

NEWS



October 2013



WORD FROM THE DEAN'S OFFICE

The year is almost at an end! My office is busy with budgets and planning for next year, while the DoS's, HoPs and academic staff wait on tenterhooks to see what allocations can be made for the 2014 workload – much of which depends on the final budgets.

Great plans are afoot for a new Teaching Practice/Work integrated Learning (WIL) model – and much of the logistics of the model are in the process of being configured by a hardworking team working with the SITE DoS. We all wait with bated breath for the roll-out of these plans as well, with much discussion and negotiation with all stakeholders still underway.

So much is happening on the engagement front that we might need to have a special edition of the Newsletter to update you on all the exciting happenings. Students are starting to take initiative to get organised as well; they, under the determined leadership of Claudia Boshoff, organised the first Faculty of Education Students' Spring Ball. It was a lovely event, and we look forward to this perhaps becoming an annual event? More people need to be involved for it to truly represent the Faculty's student body, the various programmes and levels of study, but I'm sure it will grow from strength to strength! Well done Claudia and the team who helped organise it.

Have a good few weeks and keep up the hard work – the year will soon be over!

Warmest Wishes
Denise Zinn



New Heads of Programmes

Congratulations to our Heads of programmes (HOPs)! Our appreciation for being willing to serve and lead in your respective programmes during this time of learning, growth and curriculum renewal in the Faculty. We are both truly grateful and also very proud of you all!

The New Heads of Programmes have been appointed for the next 3 years! They are:

B.Ed FET:	Ms Heloise Sathorar
B.Ed. IP:	Dr Christina Jordaan
B.Ed FP:	Dr Deidre Geduld (continuing in this position)
PGCE :	Dr Andre Du Plessis
B.Ed Hons/PGDE:	Dr Raj Kurup (Acting for first semester of 2014)
M.Ed.:	Prof Sylvan Blignaut
D.Ed.:	Prof Naydene DeLange (continuing)
ACE-LLT:	Dr Logan Athiemoolam
ACE- SL:	Dr Vuks Tshazibana
ACE-SNE:	Dr Christo Pienaar

7th Annual Teaching and Learning Higher Education Conference

Mathabo and I attended the 7th Annual Teaching and Learning Higher Education Conference hosted by the University of KwaZulu-Natal 's Teaching and Learning office, situated at the Edgewood Campus in Pinetown. The theme of the conference was Re-envisioning African Higher Education: Alternative Paradigms, Emerging Trends and New Directions.

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REEL LIFE – Using video to create intercultural conversations



A report from Eva Lambertsson Björk and Jutta Eschenbach about NMMU collaboration with Ostfold University, Norway

Through excellent contact with Dr Lyn Webb at NMMU we could arrange a number of workshops and teaching sequences, in addition we were able to meet a number of colleagues and do in-depth interviews with both students and staff at NMMU. In what follows we report in detail on activities and results, plus a look to the future.

Teaching commitments and outcome

In total we taught five different student groups and met about 125-130 students, including a group of teachers who came in for further education on Saturdays. So now 130 South-African teachers and future teachers know our method and can use it for their own purposes. We used Reel Life with a new approach in order to accommodate both the new South-African cultural setting. We received a confirmation of our earlier conclusion that fragments need to be carefully chosen in order to “speak to” the students, and move their feelings in order to prompt engagement and discussion.

Further, Reel Life also demands a thorough knowledge and prior study of the cultural issues in the country in which it is used. In our group discussions we received a wealth of material and information about the South-African perspective and the issues that are relevant in an intercultural discussion in this very diverse country.

The students offered their perspectives on what would be important for them to take up with our method. Examples would be: Drug abuse, teen pregnancy, school drop-out, the huge differences between good schools and low quality schools (in the townships), and AIDS. Their input made it possible for us now also to include a non-Western perspective in Reel Life.

We were allowed, thanks to Lyn Webb and the prior applications, to videotape all teaching sequences – this will give us the basis for further development and analysis of Reel Life, and the results will be presented at the Fourth International Conference on the Development and Assessment of Intercultural Conference in Tuscon, Arizona, January 23-26, 2014.

