

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

# Edubrief | December 2022



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# EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE FUTURES

**Prof Kat Yassim**

**Department of Education and Leadership Management**

Education and the future are inseparably intertwined. How we understand the future influences how we think about education. Given the experiences of the pandemic that witnessed 1.6 billion learners worldwide suffering learning losses, a VUCA world emanated before our eyes. If the reality of a constantly changing world was ignored before, the sudden and startling changes to lives and to education delivery demanded immediate attention and action. It brought to the fore that if the future cannot be predicted with certainty, decisions about education for the future will not have a precedence. Postmodern and postcolonial theories make us aware of the problem of a linear and teleological approach to the future advocating for a humanistic understanding of education.

The ideal is that education should bring society closer to a humane future (which includes the environment). One has to only contemplate the current struggles (like the war in Ukraine, the effect of climate change, persistent poverty, violence etc.) to establish that a future that offers one the freedom to shape one's own future, as well as contemplate the possibility of potential alternative futures is required. Mental images of the future require a differentiation between "expected" (probable), "promised" (possible) and "preferred" (positive visions of) futures. Studies of young people refer primarily to probable futures – promised and preferred futures seem to be missing. It stands to reason that if sustainability is a desired goal, then a change towards offering conversations linked to preferred futures (one where morality is the basis for decision-making) is required.

In this regard, the aim of education for sustainable futures should be to educate learners so that they acquire competencies that help them to learn to think and behave in a sustainable way. This learning extends across all types of education, to all disciplines and to persons of any age because it goes beyond imparting knowledge or raising awareness, but rather towards fostering proficiencies like systems-thinking competencies, anticipatory competencies, normative competencies, strategic competencies, interpersonal competencies, and critical thinking. Therefore, education for sustainable futures cannot be based on any specific knowledge content, but rather it should be oriented towards questions of how education can contribute towards societal transformation for a better future.

Education for sustainable futures must be considered as a process in which citizens need to take an active part where critical thinking, reflecting, the inclusion and integration of pluralistic and alternative viewpoints and where participation and decision-making skills become important aims in education. It is in this spirit that a school leadership conference was held in September 2022 in partnership with Kagiso Trust and the NECT. The aim was to foster conversation on four themes that directly concern education for sustainable futures. The themes discussed were, social well-being, economic resilience, good governance, and environmental integrity. Through presentations of school leaders, a number of education stakeholders and university researchers' ideas on the impact and implications of education for sustainable futures was shared. Conclusions and learnings included rethinking the purpose of education, creating orientations to education that offer relevant and responsive approaches with the intent of a sustainable future. In this way, education for a sustainable future was conceived as a form of subjectification, one that supports and enables self-efficacy, formability, and creativity and where education serves as a platform for experimentation and critique and one that has the potential to open up alternative futures for learners to pursue.

*First published by Kagiso Trust*

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## Critical conscious leadership for decolonising higher education's leadership: A Black consciousness perspective

**Dr Sadi Seyama**

**Department of Education and Leadership Management**

The transformation project in South African higher education institutions has made strides in redressing inequalities; however, 30 years since democracy, it continues to struggle to establish its legitimacy against the ubiquitous colonial and apartheid legacy. Students' financial deficiencies and colonising curricula, pedagogy and educational spaces remain intact. Consequently, higher education is yet to equitably serve students from poor backgrounds and ensure equal and inclusive future social and economic opportunities. Furthermore, the neoliberal market-driven accountability demands for efficiency and effectiveness compound universities' challenges as these reproduce coloniality in the 'postcolonial' era, reifying capitalistic ideals, which have been the essence of colonialism. And the fundamental project of achieving social, economic, and epistemic justice is de-centred and relegated. I thus problematise higher education leadership's transformational approach and propose critical conscious leadership (CCL)



## Critical Conscious Leadership for Decolonising Leadership

by Dr Sadi Seyama



Inspired by and in memory of  
**STEVE BIKO**



The Future  
Reimagined

to offer reflexivity – a shift of paradigms, renewed thinking and practices that disconnect universities' leadership from the remnants of coloniality. CCL draws on Steve Biko's Black consciousness as an African anti-colonial thought. This affirmation "symbolises beauty, purity, happiness, anger and resistance; a subversion of racist Euro-constructions of Blackness as deviancy, criminality, and dis-normal" (Dei, 2017, p.3).

