

YOU NISA

Magazine for Unisa students, alumni and friends

Winter 2016



Define tomorrow.

UNISA | 
university
of south africa



YOUNISA is published by the Department of Communication and Marketing.

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CONTENTS

FOR STARTERS

- 3 Editorial
- 3 Letterbox
- 3 Competition winners



CHANGE: THE BIG PICTURE

- 5 How Unisa is leading change
- 8 University unrest symptomatic of a bigger problem
- 10 Zero fee increases—where will the money come from?
- 12 A new pedagogy in rethinking knowledge production

CHANGING LIVES

- 15 Graduations by the numbers
- 16 Celebrating the sweet sound of success
- 17 Thanda realises her dream
- 18 Teaching is her passion and inspiring rural learners is her purpose
- 19 Giving comes naturally to Thelo



REGULARS

- 35 Unisa in brief
- 41 Shelf life
- 45 Study and career advice from the experts



CHANGING SOCIETY

- 21 Unisa Music Foundation's melody of hope for orphans
- 25 "Souped-up" research tackles homeless problem
- 26 Africa's top philanthropist honoured at Unisa
- 28 Learning enriched in remote Eastern Cape schools
- 30 Unisa is not letting energy go to waste

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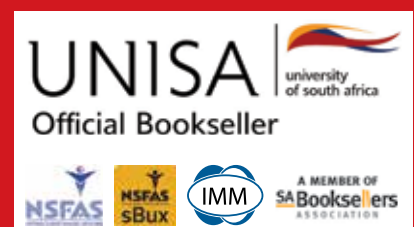
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Editorial

Celebrating change

Welcome to the very first issue of *YOUNISA*, an exciting new publication for Unisa's students and alumni. Given that our students and alumni mutually inspire each other, the university has

launched *YOUNISA* to replace the former student and alumni/stakeholder publications, *Inspired* and *Unisawise*.

We live in a time of accelerated, game-changing transformation, and it is therefore fitting that the theme of this issue is *Celebrating change*.

We live in a time of accelerated, game-changing transformation, and it is therefore fitting that the theme of this issue is *Celebrating change*.

We examine change from three angles. Presenting the big picture are contributions by Unisa's Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Mandla Makhanya, on how the university is leading change, and the institution's Chairperson of Council, Mr

Sakhi Simelane, on the causes of university unrest across the country. Also in this section is a report on a lively Unisa debate on the zero fee increases issue, and a contribution by the incumbent of the SARChI Chair in Development Education, Professor Catherine Odora Hoppers, on the rethinking of knowledge production.

The second angle is that of individual lives changed by the Unisa experience, and the third that of those who have, in turn, translated change into the betterment of communities and society in general.

Regular sections that will also form part of future issues of *YOUNISA* are *Unisa in brief*, featuring news snippets, *Shelf life*, a book review section, and *Career and study matters*, in which a career and study guidance specialist provides advice that is applicable to both students and alumni.

We trust that you will find this first issue an enjoyable read. Please share with us your thoughts and suggestions by emailing the editor at younisa@unisa.ac.za.



Letterbox

We look forward to your thoughts on the new magazine and any other news or information you would like to share with your fellow students and alumni. Talk to us by sending an email to younisa@unisa.ac.za, or post a letter to the following address:

YOUNISA, Department of Communication and Marketing, PO Box 392, Unisa, 0003.



COMPETITION WINNERS

Earlier this year Unisa students, alumni and staff were invited to suggest a name for our new publication. A total of 498 entries were received of which 396 complied with the requirements for entries, i.e. providing a name as well as a rationale for the selection. The entries were then submitted to a panel of judges comprising Nancy-Anne Anderson, Managing Editor: Department of Communication and Marketing, David Farirai, Director: Institutional Advancement, Percy Mtombeni, National

Students' Representative Council member, Professor Blessing Mbatha, Chair: Department of Communication Science and Martin Ramotshela, Media Manager: Department of Communication and Marketing.

Proving the old adage that great minds think alike, no fewer than three entrants suggested the winning name, **YOUNISA**. Congratulations to LLB student Ramon Camarinha, Bachelor of Science in Computing student Stuart Nicholas Green and BCom Honours in Business Management student Chris Smith-Symms, who each receive a R1000 voucher from Van Schaik Bookstore. Commenting on the choice of **YOUNISA**, Ramon said the name aims to put the 'you' in Unisa. It is centred on people, people like you, be it a student, professor or alumnus in any part of Africa, or the world. Stuart said that the magazine is about empowering students and alumni to change their lives, but that it is up to them (i.e. 'you') to work hard and make it happen. Chris said that the name perfectly targets the magazine's two main audiences: students and alumni.

Runners-up who each receive a R200 voucher from Van Schaik Bookstore are Zanele Khanyile from Unisa's Department of English who suggested *Khanyise* and *Unisan*, LLB graduate Nichol Dube who suggested *Khwezi*, Mabothe Lephoto of Unisa's Human Sciences and NDP Registration Section who suggested *Unisan* and Susan Datadin, a final-year LLB student, who also suggested *Unisan*.

We thank all the students, alumni and staff for their entries!



CHANGE

The **BIG** picture

FOCUSING ON CHANGE IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT, *YOUNISA* REPORTS ON UNISA'S ROLE AS CHANGE LEADER, THE ROOT CAUSES OF UNIVERSITY UNREST, THE QUESTION OF FEES AND HOW KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION IS BEING REIMAGINED.

How Unisa is *leading change*

It is often Unisa said that change is the only constant in life. Although change has always been with us, we are undoubtedly living in a time of vastly accelerated change. Whereas change on a previously almost unthinkable scale certainly occurred in the last quarter of the 20th century (think the advent of the information revolution, the toppling of the Berlin Wall, the student-led Tiananmen Square protests in Beijing and the establishment of democracy in South Africa), its pace has picked up almost exponentially since 2001.

Although the first reaction to change is often resistance, change should not be seen as a threat, but as an opportunity. In South Africa, tomorrow's leaders, our students, have brought about a number of very significant changes: a rethink of the financial obstacles to the freedom offered by education, the removal of contentious colonial symbols and a push to develop indigenous languages, to name but three. In this they were backed by academics, thought leaders and, in some instances, big business.

In the same way that necessity is the mother of invention, change is the driver of progress. With the firm belief that transformation offers powerful mechanisms to define tomorrow and make our world a better place, the University of South Africa embraces change in all its facets.

The university will not only be a participative contributor to change in the higher education sector; it is our intention to lead – humbly, in the spirit of participative leadership – the process in South Africa and on the continent.

Unisa's strategic transformation initiatives focus on five key areas: moving towards truly African scholarship, effecting cultural change for diversity and transformation, rethinking systems, ethical and participative leadership and discourse for change.

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The University of South Africa will not only be a participative contributor to change in the higher education sector; it is the institution's intention to lead – humbly, in the spirit of participative leadership – the process in South Africa and on the continent, writes Professor Mandla Makhanya, Unisa's Principal and Vice-Chancellor.

Towards truly African scholarship

Decolonising the curriculum is no small matter, and entails closely examining knowledges, epistemologies, methodologies and languages. Various initiatives are in place to deal with the issue of curricular and research reforms.