Interviews and outcome

In connection with the teaching, we interviewed two students in depth on the concept of family values, and what family meant to them. In total, we got the possibility to make seven in-depth, semi-structured interviews on the very same cultural values that we discuss in Reel Life with a variety of people – both staff and students – white, Xhosa, Indian and Malay. These interviews on life narratives were recorded. We now have six hours of material that will be analyzed and written up for publication



Eva Lambertsson Björk and Jutta Eschenbach

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Meetings, cultural visits, and outcome

We find it important to sum up also extra-curricular activities as they all contribute to our academic intercultural work. Without these experiences we cannot even begin to understand in what way the South-African teachers would be able to fill and use the framework of *Reel Life*. These intercultural encounters made it possible for us to relate to the students we taught, and to adapt our teaching accordingly.

Molly Blackburn High School: At Molly Blackburn we met two deputy school principals and a young teacher (responsible for incubator projects). The school is the only focus school for the Ministry of Education in the Eastern Cape (one out of 60 schools). They started in 1991 as a Community Project, then they shared building with another school, according to a platooning system – one school in the morning, another one after lunch. They became accredited in 1993. Until then they survived on community funding. Performance rate from 15% at the start, 40% pass rate in 1995, and now 1700 pupils, with a performance rate of 80-90 % of finishing students.

Commitment is the key, the teachers/principals informed us – “we were young, and new teachers then, necessary qualities are enthusiasm, dedication, diligence, discipline”. There are 60 staff, 32-53 students in a class. We visited the premises (surrounded by the township, and protected by fences and barbed wire), and saw a computer lab that was equipped with 30 computers and their own server, this computer lab was their pride. We also visited their library with completely empty shelves. Since the number of students increases all the time, they had built two new buildings – however, they had only had funds enough to furnish one of the classrooms. The rest stayed empty and unused, even though they had a great need for the space. Three movable science labs had been given to the school

(see <http://wikivillage.co.za/molly-blackburn-high-school>).

Charles Duna Primary School: a school located in a run-down township with a wonderful, dedicated, committed principal. She had been there for 15 years, grew up in the township and had returned to make a difference. 14 years without water - parents brought in buckets of water every day to flush the toilets (or they had been forced to close the school). Electric light came in 2004, before that they studied by candlelight. The school has 1500 learners. Some classrooms could not be used in winter, as they are too cold. Some rooms become too warm in summer, but the windows are sealed to prevent them from falling out. The library was full of donated books, but hardly any shelves. The principal had introduced a food scheme, the growing of vegetables in the schoolyard to provide nutrition for the learners. The school fee was 40 rand per year, as compared to up to 14000 rand per year for a “good” school (see <https://www.facebook.com/CharlesDunaPublicPrimary-School>).

The Masifunde Project in Walmer location: It is a project that selects children already in kindergarten to be bussed out from the township to good schools – they are then expected to bring knowledge and learning back to the children at home. Students from NMMU participate as volunteers here – and our BIKK exchange students have all worked in Masifunde. The children are selected on account of three aspects: academic potential, dedicated parents who understand the value of education, poverty. We were guided by Flip, ANC member and an earlier council member for Walmer location, and as such he stood behind the building of decent housing in the township. We travelled and walked inside Walmer in a way that very few white South-Africans have ever done (see www.masifunde.com).

Theatre development project in township schools: We attended a drama session at the NMMU in which young learners had taken up the issues that they found were important in school today – problems that needed addressing. They took up drug abuse, pregnancy, school drop-out, lack of discipline, lack of parental support. All ended with a beautiful delivery of a poem by a boy in Xhosa and English – “We are the seeds!” We will get the videotaped version of this performance sent to us for further analysis.

Contact with the International Office: We visited the office just to bring greetings from Norway and keep in touch.

Look to the future

We have initiated a co-operation with our contact at NMMU, Lyn Webb. She will now become part of *Reel Life*, and we will sum up and write a joint article on the results from our work in South-Africa. It will be submitted to a high-ranking academic journal in teacher education, disseminating the method to its readership.

