleges

Prof Salim Vally, Centre for Education Rights and Transformation

Although the adult education movement has waned in the past two decades, recently declared official policy suggests a shift in thinking about adult education and reintroduces the concept of adult and community education - a return to a more expanded view and away from the narrow focus on formalised adult basic education and training programmes. The return to an emphasis on community and non-formal education roots adult education in South Africa in the emancipatory tradition – purposeful education in

the interests of progressive social and political change. Centre for Education Rights and Transformation (CERT) and Community, Adult and Work Education (CAWE), in partnership with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and through generous funding support (R720 000) provided by a German donor DVV International, have completed an implementation strategy that integrates Non-formal Education (NFE) into the national pilot roll out of Community Colleges.

Community Colleges are an under-explored and marginalised component of the post-school education and training sector, which falls under the remit of the DHET. The intention of the strategy is to explore: a) principles and approaches for offering NFE in Community Colleges; b) how these should be implemented and supported; and c) what constitutes an enabling environment for NFE in Community Colleges.

The strategy posits some potentially constraining scenarios hinging around the pillars of space, personnel, and funding, and suggests workarounds. In terms of space, possible creative alternatives in the absence of a permanent autonomous space could be the use of mobile spaces, or finding ways to integrate various educational institutions such as CLCs, TVETs, ECD centres, and schools. Where personnel capacity or necessary experience is lacking, the possibility of actively canvassing the local community for expertise and knowledge is suggested. Finally, in terms of a lack of funding, we suggest considering partnerships, including approaching SETAs for specific programmes, and other forms of creative resourcing (for example soliciting seeding donations for a food garden initiative). The path forward with the suggested implementation strategies offered attempts to adhere to the values of consultation, deliberation and sharing knowledge with the colleges, their staff, and other stakeholders.

UNESCO Chair at UJ delivers keynote address

UNESCO Paris and UNESCO Nairobi recently invited Dr Nazreen Dasoo, who currently holds a UNESCO Chair in Values Education at UJ, to deliver a Keynote Address. The address was at a Global Citizenship Education (GCED) Webinar on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 4.7. The aim of the Webinar was to share case studies on the status of GCED implementation in six East African countries. These were Comoros, Djibouti, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius and the Seychelles.

In her speech entitled, “**Global Citizenship Education and Values Education: Two sides of the same coin**”, Dr Dasoo explained how GCED and Values Education has the potential, if implemented correctly, to facilitate ways to help young people manage and live democratically in increasingly diverse contexts. In addition, such programmes have the ability to show young people that being a global citizen means that you

are proactive, creative, flexible and interdependent. Simply, that they become “citizens without borders” who actively contribute to building a more tolerant, peaceful, inclusive and secure world.

She went on to remind the audience that as global citizenship and values education evolved from mere policy edicts into actual, authentic practices, there is a deepened need to share best practices in order to understand what is working well. Therefore, it was befitting to applaud the panelists who were to present their reports for their work around GCED. They are at the forefront in mapping the impact and outcomes of global citizenship education in Africa. In closing, she shared the former UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon’s advice that, “Education gives us a profound understanding that we are tied together as citizens of the global community.”

UJ INITIATIVES

Launch of the Advanced Diploma in School Leadership and Management

Prof Raj Mestry, Department of Education Leadership and Management

The Department of Education Leadership and Management (DELM) is the national pacesetter to

implement the Advanced Diploma in School Leadership and Management (AdvDip SLM). The programme has



been developed by the Department of Basic Education and complements its 2019 Action Plan—Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2030, which details strategies to improve the performance of South Africa's schooling system. The programme supports school management teams towards achieving learner-focussed targets. There is also a strong focus on instructional leadership which will help teachers develop their content knowledge and teaching skills. The programme makes extensive use of case studies and lectures by outside experts.

During 2019 – 2020 DELM, in partnership with Uplands College, provided the rigorous AdvDip SLM course to 23 school leaders from the Insikazi Circuit in the District of Mpumalanga. We are pleased to announce that all the students successfully completed the course.

In 2021, the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) and ETDP (Education, Training, and Development) SETA

partnered with DELM to deliver the AdvDip SLM to 150 practicing school leaders/managers of primary and secondary schools, including education district officials. The programme was launched at Funda UJabule Primary School in Soweto on 27 March 2021 and was also live-streamed. This function was attended by high-ranking officials of the GDE, UJ, and ETDP SETA, as well as participants in the course.