A major pillar in the programme of the Change Management Unit, established in the Office of the Principal and Vice-Chancellor, is the decolonisation of scholarship to assist the university in its effort to become *the African University* shaping futures in the service of humanity. In its curriculum policy Unisa undertakes "to promote African thought, philosophies, interests and epistemologies through inquiry, scholarship and partnership,"



Prof. Mandla Makhanya (Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Unisa) (left), and His Excellency Ambassador Patrick Gaspard (USA Ambassador to South Africa) at the signing of the global development alliance cooperative to establish YALI Regional Leadership Centres in Africa.

and this is supported in its strategic plan.

Seminars, colloquia, debates and focus groups are planned to explore the nature of knowledge production, epistemic justice and multilingualism. Concerning the theory underpinning curricular decolonisation, much has already been achieved by the Department of Science and Technology/National Research Foundation Chair in Development Education at Unisa. The chair is part of a new way to visualise knowledge and democracy for South Africa. Its fundamental contribution is not just to a new vision for Unisa, but also to the democratisation of democracy in the broader context.

In addition to the Research Chair in Development Education, Unisa has a variety of institutes and programmes that are leading from the front in the area of African scholarship and knowledge production.

Cultural change for diversity and transformation

Cultural change requires the disruption of entrenched ways of thinking, acting, relating and performing within the institution, as well as a creative approach to new ways of knowing. For Unisa changing culture is about creating the university as a home for all in their diversity. It is about making Unisa an equitable and transformed university that values all of humanity.

Major strides towards establishing a truly changed culture

have been made over the past decades. The university's student demographics now closely approximate those of the country. Unisa's staff profile has also shown a major trend towards true transformation in recent years.

Scholarship that addresses gender issues and questions is important as it contributes to overcoming the challenges of gender transformation in society. South Africa and Africa also require home-grown solutions to tackle gender issues. Leading the university's focus on gender equity is the Institute of Gender Studies, located in the College of Human Sciences. A vibrant centre of high quality research, the institute publishes *Gender Questions*, a peer-reviewed journal aimed at promoting diverse research on gender issues in South Africa.

In a major step towards improving student success despite the challenge of unequal access to technology, Unisa's interactive online signature course project has made a transformative impact on course development and student learning.

Rethinking systems

As an open distance learning (ODL) technology pioneer, Unisa knows that being in control of systems that support the academic project is the only way to avoid being imprisoned in a technological web. Making technology accessible, understandable and subservient to the intellectual enterprise of the university is very important for linking learning with systems. The university views leading the change in systems in ODL as a major priority.

Unisa is rethinking the way it teaches and learns in light of online education and blended learning which keep the university at the forefront of ODL. Unisa's vision and strategy are to establish the institution as an African open distance and e-learning (ODEL) university leading the world in using all the technologies available in integrated ways so that technology is a means to an end, not an end in itself.

“Unisa knows that being in control of systems that support the academic project is the only way to avoid being imprisoned in a technological web.”

Through its telecentre initiative, Unisa students have access to 1 450 computers with internet access in rural areas throughout South Africa. Added to machines at regional computer labs, Unisa students have access to at least 2 664 working computers throughout the country.

Ethical and participative leadership

Leading change in higher education is very important for Unisa, since the university produces most of South Africa's graduates. But changing leadership is equally important because there seems to be a lack of authentic, credible transformational and decisive leadership. Moreover, there is a need for intellectual leadership that is ethical in order to address developmental changes faced by South Africa, the continent and the world.

In 2015 Unisa was appointed leader of an education alliance tasked with running the Southern African centre of United States President Barack Obama's Young African Leadership Institute (YALI) in collaboration with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). This alliance reaffirms the stature and leadership excellence of Unisa and the significant role it will be playing in the economic, social and political reshaping of the African continent.

The university has invested heavily in cultivating ethical policies and practice in the university, in the belief that ethics are intrinsic to academic disciplines as well as management. A dedicated Ethics Office oversees an anonymous ethics hotline and sees to it that complaints are investigated and, where necessary, corrective steps taken.

As a signatory to the United Nations Global Compact and with a clear social mandate, mission and purpose, it was also a natural progression for Unisa to introduce the Social and Ethics Committee as a committee of Council.

Discourse for change

Effective change depends on a clear message and a sense of urgency. Moreover it requires engagement and ownership driven by a heartfelt belief and passion to deliver excellently on all aspects of our multi-faceted tasks. The core work of a university is teaching, research and community engagement, each of which is essentially about consultation and communication. At Unisa, communication depends on collaboration which comes from open and frank discussion, consultation and, ultimately, agreed-upon strategies.

Effective communication is a critical success factor in any organisational drive to bring about change and ensure a paradigm shift to a desired improved state. More importantly, listening and engaging with critical stakeholders is the bedrock of any successful stakeholder communication, purely because it makes it possible to construct clear messages based on the knowledge and understanding of the issues affecting each of the stakeholders.

Unisa already has in place various systems, platforms and fora for engaging with its key stakeholders in open and frank discussions, robust consultation and negotiation with the ultimate goal of agreeing on strategies and plans to make Unisa succeed.

The university's students are currently able to interface with lecturers, academic support staff and management of the university through face-to-face meetings, e-tutoring facilities, emails, Facebook, Twitter, myUnisa, SRC representation and student assemblies. A new Student Relationship Model, which is set to be introduced shortly, is geared towards closing some of the communication gaps we have been experiencing in our student communication; thus ensuring a quicker turn-around to resolving student queries and all-round improvement of service delivery to students.

There is an expectation for universities to provide thought leadership, conduct research and produce knowledge that will empower humanity to resolve many of the social challenges it currently faces. Reasserting the academic voice in society has thus become mission critical for Unisa, particularly given the expectation of society on the university as the biggest in South Africa, in Africa and in the Southern Hemisphere, and one of the world's mega-universities.

There is a need for intellectual leadership that is ethical in order to address developmental challenges faced by South Africa, the continent and the world. ”

In response to this challenge, the ongoing series of *Unisa-Sowetan Dialogues* aim to contribute to the discourse and begin an informed debate on the meaning and importance of history in shaping South Africa's present and future, to present history in an interesting way by presenting its relevance to life in contemporary South Africa, to draw people to a further study of history and to encourage them to interrogate the veracity of their strongly held views. The themes of the dialogues present an intersection between milestones in our history of struggle and our present challenges as a nation in the making.

So, too, the Critical Thinking Forum series, hosted in partnership with the *Mail & Guardian*, was aimed at the critical thinkers, decision makers and influencers in media, government and society at large, and created a platform for critical thinking on matters central to the national discourse.

University unrest symptomatic of a BIGGER PROBLEM

In an interview with YOUNISA, Sakhi Simelane, Chief Financial Officer at Mintek and Chairperson of Unisa's Council, said that young people are justifiably frustrated at the slow pace of economic and social change, adding that he is not surprised to see them rise against this issue and the concomitant perpetuation of unequal opportunities and an unequal society.

Simelane pointed out that the high cost of education is asynchronous with household incomes in South Africa. As a result, when choices have to be made university fees are not at the top of the list for many homes that are barely managing to make ends meet. "The unrest in the university sector is symptomatic of a bigger problem and until these socio-economic issues are addressed, the levels of dissatisfaction will rise," he said.

With South Africa's democracy still fairly young, Simelane explained that learning to deal with issues is still very much that - a learning process. "We are still learning how to engage critically and hold different views without resorting to the destruction of infrastructure. It is critical for university management and leadership to understand the root cause of problems, to listen and work with all stakeholders and to find sustainable solutions to these problems."