We have been given access to Dr Webb’s research in the classroom on language and its importance for identity development. Her work on poetry, language and communication will be very useful indeed for our master students in “*Fremmedspråk i skolen*”. There is also a possibility to develop joint master projects with NMMU for our master students who work under the umbrella of *Reel Life*.

In addition, we have already discussed possible projects in teaching and methodological development for the future. To realize this, we would have to return to NMMU sometime during spring 2015.

In conclusion, we achieved what we had hoped for – *Reel Life* has now a wider perspective including also non-Western views. Furthermore, we gained even more than that. We have now a solid South-African partner at NMMU for future research projects within education, and in particular, intercultural teacher education.

Spelling bee 2013

Unako hosted its second annual spelling bee competition for grade 12's, 2 October 2013, at the Missionvale Campus Indoor Sport Centre. There were 67 high schools across the Nelson Mandela Bay located in the township areas invited to take part; each school was represented by two learners who came 1st and 2nd internal-school spelling bee. For a school to participate at the main event, each school was required to hold an in-school spelling bee and encourage all grade 12s to participate. Unako allocated member/s per township/area to run and oversee in-school spelling bee and the words used came from the all grade 12 subjects and these words were compiled by teachers from last year's competition. This initiative endeavours to improve learners spelling skills and increase their vocabulary.

The prizes that were up for grabs – first prize: Full amount of tuition fees for a degree course for the duration of the course; second prize: 50% of the amount of the tuition fees for a degree course for the duration of the course; third prize: 15% of the amount of the tuition fees for a degree course for the duration of the course; R10 000 text book voucher (to be split amongst top 3) and a ten book set to the top ten. The first two prizes are dependent on winners applying, meeting admission requirements and registering for a course at NMMU.

This year winners are; Natasha Qaba 1st prize, Morning-Side H.S, Taron Welman 2nd prize, Gelvandale H.S and Lihleli Kutafe 3rd prize, Walmer H.S. As Unako we would like to change the status-quo by encouraging more learners to read and attain university admission through such an initiative like the spelling bee. We are indebted to the sponsors who have made this year competition a possibility – the Rupert Foundation, Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, Missionvale Campus, CANRAD, Faculty of Education, Centre for Community Schools, Red Location Museum, Ikhala Trust, Department of Arts & Culture and Port Elizabeth Education District.



From left. Yolisa Lawrence, winner from Morningside High Natasha Qaba, Thami Ntlabathi and Sihle Ndunana.

Theatre for Development Performance and Community Dialogue event: Listen Up!



The Theatre for Development Programme was conceptualized and facilitated by Ansuva Naguran.

On 9 October 2013, The Centre for the Community School (CCS) hosted its first Theatre for Development event. Twenty learners from Loyiso and Qaphelani High Schools performed two short plays that demonstrated what they believe to be the biggest problems in the public schooling system.

Among the issues the learners raised were lack of family/parental support, noise pollution in the classroom from neighboring taverns, corporal punishment, drug abuse at school and security on the school premises. The learners performed the plays to their parents, schools principals, members of the School Governing Bodies and teachers.

After the plays were performed, both the learners and the audience participated in a dialogue during which practical solutions to the issues raised in the plays were suggested. The CCS will continue to work with the schools in implementing the suggested solutions.



Report on visit by Mrs Ann-Charlotte Lindgren (University Gotenborg)

VIG (Video Interaction Guidance) workshops offered as part of the North-South Collaboration.



Under the auspices of the North-South Collaboration between NMMU and Gothenburg University, Ann-Charlotte Lindgren and Laetitia Greyling collaborated in the Special Educational Needs niche and identified VIG (Video Interaction Guidance) as an excellent tool for reflection by teachers and prospective teachers. Laetitia Greyling received special training in the technique of VIG at Gothenburg last year, and visited again during June 2013 to finalize arrangements for Ann-Charlotte's visit to NMMU from 5-16 September 2013.

At present a Master and a PhD student are looking at using VIG to help them reflect on their own actions in their research settings using PAR methodology. As facilitators we wish to thank Professors Paul Webb (NMMU) and Lars Gunnarsson (University Gotenborg) for their support.