In her keynote address, Ms Phumelele Tloubatla (Acting Chief Director: School Management) emphasised the importance of effective school leadership and management in creating an enabling educational environment for the provision of effective teaching and learning. Thus, a strong and sustainable leadership development programme (such as the AdvDip SLM) will make a significant contribution to constructively changing the landscape of South African education.



UJ Scratch Coding Club

At first, it was a way of combatting the isolation brought on by lockdown. A way for a few lecturers and senior students in the Faculty of Education at the University of Johannesburg (UJ) to come together virtually and learn something new (A new way to teach. A new way to learn). It was a space of innovation and collaboration, and an antidote to those early months of COVID-induced solitude and uncertainty.

But in no time at all it evolved and, today, the brand-new UJ Scratch Coding Club is using technology to advance the careers of its student teachers and, in turn, the experiences of the young lives they will teach. It's bringing the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) into South Africa's classrooms and into our collective future (A new way to teach. A new way to learn).

Scratch is a visual programming language that uses stories, games, and animations to help learners learn how to experiment, think creatively, reason critically, prototype, and work together. In the world of 4IR, each

of these skills is critical. "We chose Scratch because we like its approach," says Linford Molaodi, a lecturer in UJ's Department of Childhood Education who is running the UJ Scratch Coding Club together with his colleague, Kenneth Baloyi. "It's not like other coding platforms, which can involve strict and complicated rules. Our focus isn't on coding but on developing creative thinking, and Scratch is the ideal tool to help us nurture this – both in our future teachers and in their future learners. Scratch can be used to teach any subject, from foundation phase right through to high school. With Scratch experience under their belts, our students will be able to create Scratch content for everything from first-time readers to matric maths learners."

While Scratch has been around for some time, it has evolved significantly since it was first developed by the MIT Media Lab's Lifelong Kindergarten group. UJ is working closely with MIT as it rolls out the programme among its students. In 2020 the UJ Scratch Coding

Club was formalised as a research project under the leadership of Prof Sarah Gravett. It was also formalised to allow participating students to earn a certificate based on a portfolio that they submit.

"A lot of teachers don't yet know how to incorporate technology into their lesson plans, or how to properly prepare learners with the 4IR skills they need in order to succeed," says Michelle Khumalo, a fourth-year education student and one of the club's facilitators. "Our club has taught us not to feel intimidated by coding, and has equipped us with the digital literacy expertise we need to transfer to our learners. We can't not teach like this."

Department of Educational Psychology excursion to Namibia – Critical reflections on the teaching and learning of Life Orientation

Prof Anthony Brown, Department of Educational Psychology

The Department of Education embarked on an excursion to Namibia from 2 – 12 September 2021 with the fourth-year Life Orientation (LO) students. The trip was part of the Africa by bus programme run from the International Office. Part of the objectives of the trip was to explore the teaching and learning of Life Skills in Namibia. The exposure to a different African country challenges students to think more critically about how they view the social world outside South Africa and prepares them for global citizenship.

Similar to South Africa, Life Skills is offered from Grades 4 to 12 in Namibia with common learning outcomes that focus on preparing school youth to engage with real life experiences in an informed manner. We visited, amongst other, De Duine Secondary School, the Sunshine Disability Centre, and the University of Namibia (UNAM).

The engagement with learners at De Duine Secondary School enabled students to explore the various psychosocial struggles faced by young people - including the anxiety, uncertainty, and loss experienced during COVID-19 - and how Life Skills learning capacitates them to confront these complex issues. Students were challenged to open-mindedness that could lead to new thinking about the world with a predisposition to taking action for change. We shared various pedagogical approaches, such as arts-based and dialogical pedagogies, that could enhance the often over simplified learning of Life Skills. While Life Skills faces similar challenges as LO in South Africa of not being valued in the schooling system, the current COVID-19 pandemic and its severe human suffering has shone a light on the importance of this learning area, and students developed a renewed passion for LO.

Students also participated in the delivery of classes at the Sunshine Disability Centre, which caters for learners with diverse intellectual and physical disabilities. This was the first time that most students were exposed to learners with diverse disabilities and this enabled them to make the link between theoretical knowledge and real-world needs of children with learning disabilities. Following this exposure, a few students expressed an interest to teach in special-needs schools.