Better spaces for debates essential

So how does Unisa play a role in resolving some of these issues? According to Simelane, if Unisa can come out strongly championing these just causes and lead the fight against social injustice, it will truly live up to its vision. "Unisa should be creating better spaces for debates and open engagements to seek solutions, because by burying our heads in the sand, we will simply create more problems for the institution," he said.

“Until socio-economic issues are addressed, the levels of dissatisfaction will rise.

Of course, as the Chairperson of the Unisa Council, Simelane has plans to contribute to this goal, too. Some aspects he will be paying special attention to in order to help Unisa define the tomorrow of staff and students include the academic project, with a strong emphasis on teaching and learning, which must be foregrounded to be

the best that it can be with the resource constraints facing the university. He pointed out that the governance regime must be embedded and support the sustainability of the academic project specifically, and the university generally. He also believes that stakeholder engagement is critical, which he will engage sincerely and openly on with all stakeholders.

Remaining the best as the playing field changes

Unisa has been shaping futures in the service of humanity for the past 142 years. Simelane believes this has been possible because of the university's potential to provide teaching and learning opportunities for students who were not able to attend contact universities, and who needed an affordable, open distance learning institution which would provide high quality education, irrespective of the geographic divide, and at a pace that could be determined by the learner. This was Unisa's niche but now there needs to be a shift and naturally there is still a lot of work to be done. "What Unisa needs to do is the same but recognising that the correspondence mode and pedagogy have been overtaken by a focus on technology. Unisa needs to utilise technology in its didactic design, educating for the nation, the region, the continent and the globe," he explained.

Simelane trusts that the Unisa community understands this, and is confident in what management is doing in terms of working

“By burying our heads in the sand, we will simply create more problems for the institution.”

towards ensuring that they continue being true to Unisa's niche and core reason for existing. “However, the challenge is that the space in which we operate is rapidly changing, and other late-movers into the spaces are becoming better than Unisa because they invested heavily in establishing their information technology (IT) capabilities, infrastructure and design. Unisa has also invested significant sums in IT during the last years. However, IT is not the magic wand. As we consider the next 142 years, we must recognise the importance of investing in all our institutional resources to render both effective and efficient services,” he advised.

He also pointed out that students have ever-widening options from a range of service providers locally and internationally. “The competition is intense and Unisa will need to step into this milieu with confidence if we want to be relevant and continue to support future generations of students to achieve success.”

Simelane's advice to Unisa students is that they need to know that education is the single biggest predictor of future success, and need to work towards the highest possible education levels in order to gain the economic freedom to which they aspire. “Perseverance, hard work, spending time on your task, focusing on the end results and not giving up will bear tangible fruit – even if at the moment it all seems impossibly difficult,” he concluded.

Sakhi Simelane, Chairperson of Unisa's Council

In the case of Unisa, because of the #FeesMustFall campaign, the Department of Higher Education and Training can only provide 70% of what the institution had requested for the 2016 budget year. Unisa had made a request for R289 million, of which only R202.3 million would be forthcoming. The university is left to fund the shortfall of R85.7 million through savings and by reprioritising initiatives.

According to the Principal and Vice-Chancellor (VC) of Unisa, Professor Mandla Makhanya, these measures must not be allowed to compromise the quality of education that the university offers. One way to approach the situation is to do more with less and ensure that the institution still grows. "We are enrolling more students, and even more students need to get into the system to access higher education."

Austerity measures

With a view to doing more with less, Unisa will put austerity measures in place to save on appointments, while ensuring that enough academic resources are in place to succeed in the provision of teaching and learning.

Zero fee increases— where will the money come from?

Higher education has been experiencing turbulent times amid student calls for study fees and the insourcing of labour. This has compelled institutions of higher learning to seek other sources of funding. Under the circumstances, it's inevitable that they would feel a pinch on their normal budgets. The question is: how can universities manage their finances without raising fees, which have for many years been a key income generator?

By Busi Mahlangu

Staff members will see a redistribution of skills across the university. "It is possible to succeed with what we have and we will have to become clear which areas within the university need support and where resources are abundant," the VC says.

He adds that the 0% fee increase for 2016 alone has had unintended consequences. It is not only financially needy and academically deserving students who will benefit; even those students who can afford to pay fees are benefiting from the process. "The #FeesMustFall campaign has become distorted and hijacked by people with different agendas, therefore denying the real beneficiaries the opportunities to study," says the VC.

Alumni contributions needed

With limited financial resources, continued cuts in state subsidies, and the many challenges facing higher education, there is growing awareness that financial support is needed from sources other than the normal income streams, particularly contributions from individuals, mostly alumni.

We are enrolling more students, and even more students need to get into the system to access higher education. ”

Says the VC: “What I urge our alumni to understand is that this university which has helped shape their futures is in turn their institution to invest in. It automatically says that alumni have a claim to the university. A little contribution will go a long way towards making a difference in a particular student’s life.”

Principal’s Bursary Fund

In December 2015, the VC established a Principal’s Bursary Fund—exclusively for student bursaries—where staff can contribute a specific amount from their own salaries towards the fund.

This is a strategic move to make people conscious of the need to give and to encourage the Unisa community to commit to putting funds aside for the purpose of assisting students. Makhanya believes this will go a long way towards complementing the funding backlog for needy students. The Principal’s Bursary Fund is in addition to the many other initiatives which the university has started to attract external funding and support.

What if the financial need is insurmountable?

The pivotal question is, if there is less financial aid to go round, what impact does it have on students, on the university, on society, and on the young generations who still have to access education in the future?

One obvious effect would be fewer students being funded, especially students from indigent families. This could adversely affect the throughput rate, perpetuate socio-economic inequality and unemployment, and even fuel student unrest.

It is to this end that Unisa is exploring ways to increase its non-fee and non-subsidy income. The VC says that plans are at an advanced stage to streamline fundraising activities. “We have to be creative about fundraising at

the university,” he says. “The Unisa Council has approved the formation of a special purpose vehicle, referred to as the Business Enterprise Unit, whose sole purpose is to develop strategies of bringing third-stream income into the coffers of the university.”

The Directorate of Institutional Advancement has also scaled up its fundraising efforts in order to improve the resource base of the university. It has invested credible efforts to mobilise support from private, public, and developmental sectors at home and abroad.

There is growing awareness that financial support is needed from sources other than the normal income streams, particularly contributions from individuals, mostly alumni. ”



Discussing the zero fees issue at a well-attended open debate at Unisa during the university’s Research and Innovation Week on 28 February were Lukhona Mnguni, a PhD intern at KwaZulu-Natal University, and Shaeera Kalla, former Wits Student Representative Council president.

“The university is in need of massive infrastructure investment. Investments made in the past 15 years can no longer accommodate our students and academics,” says the VC.

Still financially sustainable

However, the VC emphasises that Unisa is still financially sustainable despite the severe pressure on its financial resources that has forced the university to review its short-, medium- and long-term financial plans. “Even though we operate in a secure environment, we still as a university need to ensure that both staff and students are neither taken for granted nor troubled by anything,” he concludes. “The state is under economic pressure and the financial tides facing Unisa and other universities are felt by all and yet there is so much that we need our alumni for. What alumni need to know is that the effects of the #FeesMustFall campaign will be with us for a long time to come and their support is required for the long haul.”