Dr Laetitia Greyling (NMMU)
Mrs Ann-Charlotte Lindgren
(University Gotenborg)
Mrs Elsa Lombard (NMMU)

The VIG workshops were offered to third year BEd and PGCE students. Two workshops took place – one at Port Elizabeth (12 participants) and one in George (39 students and 3 staff members). On request of Mrs Zoleka Soji another workshop geared towards the lecturers from the Department of Social Development Professions was offered. This session was met with enthusiasm and due to the number of enquiries received afterwards, sessions on specific aspects of the workshop may be repeated at a later stage.



LECTURER MAKES LEARNING FUN



One colleague writing back to another

Darrylin Bradley must surely rank as one of the most creative lecturers in the faculty who makes a concerted effort to unleash the creative potential of her students. In a quest to create opportunities for students to rise above themselves and to come to terms with their own inner creativity she has not only used drama-in-education in her classes, but has also stimulated them to write poetry so that their own inner voices could be heard. Recently she embarked on an interesting initiative which involved taking her students out of the classroom to explore the beauty of their own campus and to write pieces of poetry based on their experiential learning. Her modus operandi involved using a modeling process whereby PICL 203 (IP Language) students in their roles as potential teachers were exposed to first-hand experiences of the kinds of activities that they could implement in their classes.

Her main goal as the lecturer for the literacy module is to ensure that the teaching of language is contextualised by the creation of a series of experiential processes. It is through these processes that the students are encouraged to create their own texts.

During the students' initiation into the poetry writing process the class was divided into groups. Each of the groups had to find different forms of poetry and poetic devices that would be suitable for the intermediate phase learners and to present their findings to the class. After this session the students discussed the process of writing poetry and had to identify the senses that could be used to create suitable words. Thereafter their lecturer took them out of the venue to walk around the campus to create experiences for them to record their smells, sounds, objects and feelings. Upon returning to class the students shared their words with the rest of the class and expressed their amazement at having observed things that they had missed before. They could then engage in the poetry writing exercise using their expanded vocabulary, but based on their own experiences. The poems were placed on the notice boards in the faculty. An analysis of the poems indicated that the students were very positive about their campus and they were able to present visual pieces reflecting how they viewed the campus. Six poems representing various genres of poetry writing were selected as it was felt that these could be shared with the rest of the faculty via the Faculty Newsletter. The two poems below have been selected for this edition of the newsletter.

By Logan Athiemoolam

MY CAMPUS

My campus is my playground
Where I work, dance and play
With the children of Africa

My campus is seasonal
Ever-changing
A place where nature nurtures innovation
And fosters creativity

My campus is green....
Black, white
A place where colours fade
And ubuntu shines as bright as the South campus sun

My campus is where I can freely express myself
And choose to be savvy, sweet, silly or smart

Bernice Magalies

CAMPUS LIFE

Camping out in a semi tropical area
Autumn, summer, spring and winter - all in one day
Madibaz is our nickname and fame
Perseverance, integrity and excellence is our ambition
Ubuntu is our lifestyle, everyone unique and diverse
Studies and socializing determine our success.

Love, hope and peace is our daily desire
Inspirational staff and students create life changing moments
Friends become family and fill our hearts with joy
Ensuring this will be the start of many happy endings

Suzette Schoeman

ENGLISH METHODOLOGY PLAYS SHOWCASE PGCE STUDENTS' TALENTS



The English methodology students together with Clinton Schutters, the hip hop artist from the Faculty of Education, showcased their talents at the annual English Methodology play festival held on the 24th October 2013. The first plays were presented in 2004 with both lecturers and students acting together and since then, except in 2012, this has become an annual event for English Methodology students. The students are exposed to play making and play creation during lecture workshops and are then given the brief to create their own plays using the unique talents in their groups. This year the groups produced 3 plays and there was a solo performance based on one of Goethe's poems in German with a translation presented by Verena Tamm, a German international student in the PMEP 102 class.

The opening performance by Clinton and his group mesmerised the audience as they gyrated and did breakdance movements to hip hop pulsating music. The first play entitled 'Loony Bin' focused on the unique experiences of inmates of a mental institution, whilst the second entitled 'Player of Note' examined the consequences of a protagonist's care-free nonchalant life on his own well-being. The last play entitled 'Do Not Pass Go,' focused on a character's trial with Death as the judge, as he recounts some of the sordid details of his Life on earth.