At UNAM, students critically reflected with their peers on how to prioritise Life Skills/Orientation as one of the key learning areas that could capacitate learners to holistically develop in learning and psychosocial agency. Students from both UNAM and UJ generated radical strategies to strengthen the Life Skills/Orientation learning area when they pursue teaching in the future.

In this educational excursion, students were encouraged to move beyond reflection to be reflexive in their practice. Reflexivity is situated in relationships of power, discourse, and knowledge, and it is important for students to develop an understanding of how the 'us'/'them' binary that is so deeply entrenched in South African society emanates from, reproduces, and perpetuates unequal relationships and hierarchies. We are confident that this educational excursion has repositioned students as social agents and made them rethink educational practices through a more intuitive, compassionate, creative, and critical lens.



Visit to De Duine Secondary School with learners and Life Skills educators



Visit to the Sunshine Disability Centre in Walvis Bay



Visiting the University of Namibia with Life Skills student teachers and their lecturers

Students' reflections – Namibia excursion

Johannes Buthelezi, PhD candidate in the Department of Educational Psychology

This excursion changed my perspective about teaching and learning. It gave me an opportunity to develop as an academic (or teacher).

Throughout my stay in Namibia, I questioned my daily practices. I kept on asking myself: what I am doing in this world to make South Africa (or Africa) a better place for the next generation? This question was triggered by seeing the hard work of Namibian freedom fighters such as Hosea Kutako, Samuel Witbooi, Mzee Simon Kaukungwa, Andimba Toivo ya Toivo, Mburumba Kerina and other unsung heroes and heroines.

I learnt, firstly, that emancipation did not arrive easily in Africa and, therefore, one should not jeopardise this freedom. As a lecturer, I should strive to equip my students with knowledge that will emancipate their minds. In this regard, through the engagement we had at UNAM, I understood the importance of ensuring that teacher training (especially for Life Skills educators) is sufficient to equip educators with the skills to teach young people about topics such as Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE). I thus realised that there is a need to conduct research on *'the impact of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in the lives of young people'* and about *'the reluctance of teachers and lecturers to educate young people about CES'*. These studies can assist institutions of higher learning to train teachers about creating safe and conducive spaces for learners to speak about sexual orientation, gender identity, rape, Gender Based Violence (GBV), and other sensitive topics. As I go back to my institution, I will start to work with my students and colleagues on the topic of CSE.

Another lesson I learnt from the excursion is that learning how to teach learners with diverse learning needs cannot only occur in a lecture hall or classroom. Visiting Sunshine Centre for people living



with disabilities showed me that the theory in the lecture hall is not a true reflection of the realities of learners with diverse learning needs, or of their teachers. Through visiting this centre, I realised that as a young lecturer I need to ensure that I prepare students to be teachers who will collaborate with caregivers and other teachers (who are teaching in LSEN schools and full-service schools) so that we can build inclusive communities that embrace diversity. I acknowledge that I should teach my students about curriculum differentiation (as indicated in the SIAS policy document of 2014). I have also realised that I can make a difference to the next generation by creating learning environments for my own students that are conducive to their diverse learning needs.



Sindisa Bila, PhD candidate in the Department of Educational Psychology

I regard myself as the most fortunate individual to be part of the excursion. It broadens one's mindset and takes one out of one's comfort zone.



Visiting the centre for people with diverse needs made me rethink inclusive education and how I can create learning opportunities for those with diverse needs, including outside the classroom. I learned that if anyone is given the opportunity and guidance, s/he certainly can learn.



Through the engagement with the learners from De Duine secondary school, I learned that learners are still discriminated against because of their how they express, identify, and present. Teachers need to create platforms where we engage with learners and other stakeholders in education to disrupt the coercion of normative hegemonic discourses and practices that result in discrimination.



I have learned that through collaboration we can champion the call for inclusive

education. Excursions are imperative for they provide us with the opportunities to learn from others, and they motivate and allow for different world perspectives.

Visiting the graves/monuments of the heroes and heroines of the Struggle was one of the most emotional experiences I have ever had. While the fallen freedom fighters sacrificed their lives fighting for freedom, many young people today do not seize the opportunities that are at their disposal. Perhaps a different approach to the teaching of history will enable young people to have a better appreciation of the liberties and opportunities they have.

The trip made me a better person. I used to think that everything in Africa starts and ends with South Africa. That perspective has certainly changed and I have been forced to think beyond my limited view of the world in relation to South Africa.