A NEW PEDAGOGY IN RETHINKING KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

DE-CONSTRUCTION AND RECONSTRUCTION

Krishnamurti counsels us that one must stand on one's own knowledge to be able to trade with others' knowledge as equals. This is what makes the difference between participation and domination. The deep strategy for this de-construction and reconstruction therefore requires creative discontent: a joyful discontent that combines intelligent combat within a dialogical and praxis framework. We will then learn to be what we have not been allowed to be, to relate with humanity in ways that we determine. This tactical combat requires the recognition of complexities, of the minefields, of potential and actual resistances that are strewn on the pathway. But most of all, it is a determined struggle from which there is no other way, but forward.

The SARChI Chair in Development Education, hosted by Unisa, funded by the Department of Science and Technology and managed by the National Research Foundation, makes a fundamental contribution not just to a new vision of the university as a change leader, but also to the democratisation of democracy.

Globally, judging by the way the whole issue of colonialism haunts us as we go forward, we should distinguish between the monetary compensatory aspects of redress but deepen it into seeking dignity. But how is dignity promoted? The SARChI Chair believes that it is done by victims and perpetrators acknowledging, elaborating and designing new ways of entering the future together. But how is this done?

DEEPENING THE ANALYSIS

There is a close relation between dignity and long-lasting peace. There is much to learn both individually and collectively in our institutions of higher learning. Long-term, lasting peace has to be built. Webs of togetherness must be woven; humanising where there has been dehumanisation, and depolarising where there has been polarisation. And peace has to be kept, by nonviolent peace forces, numerous, competent, inserting themselves so densely between violent parties that there is not enough space left for battle.

Therefore there is a role for higher education in the creation of the fundamentals of the paradigms undergirding what we take as our underlying "myths", how we tailor our curriculum, what questions we ask of our researchers, how we design our community engagement etc.

Webs of togetherness must be woven; humanising where there has been dehumanisation, and depolarising where there has been polarisation. ”

Unisa's South African Research Chairs Initiative (SARChI) Chair in Development Education is part of a new way of visualising knowledge and democracy for South Africa, writes Professor Catherine Odora Hoppers, incumbent of the Chair.

This is what the SARChI Chair in Development Education tries to promote.

**TOWARDS A
FUTURE WHERE
ALTERNATIVES
ARE STILL
POSSIBLE**

I dream of new knowledge systems inspiring a new vision of democracy, achieved through cognitive justice – a new theory of non-violence which recognises the plurality of knowledge and presupposes the rights of different knowledges to co-exist. The fact that modern society is wired for western cultural compliance requires more than just critique, or a prayer for the meek to inherit the earth. It requires a decisive consensus that the meek need defences of the mind and conceptual categories around which they can organise their thoughts and actions.

But hasn't much of this been achieved by the liberation of the global South from colonial oppression? No, says the voice of the South, liberation is not enough – it must be accompanied by emancipation, and emancipation is hard work.

INDIGENOUS SOLUTIONS TO COMPLEX ISSUES

The SARChI Chair in Development Education introduces a new pedagogy in academic research and citizenship education which takes human development as the goal. Its exploration through research, postgraduate teaching and community engagement seeks answers to some of the most taxing and exciting questions about development, knowledge production and science.

In giving life to this new pedagogy the chair looks at two broad and crucial questions:

- What kind of transformative actions must be brought to bear to enable both restorative action and sustainable human development to occur in Africa and elsewhere?
- How can key areas of disciplinary knowledge production (such as science, economics, education and law) be reconstituted in order to bring about a just and human-centred development on the continent?

FORGING A NEW, EQUAL AND MORE RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIP

What stands out in the pedagogy introduced by the Chair to the higher education system in South Africa and rethinking knowledge systems is cognitive justice or, put differently, the right of all forms or traditions of knowledge to co-exist without duress. The Chair hopes to create a unique moment when the inner voice of disenfranchisement meets the outer voice of empowerment, when the inner cry for self-determination meets the warm embrace of co-determination.

Liberation is not enough – it must be accompanied by emancipation, and emancipation is hard work. ”

NEW PROPOSITIONS FOR KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION



Creating conditions for the new normal.

The Chair envisages a world that focuses on how to foster social and cultural conditions for the creation and communication of ideas, artefacts, knowledge and information that have been completely altered by colonialism and modernity.



Questioning knowledge legitimisation processes.

The Chair tackles the knowledge generation and legitimisation processes, and asks: what type of knowledge is being generated in our universities and 'scientific' institutions?



Exploring the constitutive and systemic questions.

The Chair focuses on what type of research questions are being asked, and what the existing rules and regulations governing legitimisation and accreditation of scientific knowledge are.



Creating a framework to rethink thinking itself.

The Chair rethinks key areas of knowledge production, such as law, economics, science and education, and calls for transformations in the way we think about issues.



Transforming by enlargement.

The programs of the Chair introduces bicultural experts at the epistemological level in the academy and introducing key topics such as innovation from below– not from the labs, but by common people. It works with law faculties to strengthen the paradigmatic imperatives surrounding restorative justice (which focuses on reconciling and reintegrating offenders into society rather than on retribution) in order to move away from retributive justice (where punishment is the main aim). It works with science to introduce new values and ethics to underpin the history of science being made as we seek to reframe the histories of disciplines that govern our institutions. Our firm belief is that transformation by enlargement leads to restorative action.



CHANGING LIVES

FOR MORE THAN 140 YEARS THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA, BETTER KNOWN AS UNISA, HAS BEEN AT THE FOREFRONT OF CHANGING LIVES FOR THE BETTER IN SOUTH AFRICA AND IN AFRICA AS A WHOLE. THE UNIVERSITY TAKES GREAT PRIDE IN ITS UNIQUE STUDENTS AND ALUMNI, SELF-STARTERS WHO GAIN QUALIFICATIONS THROUGH THE CHALLENGING MEDIUM OF OPEN DISTANCE LEARNING.



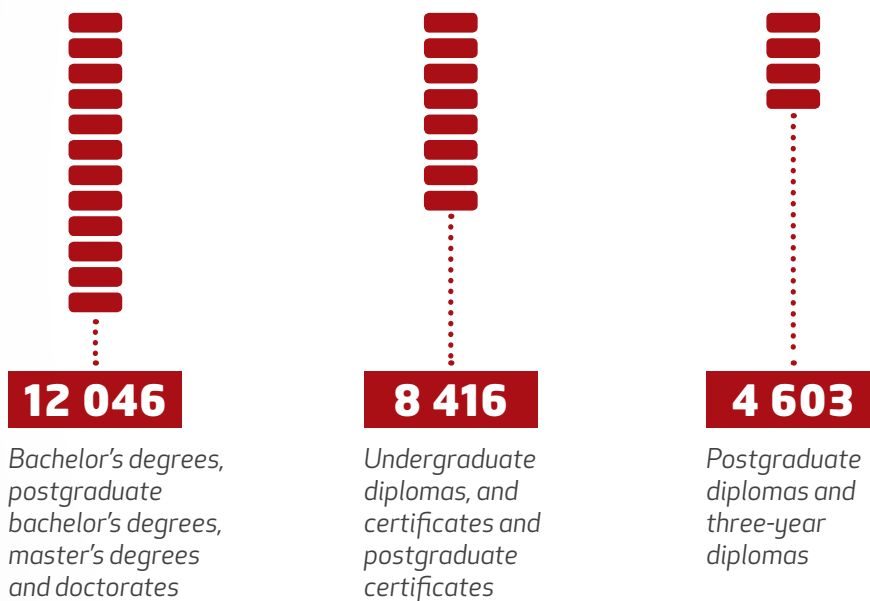
Graduations

by the numbers

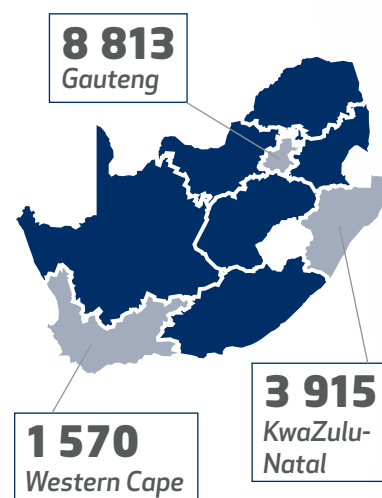
Unisa provided the country's workforce with a healthy injection of newly qualified candidates during the autumn graduation period. Provisional figures indicate that a total of **25 065** degrees, diplomas and certificates were awarded during the period, including **63** doctorates and **198** master's degrees.

