

NEWS

May 2015



Appointment of New Executive Dean of the Faculty of Education

A word from the VC Derrick Swarts

The faculty warmly welcomes Dr Muki Moeng as the new Executive Dean of Education as of 01 May 2015.

Dr Moeng is a former student and academic staff member of the faculty and NMMU and we are extremely proud to have her take up the position as head of the Education Faculty. She spent the past five years as Director of Teaching and Learning at North West University (NWU), and brings fresh new experiences into our faculty and institution. Her own background, recent research and teaching experiences, and insights will be of great benefit to us.

In addition to pioneering new methods of teaching, learning and scholarship, the faculty is also presently constructing a new Foundation Phase Complex on the Missionvale Campus,

to roll out a new generation of teacher training programmes aimed at the important phase of early childhood development. We believe Dr Moeng will be a source of great inspiration to our students and staff in creatively linking the work of the faculty and NMMU into the far-reaches of our province and country.

Dr Moeng is an NMMU graduate, attaining her BEd Honours in 1998 and her DEd in 2009. Her thesis examined the identity of academics within the new comprehensive university of NMMU. In between, she completed an MSc (Curriculum and Instruction) at St Cloud University in the United States. We are so pleased to welcome Dr Moeng home.

The Education Faculty welcomed Dr Moeng during a staff lunchtime address on the 4th May and during an evening welcoming function on 15th May 2015.



Dr Muki Moeng Executive Dean of Education

OPEN DAY 3

SUPER ED 9

Picturing Hope 10

A Warm Welcome to Dr Khoboli



Dr Benedict Khoboli

We would like to welcome our new science lecturer to the Education Faculty.

Dr Benedict Khoboli, has previously lectured at the University of Limpopo and the Cultural University of Technology in the Free State. Dr Khoboli is currently researching teacher development and the learning of physics by student teachers. A firm believer in the potential of his students, he has secured scholarships for four students in the past three years to do their masters in Australia and has himself travelled and researched abroad through the assistance of a grant from the National Research Foundation.

Dr Khoboli will be lecturing science in the undergraduate and post-graduate programmes and is motivated to help build Faculty of Education. When asked about his experiences within the faculty thus far, he had this to say, "The staff is extremely friendly and all of them are willing to support me. They're always offering me help at any given time. I have not formally met any students so far, but meeting students in the corridors and seeing the enthusiasm of students who are interested in becoming teachers of quality is enough proof as it is."

We are most fortunate to have Dr Khoboli join our staff compliment and trust that he will be a valued member of the education family.

We hope that your tenure will continue to be fulfilling.

Welcome!

Diondra Du Preez

The launch of the Faculty of Education's new Resource Centre on 05 May 2015 was deemed successful by all present. The success was not only attributed to the cocktail event but also, to the colourful, vibrant and student friendly space. The Resource Centre is a social space created to empower students, allow access to key education resources and crucial technologies. The launch marked the progress of facility which represents the heart of student activity in the faculty.

The idea of the Resource Centre began in 2006, when Lilda Koekemoer, Prof Ana Naidoo and Prof Pat Bean discussed the creation of a work space for students, based on a model seen abroad. The Resource Centre opened in 2007, situated in a tiny lecture venue in building 6. Gradually the space grew into a larger more technologically advanced, well-resourced centre.

The project to build a larger centre started in 2011 and include many key architects, administrators and academic thinkers, making the space a truly organic and collaborative project.

The VC Professor Derrick Swartz believes the space to fit into the NMMU Vision 20/20 strategy of creating common social spaces that stimulate students to think, critique, and work in a conducive manner. The VC has termed the centre an 'education commons', celebrating the nature of the space.

The Resource Centre Launch





PE and George

1137 Prospective Teachers interested in the Education Faculty

On the 8th and 9th of May, the annual Open Day was hosted at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University's Vodacom Indoor Sport Centre. Over the two day period, approximately 6000 students attended, from all over the Eastern Cape.

Stalls were ready and music played as the Grade 11 and 12 learners approached the various exhibitors in search of answers to their many questions. While some learners knew exactly what they want to study next year, others chose to explore various options.

The Faculty of Education displayed a strong presence - with the help of staff and student assistants.

Many learners came to understand the different programmes on offer and how they vary. Thanks to the engagement with learners, those who assisted at the faculty's stall had many laughs throughout the day.

The George Open Day took place the following weekend, on the 15th and 16th of May. Even on these two cold wintery days, learners from the Western Cape came determined to find out about their career options.

From Forestry to Architecture, many faculties exhibited, including the Faculty of Education.