The adjudicator Ansuya Naguran, an expert in the field of drama and theatre and currently completing her doctoral studies in Drama, provided positive feedback to the students and praised them for the effort that they put into the creation of their unique performances. She was particularly impressed by their witty lines and by the way in which some of the characters embraced their roles and managed to sustain their characters throughout the plays.

Logan Athiemoolam



Employability Workshop



On the 28 October an employability workshop was held for those of our fourth year students who will soon be taking on classrooms of their own. The workshop revolved around preparing a CV and interview skills. Each student that attended was presented with a “survival kit” as a gift from the Faculty to help them through the first year of their careers.

The kits contained the following goodies and message:

- Bar-One: For your new 25- hour days.
- Plaster: For when things get a little rough.
- Crayons: To colour each day bright and cheerful.
- Marbles: To replace the ones that you'll lose along the way.
- Paper Clips: For when you need help in holding things together.
- Puzzle Piece: To remind you that you are a big piece in each child's life.
- Elastic Bands: It's important to be flexible.
- Magnets: Never give up on any child, stick to it.
- Ear Buds: To help with those who are hard of hearing.
- Eraser: Give opportunities for wrongs to be corrected, everyone makes mistakes.
- Toothpicks: Pick out the good qualities in yourself and others.
- Tissues: To wipe away many tears- theirs and yours.
- Glitter Glue: Allow each child to shine in their own way and time.
- Back-up Red Pen: Because your ink will run dry.
- Candle: To light up the late nights you'll spend marking.
- Teacher Stickers: Remember to give compliments.
- Balloon: Remember your lessons should always blow them away.
- Two Panado's: For when all else fails.



We wish our fourth years all the best in their new careers!

by Kholisa Papu

Summary of '2013 A Call for Teachers?'

In recognizing the world Teacher's Day, Hammy Petersen, former principal of Jubilee Park wrote an article to map out the continuous need for teachers in South Africa.

Inspired by this year's theme, Petersen explores why 'a call for teachers' should far from cease. First, she muses about what this call might mean for both experienced and entry level teachers, as well as for parents, who often influence their children's choice of career.

Petersen illustrates a number of challenges that the SA teacher has to overcome, especially those in socio-economically poor communities. Among other factors, she mentions the lack of employment for qualified teachers, depressing working conditions and an education system that fails thousands of children from poor families.

The Gini-coefficient in SA is 0.63 and is reportedly the highest in the world. This explains the rapidly enlarging gap between those who are educated and afford a decent standard of living and those who remain less educated and inherit poverty.

Petersen's talk climaxes as she defines the main task of the teacher against the discouraging working conditions from needless curriculum changes to sterile schooling conditions, demeaning home environments that do not support learning as well as the incompetence of departmental and political officials who seem to further interest other than those pertaining to learners' welfare.

However, the daring resilience of most teachers derives satisfaction and inspiration to the learners. Petersen concludes by saying the teachers' struggle is the total emancipation of humankind and that the struggle in the classroom is to liberate learners' minds so that they are aware of continuing processes of their oppression.



BIRTHDAY DELIGHT

by Kholisa Papu

This tenth month of the year, the Faculty of Education celebrates 12 birthdays for its staff.

To mark this remarkable event, a combined birthday ceremony was held on Friday, 25 October 2013 at Rendezvous Café, after the Faculty Board Meeting.

The Dean expressed appreciation and best wishes for all, noting the rareness of the occasion. In a celebratory mood, the staff sang the Happy Birthday melody in English and isiXhosa, and enjoyed a delicious marshmallow cake and other treats.

Those born in October were:

- Alette Delpont
- Andre du Plessis
- Anathi Jindela
- Bulelwa Tshabalala
- Carmel Mahomed
- Cossie Rasana
- Hugh Glover
- Johanna Geldenhuys
- Mathabo Khau
- Nokhanyo Mayaba
- Pam Roach
- Shervani Pillay