DEGREES LEAD THE PACK

Bachelor's degrees, postgraduate bachelor's degrees, master's degrees and doctorates represent the largest qualification grouping with 12 046 such qualifications having been awarded. This is followed by undergraduate diplomas, and certificates and postgraduate certificates (8 416), and postgraduate diplomas and three-year diplomas (4 603).



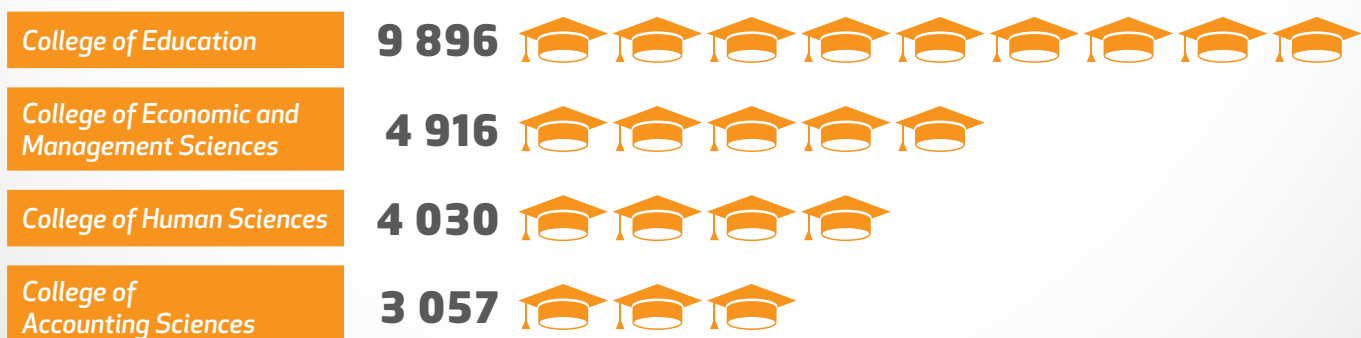
FUELLING SA'S COMMERCIAL HUBS



The majority of candidates (8 813) receiving qualifications reside in Gauteng, while 3 915 are from KwaZulu-Natal and 1 570 from the Western Cape.

CLOSE ON 10 000 EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS

Unisa continued its track record as South Africa's foremost provider of qualified educators, with the College of Education awarding 9 896 qualifications. The College of Economic and Management Sciences awarded 4 916 qualifications, the College of Human Sciences 4 030 and the College of Accounting Sciences 3 057.



Celebrating the sweet sound of success

For students with disabilities, one of the major advantages of studying at Unisa is the truly world-class support offered through the Advocacy and Resource Centre for Students with Disabilities (ARCSWiD). The letter below bears testimony to the difference this centre makes in allowing students facing unique challenges to reach their full potential.



My name is Thembinkosi Joseph Mashau. In 2006 I first set foot at the University of South Africa. I was accompanying my brother, who is visually impaired, who applied to enrol for an honours degree in law. Our first stop was at the Advocacy and Resource Centre for Students with Disabilities (ARCSWiD). Little did I know that the institution could also ignite my mind.

My brother talked with the ARCSWiD people on my behalf. Using sign language, the unit's sign language interpreter, Mrs Sophy Mabaso, asked me what I wanted to study. "I want to be a high school teacher," I responded. She then asked to see my grade 12 results. We then read the College of Education brochure together. Fortunately I met the entry requirements, and I registered for a Bachelor of Education Degree for Senior and FET Phase. I was very happy to be given the opportunity study. Then the real challenge began.

Like most students, I found studying at Unisa very difficult. But it is worth all the effort one invests. I had to make many sacrifices. I had to balance my life, ensuring that I played sport every day while also studying. No more holidays during the year! Writing my assignments and revising for examinations taught me the importance of self-discipline, commitment and time management.

The ARCSWiD staff helped me a lot as a deaf student. They made me feel at home and believed that I had the same capabilities as everyone, despite my hearing disability. They would advise which office I should approach whenever I had problem. They helped me with registration every year. They would provide sign language interpreting by Mrs Mabaso whenever I met with my lecturers to ensure that there are no communication barriers.

Thank you so much for your help. Keep on doing the wonderful work to make sure that every student registered at Unisa, disabled or not, succeeds. To the College of Education and the institution at large, thank you very much for the opportunity you gave me to change my life, and that of a deaf child who will receive education through me. When I graduated on 25 April, I wore my gown with pride armed with the most powerful tool of all: education.



Do you have an inspirational success story like the ones featured on these pages? If so, send us the details in an email to younisa@unisa.ac.za.

About ARCSWiD

The Advocacy and Resource Centre for Students with Disabilities (ARCSWiD) provides services to students with disabilities registered with Unisa.

Services on offer

- Referrals to career and counselling services
- Assistance in completing application forms during registration
- Assistance with fee reduction applications
- Assistance in motivating for assistive devices and access technology equipment
- Study guides and tutorial letters in either Braille, large-print, electronic or audio formats
- Electronic versions of prescribed books obtained on request from publishers
- Interventions with academic departments
- Advice on assistive devices and access technology
- Sign language interpretation services for deaf students
- Orientation and mobility assistance for blind and partially-sighted students
- Advice on low-vision devices for partially-sighted students
- Referrals to relevant service providers and civil society organisations
- Referrals to the library disability workgroup for recommended textbooks in electronic format

Contact particulars

ARCSWiD is situated on the main campus in Muckleneuk:

3rd floor Samuel Pauw building
Muckleneuk
Pretoria
Gauteng
South Africa
Telephone: (012) 429-6540
Email: arcswid@unisa.ac.za or
motseme@unisa.ac.za

Postal address: The Advocacy & Resource Centre for Students With Disabilities, PO Box 392, Unisa, Pretoria, 0003

Thanda realises her dream

Thanda Gwija (32), a domestic worker from Durban North, recently completed her Bachelor of Education degree through Unisa. She hopes her story can inspire the young people of South Africa.

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Thanda Gwija (32), a domestic worker from Durban North, recently completed her Bachelor of Education degree through Unisa. She hopes her story can inspire the young people of South Africa.

At 26, Thanda Gwija made the fateful decision to go back to school to complete her matric. She endured strange stares and people continually questioning why she had come back to school. But nothing could deter the resolve of the Effingham Informal Settlement resident. Fast forward six years and the domestic worker has realised her dream. She recently completed her bachelor of education degree through the University of South Africa (Unisa).