CCL could serve as a lens through which university leaders in the new African university could "...self-reflect constantly and critically on the questions: Am I leading? Why? Who and how am I leading? What kind of leader am I becoming? Where is my leading taking the organisation? (Rensburg, 2020a, p.37). It is committed to countering hegemonic whiteness' superiority notions and affirms Blackness in its symbolism of the world's fully human and worthy African and Black peoples. It encapsulates a pursuit of the public and greater good with a cautiousness towards the neoliberal ideology and a commitment to achieving social, epistemic, and economic justice within the pluriversal national and innovative global spaces for equitable human flourishing beyond the 21st century. CCL encompasses the following tenets:

- Operationalising a decolonised psyche
- Fostering a new humanism for a thriving communitarian culture
- Crafting critical performativity to insert meaningful positive performatives
- Nurturing pluriversality
- Cultivating political, humane, and innovative academics and students' agency

CCL cultivates leading with the head, heart and spirit and directs a humane and innovative leadership praxis, encapsulating emancipatory and developmental philosophies, ethics, ideals, and norms that serve the transformational mandate of repairing, healing, and rebuilding. It calls upon HE leaders to mobilise an authentic collective commitment and efficacy to change society, develop active and critical graduates, and produce meaningful knowledge for creating future paths towards making the world a just and thriving place. Taking up CCL, leaders ought to engage in reflection and reflexivity of their subjectivities and assumptions and ask the difficult question – 'What are they directed to serve?' The CCL praxis draws on a decolonised psyche, embedding an ethical, political, social, and economic subjectivity. It acknowledges the colonial historical violence that shaped Blackness as a political discourse, embodying a dehumanisation of black people. Through this praxis, African universities could rewrite African legacies; redefine excellence as a meaningful endeavour of alternative thinking in innovation and creativity. And offer the world new knowledge for tenable and sustainable answers to the difficult questions in the global context that is inhumane, volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous.



# Undergraduate Student Research Conference

## Mr Linford Molaodi Childhood Education

Mr Linford Molaodi presented a keynote during the Undergraduate Student Research Conference on 11 October 2022. His keynote was titled : thriving through Ubuntu principles in the fast-changing world : 4IR and beyond.

Linford addressed the students on the importance of respect (which is an integral component of human nature), humility, humbleness, compassion and kindness. He said that young people tend to forget that being intelligent in their areas of specialisation was not enough. It should be coupled with Ubuntu.

'Respectful and kind youth are attractive. I have seen many intelligent youngsters falling from the top, due to lack of respect.'

He also emphasized the importance of reputable digital footprint as the students being their journeys as young academics.

The speech can be access through the link [https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=679507350410287&id=100064892280107](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=679507350410287&id=100064892280107)





## 2022 Service-Learning Project-The Gallery Walk

**Taryn Bennett**  
**Childhood Education**

On the 30th of September, the second-year intermediate phase students presented their service-learning gallery walk project to learners from the Funda UJabule primary school. Service-learning forms part of the non-placement work integrated learning (WIL) in teacher education. This service-learning project aims to draw on academic content to meet community needs while allowing students to engage in teaching practice and reflect on their experiences to improve their teaching. The second-year intermediate phase, students were placed into groups and were required to organise and demonstrate social science and isiZulu or Sesotho lessons for grade four and five learners using performance and visual arts (Life skills) in their teaching strategies. The project was designed to remove students from the typical classroom environment and place them in an environment that is outdoors for an authentic teaching practice experience. The service-learning project was set up as a gallery walk teaching strategy. A gallery walk is an active learning strategy that displays presentations and resources to teach others. The Funda UJabule learners rotated from one group presentation to the next like they would in a physical gallery or exhibition. Teacher educators and Funda UJabule teachers would also assess the group presentations and provide feedback. The second-year intermediate phase students thereafter had an opportunity to do a peer and self-reflection to learn from their experiences. Overall, it was a successful day that both the learners and students enjoyed.