Launch of SciTechEd's VARSTEME hub

Prof Umesh Ramnarain, Department of Science and Technology Education

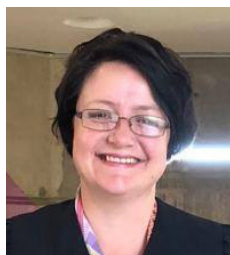
On 4 August 2021, the Department of Science and Technology Education proudly launched a hub in Virtual and Augmented Reality in STEM Education (VARSTEME). The hub is expected to play a key role in driving the department's strategic thrust in empowering pre-service and in-service teachers with knowledge and skills in the use of advanced learning technologies in STEM. Complementary to this goal, it will support the department's research agenda to pursue studies on the efficacy and pedagogy of virtual and augmented reality. The launch was well attended by academics, stakeholders in education, and students from UJ and beyond. The guest speakers were Prof Letlhokwa Mpedi, UJ's Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic, and Prof Yiyu Cai from The School of Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering in Nanyang Technological University (NTU). Prof Cai is also a Visiting Professor at UJ.



STAFF AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Staff Graduations

Congratulations to staff members who recently graduated in the following disciplines. The faculty is proud of your achievements.



Higher Certificate in Business Management
Bence, Irma



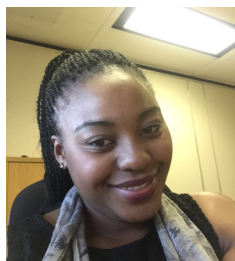
Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip): Research Supervision
Yu, Ke (with distinction)



Bachelor of Education Honours (BEd Hons): Childhood Education
Cancelliere, Semoni (with distinction)



Bachelor of Education Honours (BEd Hons): Childhood Education
Sikakane, Smiso Ntombizethu



Master of Education (MEd)
Tshidumo Lufuno Belinda (Education)
Dissertation: Learning to read in Afrikaans: The progress of a Grade 1 Setswana speaking girl
Supervisor: Prof E Henning
Co-supervisor: Dr S Brink



Master of Education (MEd)
Allison, Charis Fay (Education)
Dissertation: Teachers' views of the development of core academic language skills in the primary school
Supervisor: Prof N Petersen
Co-supervisor: Prof E Henning



Master of Education (MEd)
Bennett, Taryn Kacey (Education)
Dissertation: The influence of a boarding-school on the academic and social development of a rural male child
Supervisor: Dr S Ramsaroop
Co-supervisor: Prof N Petersen

More staff Graduations



Doctor of Philosophy (DEd): Educational Psychology
Mawila, Daphney
Thesis: Relationship between resilience and social-ecological support among learners with specific learning disabilities in LSEN schools
 Supervisor: Dr H Dunbar-Krige



Doctor of Education (DEd): Educational Psychology
Soni, Trishana Devi
Thesis: The role of peer educators in HIV prevention at a Higher Education institution in Johannesburg
 Supervisor: Prof J Pillay



Doctor of Education (DEd): Educational Psychology
Mabaso, Nancy Phyllis Makhosazane
Thesis: Parental experiences in supporting children with intellectual disabilities in a full-service school setting
 Supervisor: Dr H Krige
 Co-supervisor: Dr ND Maseko



Olympic Athlete named from Faculty of Education

One of our final year B Ed Senior and FET Phase students, Mr Ronald Brown, was included in the 2021 SA Rugby Sevens Olympic team. In total, UJ had fifteen sportspersons in the Team SA squad in Tokyo, Japan.

Brown, a cancer survivor, is a product of the SA Rugby Sevens Academy set-up and a UJ rugby star in the annual FNB Varsity Cup tournament. The Faculty is proud of Ronald's achievements.

Chancellor's Medal for the Most Meritorious Masters Study for 2020

Maseko, Siphesihle Ntokozo Mpumelelo (Education) (with distinction)

Dissertation: Non-heterosexual school youth experiences of HIV education in Life Orientation

Supervisor: Prof Anthony Brown

His motivation for the study came about when learners at the school at which he is teaching attended an HIV and sexuality education talk, run by a non-governmental organisation. "Following this talk, learners with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities came to me with questions. The talk was heteronormative in nature, focusing on abstinence and condom use in heterosexual relationships. There was no mention of safe-sex measures for learners with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. When these learners asked me questions like "Is it true that lesbians can't contract HIV?" and "where do I get finger condoms, sir?", it piqued my interest. It made me wonder if lessons about HIV are inclusive of all sexual orientations and gender identities. Have they ever asked this in LO lessons, and what was the response? Where do they get information and is it reliable?" Sihle says his study aimed to get the voices of learners with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities in high school to be heard and for their experiences to contribute towards making Life Orientation inclusive of their sexual orientations and gender identities. Sihle's study was supervised by Prof Anthony Brown in the Department of Educational Psychology.