It wasn't always easy for the 32-year-old who studied by candlelight in a shack she shared with her sister. She spent nights pouring over material at various libraries and even slept on the street outside the university to secure a loan in order for her to achieve her dream. Thanda also did not feel confident with her English and paid to have private lessons with an English professor.

"I dropped out of school after grade 11 believing I could make a better future by finding a job and working my way up the employment ladder. My father was against the move and kept encouraging me to go back to school, he felt education was important and believed if you are uneducated, you work hard but earn less, and with an education, you work less but earn more. I refused thinking I knew better.

"I spent my time as a domestic worker and I realised that my dad was right. I was determined to go back to school and finish my matric and go even further. I decided I wanted to get into teaching and inspire and motivate children, who were in similar positions to me, to stay in school and get an education. When I got an SMS last Friday saying I had qualified for my degree, I just burst into tears, I was ecstatic and was so excited. I immediately phoned my dad to tell him, he was so pleased and proud of me," she said.

Gwija is planning on completing her honours and remains optimistic in securing employment at a local school. She added thousands of young pupils, especially in disadvantaged communities in South Africa lack direction and motivation.

"I've worked for the Cameron family in Durban North for four years, and like my father, they have always supported me with my dream. So many people feel helpless and want to give up. If I had someone motivating me and believing in me when I was in school, life could have been different. I want to say to the youth of South Africa, you have to always be positive and believe anything is possible," she said.



Career Junction's 2016 Salary Review shows that engineers, IT professionals, and financial experts are the highest paid professions. Teaching does not make the grade. One could, therefore, ask oneself why a bright young girl like **Rudzani Matamela** would choose to pursue a career in teaching as opposed to any of the above-mentioned, well-earning jobs.

Some would speculate that it is because she did not do mathematics at school or perhaps her grades were not up to scratch, but the facts will prove you wrong. This 26-year-old from Mdombidzha, a rural village near Makhado, in Limpopo, is currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Mathematics Education. When she finished matric, she qualified for admission to a BSc degree course, but she opted to do teaching. She attended Madobidzha Primary school, as well as Ndwakhulu Primary School, and she completed her schooling at Maluta High School.

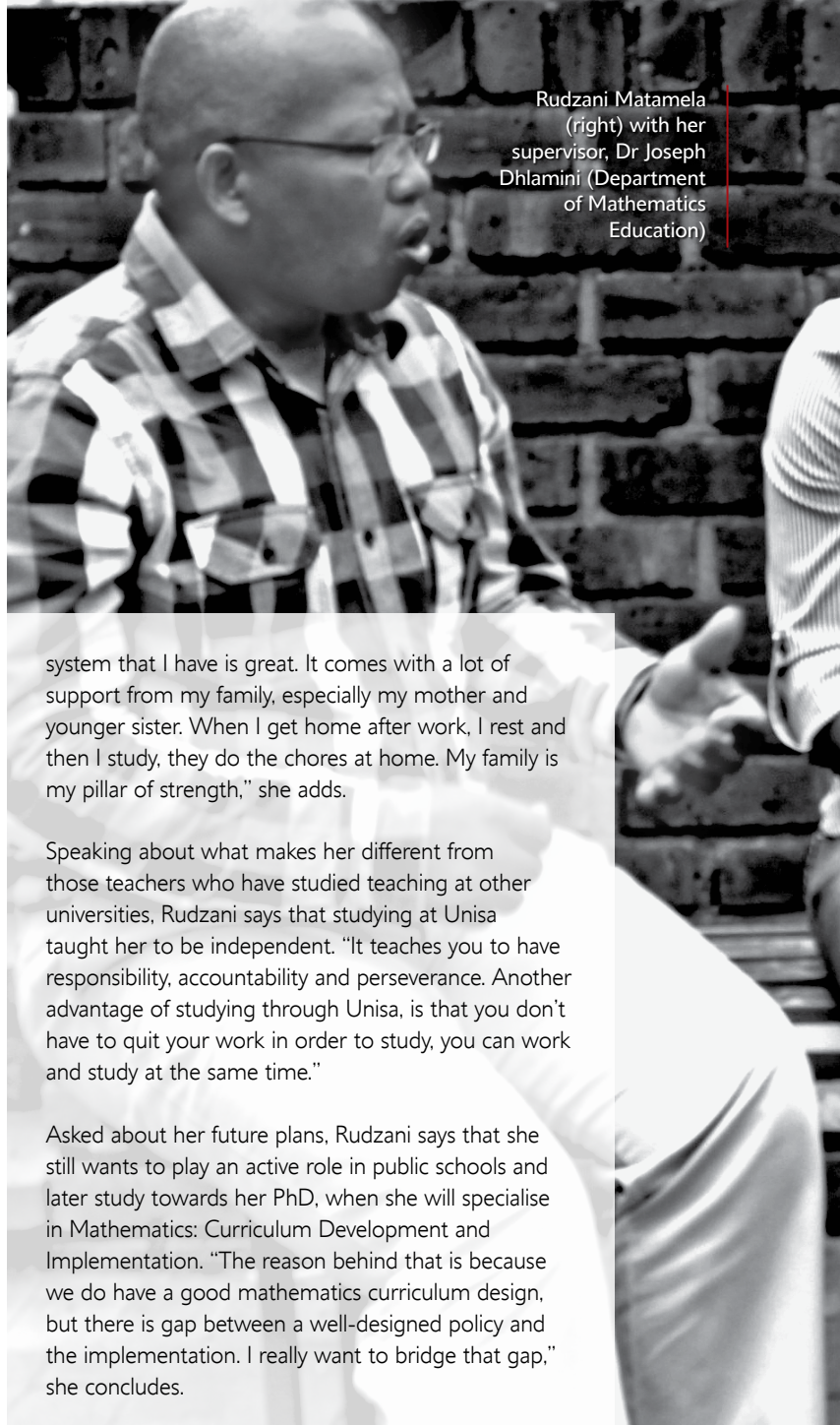
"I am happy where I am; teaching is like a calling," says Rudzani. Unlike most of her peers, her career path was not motivated by how much she would be earning at the end of the month. "My career choice was not about the salary; it was about what type of work I really wanted to do," she says. "I really wanted to look forward to going to work. Another reason is that I always wondered why the education system was not up to scratch, especially in the rural areas. I wanted to be one of those teachers who bring about a change in the system, even if we help only a few learners. This will go a long way towards improving the education system."

Speaking about her passion for teaching and love for her job, Rudzani says that what inspires her to wake up and look forward to her day at work is the knowledge that she can make a difference in a learner's life. "Helping rural learners and giving them hope inspires me to go to work every day," she says. "I always tell them that anything is possible and, it is funny, because some of them think I'm their age. I always tell them it doesn't matter where you come from, even if your background is messed up – if you study hard, it is possible to achieve your dreams. You can buy yourself a house and a car, and achieve a lot through education. As much as I am happy to be setting the standard for them to succeed in life, in a way, they can achieve much more than I have. It would make me happy to see some of them become engineers, professors, doctors and whatever their dreams are. The fulfilment that will come out of that can't be compared to anything, especially when they come back to say, 'If it wasn't for you, I wouldn't be where I am today.' I would know that I am fulfilling my purpose in life."