With a large number of learners interested in teaching, many hopefuls were disappointed to hear that the B(Ed) courses will not be offered at NMMU George Campus, whilst others pledged to pay the price of overcoming the distance in order to complete their tertiary studies and change the lives of people in their community through education.

The total of 458 names of learners who are interested in teaching were collected over the four Open Days. Thus bringing our database of matriculants to 1137 collected from the Working World Exhibition and Open Days.

A big 'thank you' to all the staff and students who assisted – it was much appreciated.

BEYOND “LOAD SHEDDING” MOMENTS IN EDUCATION

An excerpt from the Research Seminar by Dr Ron Beyers

Load shedding is becoming a daily occurrence for all South Africans. There are many excuses provided for why the country has to endure this but it boils down to high level decision making processes.

Up until now the topic of national education is often in the news for a variety of reasons. One often hears of the youth not having the prerequisite skills for employment and the lowering of standards - 30% pass mark. The real “load shedding” moments in education will only be realised when we take stock of the brain drain and the inability of suitably qualified individuals to grow the economy.

The Cofimvaba experience was an exercise in human capital development to expose 3 500 learners to alternative energies. A number of schools in the Nciba circuit of the Cofimvaba District are being supplied with Hydrogen Fuel Cell technologies to meet their electricity needs.

As part of this initiative demonstrations were conducted at 30 schools with learners ranging from Grade 4-12 to illustrate the transfer of energy from the sun to electrolysis and finally back into fuel cells to power a small toy car.

This project was conducted under the banner of the Young Engineers and Scientists of Africa (YESA <http://yesa.org.za/cofimvabaschools/>). A number of NMMU students accompanied Dr Ron Beyers to experience first-hand rural education, which had a profound influence on the lives of all students who participated in the project.

An important outcome of these demonstrations was the emergence of talented individuals who displayed great insight into some of the challenges presented to them.

This was despite the fact that the presentations were not in their mother tongue and that many learners had not seen this type of technology before.

The country can no longer afford to write off more generations of learners by delivering poor quality education to learners in any of the 27 000 schools across South Africa. This impacts on how we prepare our teachers in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Innovation (STEMI). It is our collective responsibility to turn the education system around from being bottom of the international pile in numeracy and literacy to providing a quality service that is diversified to meet the needs of the learners as well as that of the economy. Are we preparing our teachers to unlock this potential in our youth?

Research Themes

Teaching and Learning and Language in Education

A combined meeting for the research themes, Teaching and Learning and Language in Education was held in the Research Commons (lower ground, Building 11) on Tuesday, 12 May. It was felt this was a more conducive space for informal engagement. The combination of attendees in a joint sessions also meant that contributions from the two research areas could inform and enrich each other. Discussions were jointly facilitated by Alette Delpont and Eileen Scheckle, as respective research theme drivers. As this was the first meeting some time was spent outlining the purpose of the research theme and how regular engagement could be supportive and generative for all. Some of the attendees are in the preliminary stages of research, whilst others had collected data and were working towards presenting their research at conferences. The next meeting is planned for June, and we look forward to seeing more colleagues join us.

By Eileen Scheckle



The Research Theme Science, Mathematics and Technology Education

On the 28th May 2015 Dr Ron Beyers presented on technology and the use of iPads in the Science Lab and in the classroom to teachers from various Port Elizabeth schools. The presentation entitled Using iPads in the Science Lab focused on a variety of possible uses of iPads and Android devices in the Physical Science and Life Science Laboratories, combining pictures, videos, various apps, etc., to combine theory and practical in a richer learning environment. The presentation also touched on Making sense with Mind Maps (iPads and Windows) and using iPads as well as Windows based software to demonstrate mind maps in a teaching /presentation/learning mode using MindMaple (iPad) and FreeMind (Windows) – these are merely examples of apps. The use of Portable apps opens up a whole new world of opportunities for the learners. The intention is to establish a regular forum for educators to share learning experiences from the classroom.

By Andre Du Plessis



Dr Mathabo Khau presented on Tweens, sexual double standards and social media: The case of Pulane Lenkoe and the NMMU Ms Freshette Beyoncé dance on Wednesday the 20th May.

This is a brief overview of Dr Khau's discussion.



Tweens (teenagers and early-twenties) today are bombarded by media messages and depictions of what it means to be a man or woman and what it means to be sexy or beautiful. These messages create situations in which young people find themselves having to either conform or rebel against the predominant discourses of beauty/sexy or masculine/feminine. With social media allowing young people easy access to digital image exchange and sexting, it is important to interrogate the gendered inequalities and stereotypes perpetuated through such activities in order to come up with a framework of incorporating the corporeal into teaching and learning in higher education.