*Learners did a scavenger hunt to build their own grassland model*



*Learners taking part in the Soweto Uprising re-enactment*



*Learners taking a picture with the Mapungubwe King*



*Learners being questioned on the characters in the play they watched*



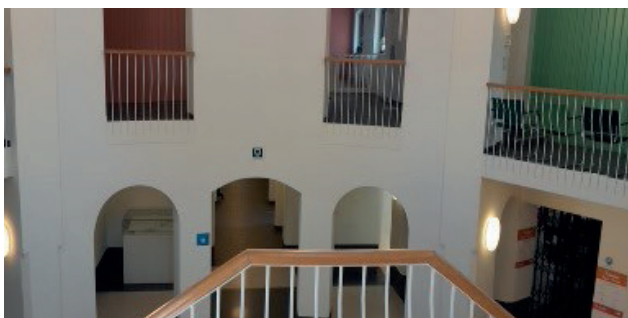
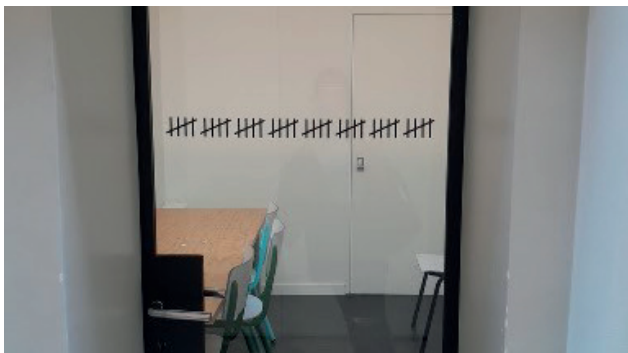


*Sesotho lesson on a drama presented*



*Students acting out a novel for the learners.jpg*





## The Mathematics Education unit's visit to Hasselt University in Belgium

**Janine Bouwer**  
**Science and Technology Education**

The Mathematics Education unit in the Department of Science and Technology Education (SciTechEd) visited Hasselt University (HU), Belgium, from 27 June - 02 July 2022, as part of the Global Minds project "Online collaborative learning in mathematical modelling for pre-service teachers in STEM education". This project aims to develop pre-service mathematics teachers' knowledge and pedagogy of teaching mathematical modelling (MM). The picture below shows the colleagues from left to right: Adam-Christiaan Van Roosmalen (master student from HU), Dr Viren Ramdhany (senior lecturer from UJ), Ms Janine Bouwer (assistant lecturer from UJ), Prof Erica Spangenberg (associate-professor from UJ), Prof Katleen Denolf (professor and project leader from HU), and Wietse Vaes (student-teacher from HU).

During this visit, Adam-Christiaan Van Roosmalen presented the findings of his master's thesis, which was titled *The Influence of the modelling week on attitudes towards mathematical modelling*. Adam's thesis was based on his work with UJ BEd 4<sup>th</sup> year students during the modelling week earlier this year. Based on these findings, we collaboratively prepared a poster, which was presented at the Het ORD 2022 conference in Belgium. Currently, an article based on this project is being written, and will be submitted to an accredited journal by the end of the year.

During our visit, some of the discussions revolved around refinements to the modelling week for the 2023 academic year, to ensure this collaborative project is sustainable. In increasing mathematics pre-service teachers' levels of confidence and motivation toward the teaching of mathematical modelling (MM) during their practice, we aspire to expose third-year mathematics pre-service teachers to the introduction course (of MM) and to prepare them for the intensive modelling week in the fourth-year methodology module. Furthermore, in extending and strengthening this collaborative relationship between the two universities (HU and UJ), we are in the process of formalising a joint UJ-HU PhD degree, and are also seeking funding opportunities for future collaborations.

HU actively promotes social justice, and the photos below display a building at one of HU's campuses. Its significance is that it used to be an old prison which was then turned into a campus for Law studies. The picture on the far right used to be an old prison cell which is now being used as a study area (room) for students.

During our stay we were also invited to a small pre-graduation ceremony, which allowed us to engage with and experience/ appreciate the cultural differences between UJ and HU.