Rudzani says it was not easy to get where she is in life. "It took lot of sacrifices, hard work, self-motivation, determination, perseverance, and prayer. It is still not easy juggling my workload and my studies, but the support

TEACHING IS HER PASSION AND INSPIRING RURAL LEARNERS IS HER PURPOSE

By Edgar Rathelele



Rudzani Matamela (right) with her supervisor, Dr Joseph Dhlamini (Department of Mathematics Education)

system that I have is great. It comes with a lot of support from my family, especially my mother and younger sister. When I get home after work, I rest and then I study, they do the chores at home. My family is my pillar of strength," she adds.

Speaking about what makes her different from those teachers who have studied teaching at other universities, Rudzani says that studying at Unisa taught her to be independent. "It teaches you to have responsibility, accountability and perseverance. Another advantage of studying through Unisa, is that you don't have to quit your work in order to study, you can work and study at the same time."

Asked about her future plans, Rudzani says that she still wants to play an active role in public schools and later study towards her PhD, when she will specialise in Mathematics: Curriculum Development and Implementation. "The reason behind that is because we do have a good mathematics curriculum design, but there is gap between a well-designed policy and the implementation. I really want to bridge that gap," she concludes.

“ I wanted to be one of those teachers who bring about a change in the system, even if we help only a few learners. This will go a long way towards improving the education system.



Giving comes naturally to Thelo

Thelonius (Thelo) Laka, currently completing a Master's Degree in Psychology, has been contributing to the university's Alumni Association since he began his journey with Unisa.

By Busi Mahlangu

Thelo's journey at Unisa reflects his interest in reaching out to help people. He says he identifies with the university's long-distance learning character, which has been the foremost reason behind his giving of his time to serve as a counsellor—even though he has never in his life been formally employed. He receives a stipend for the work he does.



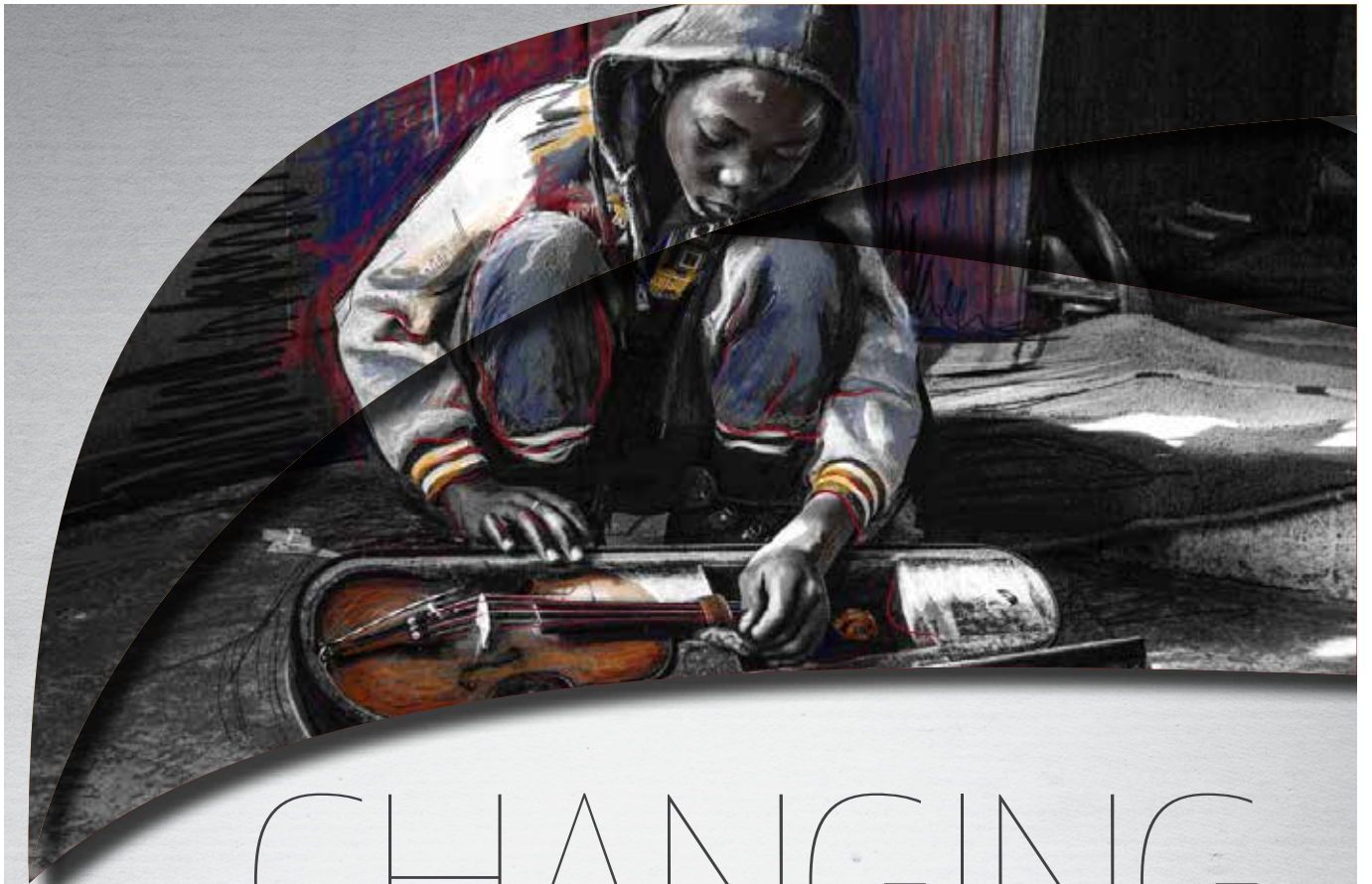
Thelo Laka

“I give because I find that it is appropriate to give back to the university. I know that Unisa caters for those who cannot afford full-time tuition. The fees are reasonable and I know my money will go a long way in ensuring that there's access to education for others who cannot afford fees,” he says.

He doesn't believe that giving is only about money. A person can give other things that can make a difference to people's lives. Thelo himself has been a volunteer at the Tshwane Multisectoral Aids Management Unit since November 2014. The volunteer work he does is in HIV/Aids counselling, bereavement counselling, healthcare work, exhibitions, peer education, general office work and the screening of families. At times he assists social workers with fieldwork.

Thelo credits his alma mater for turning him into the person he is today. “With Unisa, you have to work hard in order to reach your targets. Open distance learning requires patience. It requires you to sacrifice a few things such as leisure time, weekend events and family gatherings because you need to use whatever little time you have to study.”

He says distance is not a deterrent, and encourages students and alumni to be in constant touch with their lecturers so that they can achieve the goals they set for themselves.



CHANGING SOCIETY

UNISA IS VERY MUCH IN AND OF THE COMMUNITIES IT SERVES, AND THROUGH A RANGE OF INITIATIVES SUCCESSFULLY DRIVES POSITIVE CHANGE IN THE BROADER SOCIETY. THROUGH ITS HONORARY DOCTORATE RECOGNITION PROGRAMME THE UNIVERSITY ALSO HONOURS THOSE WHO, THROUGH OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL EFFORTS, BRING ABOUT SOCIETAL CHANGE.



Unisa Music Foundation's melody of hope for orphans

Photos by Jacques Nelles, courtesy of the Citizen



The Unisa Music Foundation is committed to, through music, bringing social change in the lives of South Africans who do not have access to it. Through its community engagement efforts, the foundation serves students from disadvantaged backgrounds countrywide and provides tutors, instruments and lessons to those who do not have the finances to get training in music.

