

# Court Interpreting workshop



The court interpreting workshop participants

The Department of Linguistics held a three day court interpreting workshop from 10 – 12 August 2011 at the Unisa main campus.

Samuel Lebese, one of the department's lecturers and workshop facilitators, said that the department was given an opportunity by CHANCE 2 ADVANCE to be one of the departments involved in community engagement. "We started by offering a short course in interpreting from 31 January – 4 February 2011. The course targeted unemployed Matriculants with the aim of giving them a skill so that they can be employable. My department is offering interpreting as an option at Honours level in the BA Honours in Linguistics (Translation Studies) programme, and this is the reason why we are involved in this workshop," said Lebese.

The workshop's aim is to equip court interpreters with the necessary interpreting skills to enable them to perform their duty professionally, and to overcome the daily challenges that they face in interpreting. Furthermore, the workshop aims to enhance the skills of existing professional court interpreters and to advance skills such as narration, note taking, source language, modes of interpreting and strategies, role playing and types of interpreting such as trade, educational and corporation interpreting, amongst many others.

A total of 12 participants and students from various provinces attended the workshop. They had the following to say:

"This profession has many challenges. Interpreters are seen as translators and we are far from that. The government needs to educate people about the importance and difficulty of the process of interpreting."

"I came to enhance my skills and I've learnt a lot. I feel so much more confident, motivated and empowered to do my job better. Interpreting is a dynamic job as crimes have evolved, but now I have faith in my profession again."

"I see the value in being a language practitioner in this country. I won't forget what I learnt from Unisa – I will impart this knowledge to my colleagues."

"If it wasn't for this course I'd say I don't know much. The opportunity to attend this course has been an eye-opener."

"My passion for languages has increased. I'd definitely do my Honours in interpreting."

“I am of the opinion that with the kind of research that Unisa did, they have a lot to offer court interpreters. In fact, they could transform this section and professionalise it.”

“We appreciate what Unisa has offered to us, and hope that this will not be our last opportunity to be with you.”

“All the presenters displayed an in-depth knowledge of their subject material.”

“It was a workshop that enhanced my capabilities as far as interpreting is concerned. Such workshops are of vital importance to the language services in our department.”

The latest workshop for court interpreters ran from 10 – 12 August 2011. The second session will take place from 22 – 24 August 2011 from 9h00–16h00.

Lebese concluded, “Our future plans are to take the workshop to all the Unisa regions in South Africa, as this initiative is part of our continuous community engagement. We have already received a request to go to Polokwane in September this year to offer the workshop to the practising court interpreters there.”