South Africa and Africa in general has been experiencing a spate of leaked naked photos of women by jilted lovers, or sexting scandals by teenagers.

Using the examples of Pulane Lenkoe's leaked naked photos and the "wardrobe malfunction" during the Mr and Ms NMMU Freshette 2015 Beyoncé dance, I discussed how tween 'sexting' presents specific age and gender related contradictions: tween girls are called upon to produce particular forms of 'sexy' self-display, yet face legal ramifications, moral censure and 'slut shaming' when they do so. I also challenged the sexual double standards perpetuated through tweens' discussions on Facebook and YouTube. For instance, boys score points by possessing and exchanging images of girls' naked bodies, which operates as a form of currency and value. Contrarily for girls, sharing or posting of such images becomes risky; potentially inciting blame and shame around sexual reputation.

Based on these discussions, I propose that while HEIs are tasked with producing a sound mind, we should also focus on the body and its desires, expressions and performances within our daily teaching and learning endeavours in order to challenge the gendered, sexualised, and racialized stereotypes surrounding African sexualities.



How2 Buddies Ceremony

The How2 buddies of 2015 were the mentors for first years entering NMMU in 2015. Made up of students from all faculties, the programme aims to gently orientate students into their new environment. The achievements of these 'buddies' were celebrated at a dinner on the 15th of May in the Conference Room at the Vodacom Sports Centre, where students were awarded their certificates of participation.

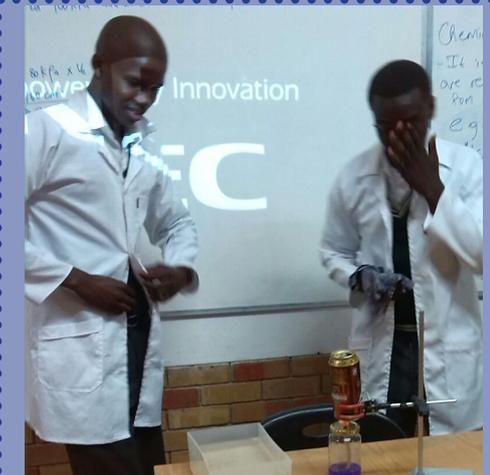
Hosted by Mikaela Oosthuizen, NMMU student and former Miss South Africa Teen 2010, the buddies of 2015, attendees were treated to a variety of performances done by fellow How2 buddies of other faculties.

A rap song, poetry and piano accompaniment as presented and inspired by the experience of the How2 buddy programme. Testimonials were shared by 2 first year students about their experience of having a How2 buddy. Ms Shereene Knipp, coordinator of the orientation programme, shared a video of clips and photos of the How2 buddies and their training. Congratulations to all of the Education students who participated in this project, you have made us proud.

Ginique Brown

Students 'Happy' for Education

This month allowed students to express the vitality and excitement for Education by dancing to the video Happy by Pharell Williams. Video versions on the song were made by fans globally and shared on the Happiness.com website <http://24hoursofhappiness.com/>. Dr Kathija Adam suggested the project as a marketing activity to promote the faculty to potential NMMU first years. The video will be released in June 2015 and will feature a myriad of student and staff performers.



Halala to the students of the Paterson project for continually engaging with learners in the science project. Keep up the great work.

Halala to the staff and students of the Education faculty involved in the Sondle Sonke [All shall share, All should eat] project. The groups are currently brainstorming to develop fundraising initiatives to assist struggling students. Your efforts inspire us all. Halala



Halala Bianca!

At the recent Golden Key International Honour Society Awards at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, many students were recognized as new members based on their high academic achievement. Each year, Golden Key awards certificates of excellence to the top 15% of undergraduate academic achievers in their respective institutions nationwide. In addition, candidates also had to apply online to stand a chance to receive the Golden Key New Member Chapter Award based on the individual's academic achievements, work commitments, extracurricular activities, leadership positions and commitment to community service.

Due to the multiple applications of high quality received, Golden Key International Headquarters objectively selected three recipients, one of whom is Bianca Jessica Coetzee, a second year Intermediate Phase student from the Faculty of Education. Bianca obtained an accumulative percentage average of 83% for her Education degree. For this achievement, she had also been granted a Merit Award in 2014. She has served as the Faculty of Education Student Representative for two consecutive years, and in 2015 acts as the Faculty of Education Mentor for PICS and a Faculty of Education First Year Tutor for MATE Mathematics. She also utilizes her tutoring skills to do community service, as she tutors Maths and Science to Grade R – 12 learners. Halala Bianca and keep up the good work!