His current favourite quote: "It's nice when they say I inspire them, it inspires me" - Lita Ford



TRIBUTES TO STAFF MEMBERS

Professor Aziz Choudry: The Quintessential Scholar-Activist (1966-2021)

Prof Salim Vally, Centre for Education Rights and Transformation



After over a year's delay, partly because of COVID-19 travel restrictions, Professor Aziz Choudry finally joined us as a full-time member of our Centre in February this year. Prior to arriving from McGill University, Montreal, he was a visiting professor in our Faculty for five years.

He made significant global contributions to social movement learning, knowledge production in community organisations, activist archives, research methodologies, immigrant workers' education, anti-racist/anti-colonial education, and related fields. He had a deep knowledge of neoliberalism, global economic domination, and social injustice, prolifically documented in ten books and countless other writings. He was also an untiring international solidarity activist supporting indigenous, Palestinian, anti-racist, and anticolonial resistances. He was involved in activism against surveillance and repression and unfair trade, and supported activism around food sovereignty and climate justice. He was a strong advocate of education as a public good, and championed the struggle for a decommodified, decolonial academy. He always sought to open academic spaces for activists.

Prof Choudry will also be remembered for his unstinting, generous, and energetic devotion to the students he supervised and taught as well as the encouragement and affirmation he provided to the many, mainly young, academics and activists he mentored throughout the world. His influence will continue through the countless people he inspired across the world.

Prof Choudry's vision and hope is captured in the concluding paragraph of our co-edited book *History's Schools: Past Struggles and Present Realities*:

...young people, dissatisfied with inadequate explanations for the state of the world, and seeking

ways to change it, are searching for other ways of approaching and understanding history. We have encountered many young people who are hungry to learn about how people have struggled, what they have done, how they have envisioned alternatives, all as part of developing their own political, social and environmental activism... recognising the urgent action that is vital on so many fronts today, we remain convinced of the care and commitment needed to reflect, prepare the ground, plant seeds and grow vibrant movements and politics of resistance, and of continuing to work through, in our different contexts, how we might critically conjure up the spirits of the past in the service of liberation.

Professor Choudry is now one of those spirits. An ancestor whose praxis and vision for a kinder and more humane world will always inspire and remain with us.

See CERT's virtual tribute to Prof Choudry: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qhull0jJhKc>

Professor Michael Cross

Prof Emmet Tadesse Woldegiorgis, Ali Mazrui Centre for Higher Education Studies

The passing of Professor Michael Cross on 6 June 2021 shocked not only South Africa but also the higher education research community worldwide. Prof Cross was the founding Director of the Ali Mazrui Centre for Higher Education Studies (AMCHES) at the University of Johannesburg, which has emerged as a Pan-African institution for scholarly research, inquiry, training, and professional development in higher education.

He dedicated his academic life to critical questions on issues of academic leadership, academic performance of students, access, equality, social justice, political economy of education, and the decolonisation project in higher education. He was deeply committed to issues relating to inclusive education in post-apartheid higher education, and to the intersection of knowledge and power and the epistemological and theoretical hegemony of the West in African academic discourse and practice. His passion for education research and researchers in Africa led him to launch a project to document the intellectual legacies of African scholars, leaders, and institutions. Because of him, the project now hosts book initiatives, postdoctoral research projects, and many more research collaborations to come.

His legacy lies beyond research, academic publications, and books, and includes advocacy as well as participation in major curriculum development and pedagogical initiatives at national and international levels. His intellectual contributions will persist, but the loss of his remarkable ability to be a friend to many across time zones, generations, and decades, will be keenly felt by us all. There will be many tributes to his life, but it is doubtful that any can fully capture Prof Cross's impact on African scholarship. We will continue the journey that Prof Cross started to honour his vision and to maintain the Ali Mazrui Centre for Higher Education Studies as his living legacy. The Ali Mazrui Centre for Higher Education Studies, on behalf of the University of Johannesburg, would like to express its deepest condolences to the family of Professor Michael Cross. We would also like to express our sincere gratitude to colleagues and friends from across South Africa and all over the world for providing support in diverse ways.