Although this was a week of intensive discussions and meetings, we managed to find time to explore the city of Hasselt, and to visit neighbouring Antwerp. This international exposure and collaboration have allowed us to grow in flexibility and to adapt to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which is deemed necessary in a time where 4IR is promoted globally, and as teacher-educators we are encouraged to keep up with the time. This joint project has also allowed us to travel together and build better working relationships, which will certainly foster a strong mathematics education unit.

## Pan-African Science Education Research (PASER) Postgraduate Student Conference

**Prof Umesh Ramnarain**  
**Science and Technology Education**

Prof Umesh Ramnarain, HoD, Department of Science and Technology Education in partnership with colleagues from Rhodes University and the University of KwaZulu-Natal organized a virtual Pan-African Science Education Research (PASER) postgraduate student conference. The intention behind the PASER conference was to build a community whereby scholars from throughout Africa could come together and interact on research. The call was well received and we had masters and doctoral students from 10 universities across the African continent present papers in science education. After going through a rigorous process of review, 23 papers were accepted and presented. The papers were on topics on research in the following areas: chemistry education; physics education; technology integration; and teacher development. The keynote speaker was Dr Prajakt Pande from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC). His talk was on "An early-career researcher's introduction to 'technology-enhanced embodied learning', and a tale of experiences navigating the field's complexities". It is expected the success of the inaugural PASER conference will inspire further such initiatives across the continent.

## Swiss collaborators hosting exciting free MOOCs

**Dr Roxanne Bailey**  
**Science and Technology Education**

Colleagues from the Swiss Distance University of Applied Sciences (FFHS) who are collaborating with some of our colleagues from SciTechEd are presenting two free MOOCs in October 2022. This is a great opportunity to learn about "Learning analytics for teachers" and "Basics of Adaptive Learning". Both these topics being very relevant in the recent educational landscape.

A short description provided by Prof Dr Egon Werlen:

*If you would like to know more about how the analysis of data and online breadcrumbs left behind by your students, and how those can be used in a productive manner within teaching, then we have the thing for you: At IFeL and our UNESCO Chair on Personalized and Adaptive Learning, we specialise in learning analytics and how to incorporate students' data into learning techniques. How can we best utilise online behaviour on learning platforms in our teaching?*

*This and much more will be discussed in our MOOC [Learning Analytics for Teachers](#), specifically tailored for teachers, lecturers, or instructional designers. On the other hand, [Basics of Adaptive Learning](#) is suitable also for researchers or anyone trying to get into the field of Adaptive Learning in online environments.*

*Are you interested and want to learn more? Contact: [mooc@ffhs.ch](mailto:mooc@ffhs.ch)*

## Dr Roxanne Bailey presenting guest lecture at FFHS in November 2022

**Dr Roxanne Bailey**  
**Science and Technology Education**

Dr Roxanne Bailey from the Learning Technologies Unit (SciTechEd) presented a guest lecture at the Swiss Distance University of Applied Sciences (FFHS) in November titled: Adaptive learning and self-directed learning from a South African perspective.

Collaboration with the Swiss colleagues Prof Dr Per Bergamin, Prof Dr Egon Werlen and others, started during her post-doctoral fellowship in 2018. During this fellowship, Dr Bailey and two other colleagues from NWU completed a short-stay of four months in Brig, Switzerland where they closely worked with Prof Dr Per Bergamin (UNESCO Chair on Personalised and Adaptive Distance Education) who managed the Swiss side of the fellowship as well as Prof Christo van der Westhuizen who managed the South African side of the fellowship. After moving to the University of Johannesburg, both Prof van der Westhuizen as well as Dr Bailey have continued their collaboration with Swiss colleagues and are both still working closely with these colleagues and looking forward to more collaborative outputs in the near future.



## The University of Johannesburg, Faculty of Education, Departments of Educational Psychology, Childhood Education, and Educational Leadership and Management hosted delegates from the University of Southern California Rossi at the Soweto Campus on 20 September and at APK campus on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2022.