Teacher Heaven Production Success



Teacher Heaven, the play that focused around humanising pedagogy was performed by talented student actors from the Education Faculty on the 11th of May. The play by Shanna Vermaas was the highlight of 'Madibaz Day' which commemorated the 10 year NMMU celebrations. The production took place after Open Day on the stage of the Vodacom Indoor Sport Centre.

One by one the teachers explain that they do the best they can even if it means getting out of their comfort zone to learn another language to aid communication with their students. The play also entailed a rap segment and an informing march with signage creating awareness of the problems facing South African Schools.



The play takes place in the setting of "heaven". The "hostess" who meets teachers at the pearly gates and inquires from the teachers what the current teacher-classroom situation is down on earth. While the teachers argue their case and defend their careers, the audience is provided with a list of situations that teachers are faced with in the classroom.

Resting upon the humanising pedagogy theme, the play came to an end with a positive message, thanking educators for aiming to excel amidst dire situations – and becoming educators for change.

Congratulations to Shanna and her team!

JUTA exhibits at the FOE

On the 20th May 2015, JUTA visited the Education Faculty to share information on the new books available for purchase. Many staff members popped in to discuss books and teaching materials. Books such as Teaching Grade R by Excell and Lington, Philosophy of Education Today by Higgs and Smith, and Roy Killen's second addition Teaching Strategies were on show. Great thanks to JUTA for the information shared, and special thanks for the books donated to the Resource Centre afterwards.



MACBETH COMES ALIVE IN ENGLISH METHODOLOGY CLASS

Many pre-service English home language teachers find the teaching of Shakespeare's plays rather challenging. In an attempt to make the teaching of Shakespeare's plays a fun event and experience PGCE English methodology students were divided into groups and allocated scenes from Macbeth, which they were required to dramatise in an exciting way by using props, costumes and music.

The outcome of the experience was phenomenal for the students who with their cleverly co-ordinated costumes, orchestrated actions, dance moves, tableaux and expressive renditions of excerpts from Macbeth, made the play come alive in the classroom. It is hoped that the skills that they have acquired and the creative ideas that they shared during the interactive session will go a long way towards motivating them to design fun-filled lessons for their secondary school learners so that they (the learners) will become more aware of the literary genius of the Bard, the richness of his works and the relevance of his plays across time and space.



Girls Leading Change in Universities



The proudly NMMU Girls Leading Change (GLC), are continuing to make voices of young women and students heard by becoming the change they want to see happen in South African Universities through agency.

On the 19th of March the GLC were part of the Feminist Dialogue held at the University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN), Edgewood Campus. The project led by HIV and AIDS Education Research Chair: Prof Naydene de Lange includes a team of 14 female students from the NMMU Education Faculty who came together in 2013 to address the issue of sexual violence on campus.

Miss Melissa Lufele and Miss Zethu Jiyana, BEd students from the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU), accompanied by Professor Naydene de Lange, presented on the work of The Girls Leading Change initiative.

The topic of the dialogue was centered around the question of "What does/would a girl-led response(s) to sexual violence look like?" In this session, Miss Lufele and Miss Jiyana presented on the work of the Girls Leading Change, in which they developed cellfilms (videos made using cellphones), policy posters and actions briefs to stimulate dialogue in their university community around sexual violence and safety. Lufele and Jiyana spoke of students' experiences of violence and feeling unsafe on campus, issues which their project aimed to highlight and how the Girls Leading Change together with the university, have worked to make changes so as to make their institution a safe learning environment where students voices are heard and their needs are taken care of.

Their work continues...

By: Zethu Jiya



Super Ed George has been remarkably busy during the second term, hosting an array of events, workshops and charity activities. The success of the team is a feather in the cap for the Education Faculty, which is extremely proud of their constant achievements.

Workshop Training:

Super Ed George presented a Career Guidance Workshop and a Learning Styles Workshop to its own committee and representatives on 14 and 15 April 2015. This was presented to the reps in order to better equip them with presentation and communications skills. The Career Guidance Workshop focused on how to assist grade 9 school learners thinking about their future in terms of which career they would like to choose, the bursaries and loans available, as well as which school subjects they would need in order to study for this career.

The second workshop entitled the Learning Styles Workshop aimed at assisting NMMU students to identify school learner's dominant learning styles and the relevant studying methods to improve learning. Super Ed later opened the workshop to all NMMU students on the 21st and 28th April 2015.

Workers Day Dress Up:

Super Ed hosted a Worker's Day Dress Up on 30 April 2015 to promote fun and self-expression. The event was successful as many participated. We gave out prizes for the "Best Dressed" as voted by the committee and also for the "Most Likes" as voted on our Facebook page.