EVENTS

Education Conversations: African solutions for African problems



The COVID-19 pandemic has been a huge disruption for education, curtailing school years and upending the plans and dreams of, particularly, disadvantaged learners, thereby exacerbating inequality. This was in evidence at the latest Education Conversation, held in partnership with Kagiso Trust and chaired by Prof Kat Yassim from the Department of Education Leadership and Management. The theme of the webinar was African solutions for African problems.

Participants discussed issues like lack of access to technology, inadequate training of teachers on ICT ("it is either a non-comprehensive training or too advanced" – Mishka Khotu), and lack of preparedness of the system to deal with the crisis, as well as the consequent detrimental effect these had on the mental health of teachers and learners and on the academic fitness of both when they returned to school.

Prof Yassim suggested that a blended model, "part face-to-face, with some of the remote learning experiences" could be the solution. "It certainly makes learning cheaper. How can we provide quality learning for everyone? We should look to the future and not just how do we get back to the way things were," he said. "Education in your pocket, for example. How do we use cellphone technology as one of the ways we can enable access?". Yandisa Tshutshani, an economics teacher

at UJ Metropolitan Academy, called for a bottom-up re-evaluation of the education system, saying: "The provision of education in this country is not uniform, it is not equal. We need to start from grass roots to make sure it is equal. Where are you going to put a smart board where there is no electricity, where children are learning under a tree? What can we do if we face another pandemic?"

Emily O'Ryan, a writer and researcher in the political field who was named "Student of the Year" for 2020, published a book called *Learning Under Lockdown: Voices of South Africa's Children*, with respected educator Professor Jonathan Jansen. O'Ryan said they received some heart-breaking stories that showed the mental strain learners were under, though she did not expect to "see how much capacity young people had to solve their own problems". This was evident in the stories of students, young teachers, and activists who shared experiences of how they had to fight, innovate, and motivate to ensure 2020 was not a lost year for many South African scholars.

In thanking the speakers, Sizakele Mphatsoe, Head of Education at Kagiso Trust, said she believed the first Education Conversation for 2021 had not only shone a spotlight on the inequalities of South African education, but had offered workable solutions.

The Neville Alexander Commemorative Conference 2021

Prof Salim Vally, Centre for Education Rights and Transformation

Neville Alexander launched the Centre for Education Rights and Transformation (CERT) in 2009 at UJ. Since his passing in 2012 we have held an annual conference linking his praxis to contemporary topics and issues. This year, the conference was jointly hosted by CERT and the newly established Centre for Sociological Research and Practice, on 30 March 2021.

The keynote speakers were Professors Barbara Ransby and Robin D.G. Kelley. Barbara Ransby is Distinguished Professor in the Departments of African American Studies, Gender and Women's Studies, and History at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). She is author of *Making All Black Lives Matter: Re-imagining Freedom in the 21st Century*, and other books. She was deeply involved in the Anti-Apartheid/ Free South Africa movement in the 1980s.

Robin D.G. Kelley is a Professor of American History at the University of California (Los Angeles) (UCLA) and author of numerous books including *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination and Africa Speaks, America Answers: Modern Jazz in Revolutionary Times*.

The theme of this year's conference revolved around racial capitalism. The conference can be seen here: <https://youtu.be/FqP-hVFZBU4>

The phrase 'racial capitalism' first emerged in the context of southern African liberation struggles. Neville Alexander, together with Martin Legassick, Bernard Magubane, and others were early advocates of the term. The term has now become ubiquitous in the US after an estimated 26 million people took to the streets last year following the police murders of George Floyd and many others. The COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on African-American and Latinx workers also propelled the increasing use of the term. Notes Prof Kelley: "the boldest activists demanded that ... we shift the resources funding police and prisons to housing, universal healthcare, living-wage jobs, universal basic income, green energy, and a system of restorative justice. These new abolitionists are not interested in making capitalism fairer, safer, and less racist—they know this is impossible. They want to bring an end to 'racial capitalism'".



Neville Alexander Commemorative Conference



The Struggle Against Racial Capitalism in the USA, SA and Palestine

Tuesday, 30 March 2021
18H00 (SAST); 09H00 (Los Angeles); 11H00 (Chicago)
To register please type or click on: <http://tiny.cc/NA21>

Jointly hosted by the University of Johannesburg's Centre for Education Rights and Transformation (CERT) & Centre for Sociological Research and Practice (CSR).