**Dr Parvathy Naidoo and Dr Veronica Dwarika**  
Education Leadership and Management and Educational Psychology

### Day 1: 20<sup>th</sup> September 2022

The USC Rossier runs a Global Executive Doctor of Education Program. Their program prepares senior educational leaders, policy makers, administrators and change agents for the challenging task of improving individual and national outcomes. The FoE departments hosted the international delegations (10 students and 2 faculty staff) with a view to formalize mutually beneficial partnerships. During their visit the USCR were introduced to the Funda Ujabule Teaching school as well as the Centre for Neurodiversity@UJ. Various colleagues from Childhood Education shared their experiences as teachers and mentors within the Funda practicum processes. As part of the USCR-UJ collaboration, the USCR academic team have already begun with a peer review of the Department of Educational Psychology, Online Professional DEd program that will begin in 2023. The aim of the peer review is to collaborate to strengthen this UJ new program offering, glean from USCR experience in offering a Global Online doctorate program. The opportunities for further collaborations in aspects of joint research opportunities, joint proposals for project funding, arranging, and hosting of international events of stature to further elevate UJ's global reputation, were also explored.







*Shown here top left to bottom Right (Dr Naidoo, Prof Ramsaroop, Principal and Deputy PrincipalFUJS-Mrs Lukhuleni and Mr Ngubane, Delegates USCR and UJ, Prof Diale, Prof Robison)*





*UJ Team with USCR team at the Centre for Neurodiversity. Dr Jean Fourie (top right) involving delegates in experiential learning with the "Brain Game"*

## **Day 2: 21 September 2022**

The University of Johannesburg, Faculty of Education, Department of Educational Leadership and Management (DELM) hosted the delegates from the University of Southern California Rossi at the Auckland Park Campus on Day 2, 21st September 2022.

The Postgraduate School, Training Room was the venue for Day two, which began with the Head of Department (DELM), Dr Suraiya Naicker introducing the staff of DELM, and the Master's and Doctoral students, who are pursuing their research studies within DELM. This was followed by a presentation by Dr Mark Robison outlining the aims, objectives and collaborative initiatives of the USC Rossier visit to UJ. Thereafter, the delegation were delighted to have Prof Yilva Rodny- Gumede, Chief Director of UJ International Office, deliver an overview of UJ's international office's vision, mission, their collaborators, and UJ's international student enrolment.

Two hours of the programme was then dedicated to small group exchanges/engagement where 10 USC Rossier students enrolled in the Global Executive Doctor of Education Program and 10 UJ postgraduate students, from the Departments of Educational Psychology, Childhood Education, and Educational Leadership and Management,





UJ-USC Rossier Collaboration Program for 20-21 Sept, and this report were coordinated by

participated in robust discussions regarding their Doctoral/PhD research studies. These discussions were facilitated by staff members and post doctorate research fellows (PDRFs) from the Educational Psychology Department and DELM. The deliberations provided students with global exposure and competitiveness, narrating their experiences as, "a professional learning experience; cognitive enhancement; sharing intellectual capacity; wonderful; sharing is empowering; illuminating experience; having a similar outlook; expansive; encouraging; self-development etcetera." The day culminated in an educative tour of the Auckland Park campus. We envisage this interaction between USC Rossier directorship, the student delegates and the UJ FOE departments will provide new prospects for innovative collaborations regarding shared research opportunities, postgraduate student exchange programmes and exposure to global study programmes.

## STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS



### PROMOTION

**Dr Dean van der Merwe** has been promoted to the level of senior lecturer.

Congratulations to Dr van der Merwe; we look forward to your contributions to the Faculty.

### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S DISTINGUISHED AWARDS: TEACHER EXCELLENCE 2022

**Dr Dean van der Merwe** has been awarded the prize in the **Most Promising Young Teacher Award** category.



### VICE-CHANCELLOR'S DISTINGUISHED AWARDS: TEACHER EXCELLENCE 2022

Congratulations to **Prof Andy Carolin**, recipient of the 2022 Vice-Chancellor's Distinguished Award for Book of the Year, for his book entitled: *Post-Apartheid Same-Sex Sexualities: Restless Identities in Literary and Visual Culture*.

**Prof Andy Carolin** has been awarded the prize in the **Teacher Excellence** category.

The Faculty of Education is extremely proud of these outstanding achievements!

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