Trivia Event:

Super Ed hosted a Trivia Event on 23 May 2015 in order to promote academic to all NMMU Students and Societies. This event consisted of the 10 teams competing against each other to answer general knowledge Trivia questions and also to outwit each other in the 30 Seconds Board game. Many enjoyed competing at the event, whilst others opted to spectate. Prizes were allocated to the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Best Teams.



Picturing Hope Exhibition

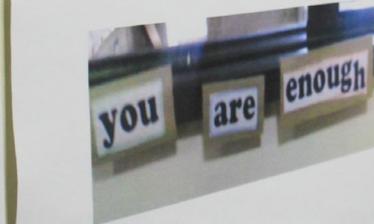
Believing in yourself

YOU ARE ENOUGH!!!

The more you learn the more you realise the reward of believing in yourself. If you go through life allowing others to dictate your pace you're always going to fall short of where you'd like to be.

Your vision for yourself is stronger than anyone's perception of you. The more you internally enforce who you are, the more you believe in it and the easier the reality of it is realized.

ARE PERFECT EXACTLY AS YOU ARE; THERE IS CHANGE ANYTHING EXCEPT THE THOUGHTS AREN'T GOOD ENOUGH." -
 ...ing.tumblr.com



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Practical application of Constructivism in a Technology Education Classroom

Academics deal with mental gymnastics while technical subjects focus on the development of specialised psychomotor skills in the context of a specific trade. This leaves a glaring gap to develop skills that link the mind and the hand.

Technology Education as a subject is defined as meeting human wants and needs using available resources and available technologies. The design process forms the heart of the approach lending itself for important team work and creativity.

This year's intake of 3rd year Intermediate Phase BEd teachers were challenged to liberate their thought processes and unleash their creative talents. The learning theory of Constructivism formed an integral component while students are expected to apply multiple skills such as sketching, designing, making three dimensional cards, etc. The shift has been from a craft approach to integrating Science and Technology in a new and exciting way. This has the potential to be expanded even further to include the integration of more aspects of Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Innovation (STEMI).

In a group challenge, students had to build a bridge confined to a "budget" of 20 sucker sticks. After designing in teams of 3 per group they had to construct the bridge in the next lecture using wood glue. The next lecture saw each bridge being loaded to the point of destruction using a scale to determine the maximum load across the predefined span. The conditions for all groups were the same where the only variable was the design of the bridge and the construction techniques.

This exposed them to a range of skills including communication, team work, designing, decision making, trouble shooting, testing, observing, etc., while discovering the properties of materials and joining techniques. The final testing revealed a broad range of possible solutions and interestingly enough 'industrial espionage' crept in where some teams changed their solutions from their final designs at the last minute after noticing what appeared to be an easier construction technique of laying the stick horizontal – to their detriment. This has laid a firm foundation for future groups to take up the challenge. The vast majority of students developed a more positive attitude towards themselves while acquiring hands-on experience of the pedagogies of the subject and to manage large classes.

The 3rd year Intermediate Phase BEd Teachers were stretched even further with a long term challenge of designing and constructing a wind powered device to lift a load using recycled materials. As part of the design brief each group had to demonstrate the integration of Science and Technology by transforming wind energy into rotary energy to lift a load. Scientific evidence had to be presented through experiments to determine the maximum load lifted and hence the work done in lifting the load. An interesting observation is the range of possible solutions that the different groups came up with for the blades.

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These ranged from yoghurt cups to plastic spoons, laminated sheets of paper, bottoms of coffee tins, cardboard, etc. There is clear evidence that the groups researched widely and produced solutions that were well within their own manufacturing capabilities – each correct in their own right.

Technology Education makes provision for the groups to define their own specifications and to assess their solutions against their own lists. At the end of the day all tasks set for the students challenged them sufficiently to strive to improve on their own standards. The ultimate test will be to determine whether these skills will one day be transferred to the classroom environments.

The recommendation is that more students, even in other faculties, should be exposed to this type of module based on the findings of Prof Neil Gershenfeld of MIT. He introduced a module to “Make just about anything” in a high-tech rapid-prototyping environment of a Fabrication Laboratory or FabLab with positive results from a broad range of students.

Henry Ford once said “If you always do what you’ve always done, you’ll always get what you’ve always got.” The standard has been raised with the prospect of more competent teachers stimulating learners in the schools to express their creativity in different ways potentially leading to further entrepreneurial opportunities amongst the youth. This bodes well as we nurture future STEMI related skills which can feed the National System of Innovation and the economy as a whole.



RESOURCE CENTRE LAUNCH