Keynote Speakers: Barbara Ransby & Robin D.G. Kelley with Mosa Phadi, Andy Clarno, Trevor Ngwane, Salim Vally, Terri Maggott, Enver Motala and Andile Zulu



Barbara Ransby is Distinguished Professor in the Departments of African American Studies, Gender and Women's Studies, and History at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). She is author of *Making All Black Lives Matter: Re-imagining Freedom in the 21st Century* and other books. She was deeply involved in the Anti-Apartheid/ Free South Africa movement in the 1980s.



Robin D.G. Kelley is a Professor of American History at UCLA and author of numerous books including *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination and Africa Speaks, America Answers: Modern Jazz in Revolutionary Times*. Kelley is also on the Board of CSR.

The Future Reimagined

A Note on Alexander:

After receiving his doctorate in Germany and prompted by the Sharpeville Massacre, Alexander, together with Namibian and South African activists, formed the National Liberation Front. Members included the late Judge Fikile Bam and Dulcie September who was later assassinated. At the time of his arrest in 1963, Alexander was a history teacher at Livingston High School. He was imprisoned on Robben Island for ten years, after which he was placed under house arrest in Cape Town from 1974-1979.

Alexander had long grappled with questions of racism, class exploitation, caste, ethnicity, and nation in South Africa, as evidenced in his book *One Azania, One Nation: The National Question in South Africa*, written under the nom de guerre No Sizwe. Alexander clandestinely began writing the book on Robben Island and completed it during the period of his house arrest. He was motivated to write the book after a long and celebrated debate with Nelson Mandela on Robben Island.

Department of Education Leadership and Management (DELM) hosts Principal's Conference

Prof Kat Yassim, Department of Education Leadership and Management

Leading schools has never been more important than at this time. With no handbook or precedent on how to lead during a time of crisis, education leaders have had to make decisions that centre the continuation of learning. Research papers on the impact of the COVID-19 virus on education have outnumbered any other types of publications with the exception of health research, and the time was right to expand the conversation to our schools.

In collaboration with Kagiso Trust and the NECT Sandbox project, DELM spearheaded a conference on September 01 and 02 entitled "Leading schools during challenging times: The impact of COVID-19 in catalysing a 4IR driven culture of learning". Four questions anchored the two-day event:

- What kind of school leadership is needed during challenging times?
- How can we enhance collaboration within and beyond schools for meaningful change?
- What kind of school culture is needed for education to thrive in a fast-changing world?
- What are some of the key imperatives highlighted by the pandemic, which we should hold on to as we "build back better"?

The Gauteng MEC for Education, Mr Panyaza Lesufi, opened the conference. Principal Andries Makgoba, representing the Sandbox project, spoke of how young teachers were leading the ICT revolution in this group of schools, saying: "We are blessed with a resource, so we should use it." Mr Jonathen Mendonca from Barefoot Education in India and Ms Komala Pillay CEO of Partners for Possibilities South Africa (PfPSA) also noted the importance of "us[ing] what resources – human or

otherwise" are available to support the development of a learning culture that creates an innovative learning environment.

The importance of making teachers agents in leadership was emphasised by Mr Adeoye Ajodeji and Ms Duduzile Makhari, DELM PhD students. For example, Principal Klaas Mahlahlani runs a successful "shadow principal" programme that provides leadership practice opportunities for staff members. Similarly, DELM PhD student Mr Lotus Phukubje shared his research on learning agility and the need for role modelling of life-long learning by school principals.

Deputy Principal Joyce Pilane shared the process of leading with a pedagogy of care. She spoke of how the virus had disrupted teacher and learner wellbeing. She shared the results of surveys that they had created to ascertain the wellbeing of teachers, and discussed various interventions teachers had suggested for supporting their emotional health. Listening to children and teachers and clearing up misconceptions were some of the ways they used "healing circles" in their school communities

A number of participants noted the importance of building school-community partnerships in order to ensure support for a rapidly evolving school culture that is fit for 21st century. Principal Rebecca Mahapa discussed how a group of Sandbox schools engage with businesses, social services, police, and the parent community to support holistic child development.

We ended the conference with DELM Emeritus Prof du Plessis who said "a new chapter has been opened, where voices from the ground come together to talk leadership and to learn from each other."





SciTechEd hosts webinar on “Re-imagining decolonisation, transformative learning and teacher agency”

Prof Umesh Ramnarain, Department of Science and Technology Education

The Department of Science and Technology Education (SciTechEd) proudly hosted a webinar on 21 April 2021 by Prof Kenneth Ngcoza from Rhodes University, titled “Mobilizing the cultural heritage, Ubuntu and ethics of indigenous communities in teaching school science: Re-imagining decolonisation, transformative learning and teacher agency”. The webinar forms a part of a seminar series called “Continuing the Dialogue: Indigenizing the Curriculum”. The seminar series provides a forum for us to grapple with key questions such as: What is meant by a transformed teacher education curriculum? What role can indigenous/cultural knowledge play in curriculum transformation? How can disciplinary knowledge be merged or integrated with indigenous knowledge, if

that is our intention? What can be a research agenda for indigenisation of the curriculum?

The event was well attended and drew participation from researchers, students, and teachers throughout Southern Africa. Prof Ngcoza, who was accompanied by his colleagues and students, shared with us their practices on how indigenous knowledge may be effectively and meaningfully integrated into science lessons. The example on the preparation of traditional beer (umqombothi) was particularly interesting. The team also presented research that had been conducted on the integration of indigenous knowledge in the science classroom.

STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

We wish to welcome the following staff who have joined the Faculty in 2021. We look forward to your new energy and contributions to growing the Faculty of Education.

Academic staff

Ms Thandeka NCUBE

Assistant Lecturer
Department of Childhood Education

Mr Henk MOSTERT

Lecturer and Educational Psychologist
Department of Educational Psychology

Ms Semoni CANCELLIERE

Assistant Lecturer
Department of Childhood Education

Academic administration staff

Mr Petrick MASHABA:

Senior Faculty Officer

Mrs Lebogang MOGANO:

Faculty Officer

Promotions

Dr Kathleen FONSECA – promoted to Senior Lecturer

Dr Viren RAMDHANY – promoted to Senior Lecturer

Dr Jacqueline BATCHELOR – promoted to Associate Professor

Dr Sarita RAMSAROOP – promoted to Associate Professor



New Dean and Vice Dean for the Faculty of Education: Professor Nadine Petersen has been appointed the Executive Dean: Faculty of Education

Professor Petersen is a Full Professor and the former Vice-Dean: Teaching and Learning within the Faculty of Education at UJ. She is rated as an established researcher by the National Research Foundation (NRF) and an acknowledged scholar of service-learning and teacher education.

Prior to her appointment as the Vice-Dean for the period 2018 to 2021, she served as the Head of Department for Childhood Education from 2014 to 2018, during a crucial period when the University of Johannesburg's teaching school, Funda UJabule, was established.

Professor Petersen obtained her PhD from the University of Johannesburg and her Master's in Education (M.Ed.) cum laude from the former Rand Afrikaanse Universiteit

(now UJ). She obtained various awards throughout her career; and most recently from the International Association for Research in Service Learning and Engagement, in recognition of excellence in scholarship that advances the practice of service-learning and community engagement within and across borders/cultures. She has invested in the research and practice of teacher education, often in collaboration with international partners such as the University of Helsinki and the University of Hong Kong.

Recognition of Professor Petersen's educational expertise is reflected in the positions she holds on the Boards of the NRF and the Gauteng Education Development Trust, and a 10-year position as a Sasol Inzalo Foundation Trustee.



Prof Boitumelo Diale has been appointed as Vice Dean: Teaching and Learning

Prof Boitumelo (Tumi) Molebogeng Diale has been appointed Vice Dean: Teaching and Learning in the Faculty of Education. She has been the Head of the Department of Educational Psychology since 2017. Prof Diale is a registered Educational Psychologist with the HPCSA and has been an Employee Wellness Practitioner for the past 17 years. Prof Diale is the President of the Convocation at UJ, current chair of the South African College of Applied Psychology (SACAP) Academic Board, outgoing chair of the South African Career Development Association (SACDA), and represents South Africa in the International Career Development Peak Body Network with members from the UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. She is also a Visiting Professor at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN), co-leads a national project on career transition of youth with neuro developmental disabilities and is currently establishing a Centre for Neuro Developmental Learning Needs at the Soweto Campus.

We look forward to the contributions in the Faculty of Education.

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