Music has proven to be a great way of teaching these children about life, and also provides them with an escape from their own experiences. This is one of the many reasons why the foundation is so invested in this programme. ”

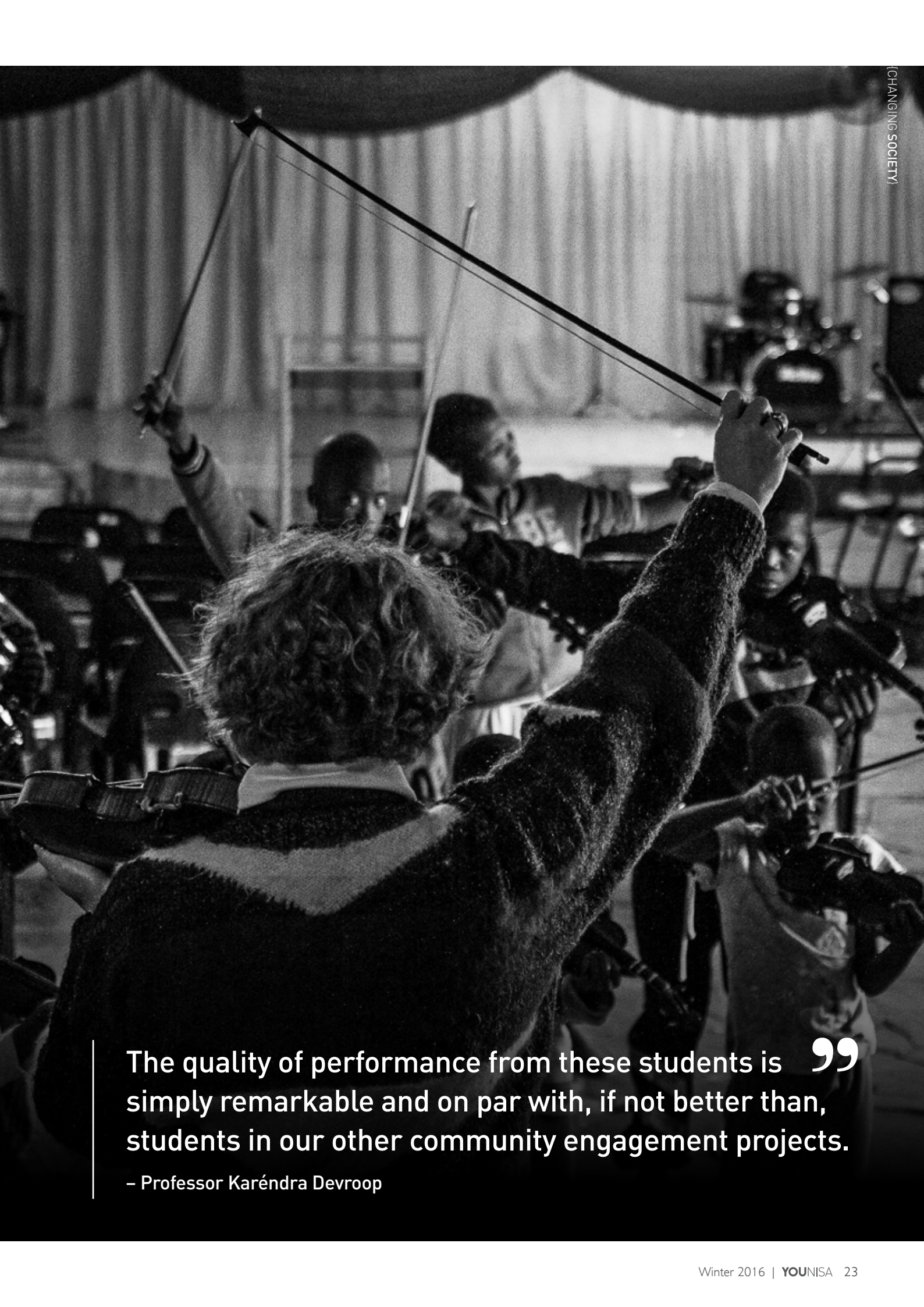
The Kingdom of Life Centre is a home for orphaned and abused children. These children are special little beings who also have an abundance of talent. The same goes for Leamogetswe Safety Home, which is a registered non-profit organisation and youth care centre currently seeing to the needs of 82 orphans and vulnerable children. Leamogetswe's primary purpose is to provide residential care (housing), food, education, health care and a safe environment to children who are in need of care. The children are also given the opportunity to receive counselling and therapy, and interact in life skills, including outreach, which enables them to heal and reintegrate with society.

Music escapism

Music has proven to be a great way of teaching these children about life, and also provides them with an escape from their own experiences. This is one of the many reasons why the foundation is so invested in this programme.

Professor Karéndra Devroop, Deputy Director of the Unisa Music Foundation, explains that the foundation has been supporting this project for many years. "We feel it is important to support this specific project due to its unique nature," he says. "Many of the students in this project are AIDS orphans, so it is also a safe home for at-risk youth. We feel it is the ideal setting to impact at-risk youth through music accordingly, so this is why Unisa is heavily invested in this project. It is one of several projects that we support, although this one is unique due to the types of students benefitting from our work," he explains.





The quality of performance from these students is simply remarkable and on par with, if not better than, students in our other community engagement projects.

– Professor Karéndra Devroop



The Unisa Music Foundation supports over 130 students in this project by providing them with musical instruments, music lessons, access to examinations and the opportunity to perform in all of the Unisa Music Foundation ensembles. Almost all of these students participate in the annual Unisa Tshwane Youth Music Festival, which is open to students in community music engagement projects. "The quality of performance from these students is simply remarkable and on par with, if not better than, students in our other community engagement projects," says Devroop.

By 2014 there were 80 violin students participating in these two projects (Kingdom of Life Centre and Leamoetswe Safety Home combined) and 30 of them were between three and six years of age. All of these students participated in various events, some within the Atteridgeville community itself. These included weddings, funerals and church services. In doing so they have become shining representatives of the Unisa Music Foundation.

Music as a game-changer

Over the years the Unisa Music Foundation has seen tremendous progress with these students, not just in their musical development, but also from a social and psychological development perspective. "We firmly believe that music has the ability to bring about social change in the lives of at-risk and disadvantage youth. In keeping with broader university's vision of being *the African university in the service of humanity*, we are proud to lend our voice, through music, to addressing the social challenges that exist in our country, especially those impacting the youth," concludes a committed Devroop.



"SOUPED-UP" RESEARCH

tackles homeless problem

Homelessness is defined as a condition of people without a regular dwelling. It is a global phenomenon and the number of homeless people worldwide has grown steadily in recent years and has become a problem in different countries, South Africa being no exception.

Compiled by Deon Tustin

Against this background, Unisa's Bureau of Market Research (BMR) has been commissioned by the Department of Social Development (DSD) to investigate the situation of homeless people and people begging on the streets in Mpumalanga in order to develop strategies to be used to address this phenomenon.

A key phase of this project involves the training of local residents across the entire province as well as the engagement with homeless people. In the spirit of pragmatic community engagement, the BMR has incorporated a Soup Project whereby participating homeless people are issued with soup packages at the point of engagement with the BMR and DSD research team.

In this way, the BMR is contributing to its community engagement goal of providing some comfort to the homeless during the course of the study. Professor Joshua Kembo is the leader and manager of the project that concluded at the end of July 2016. Approximately 450 homeless people will be participating in the project.

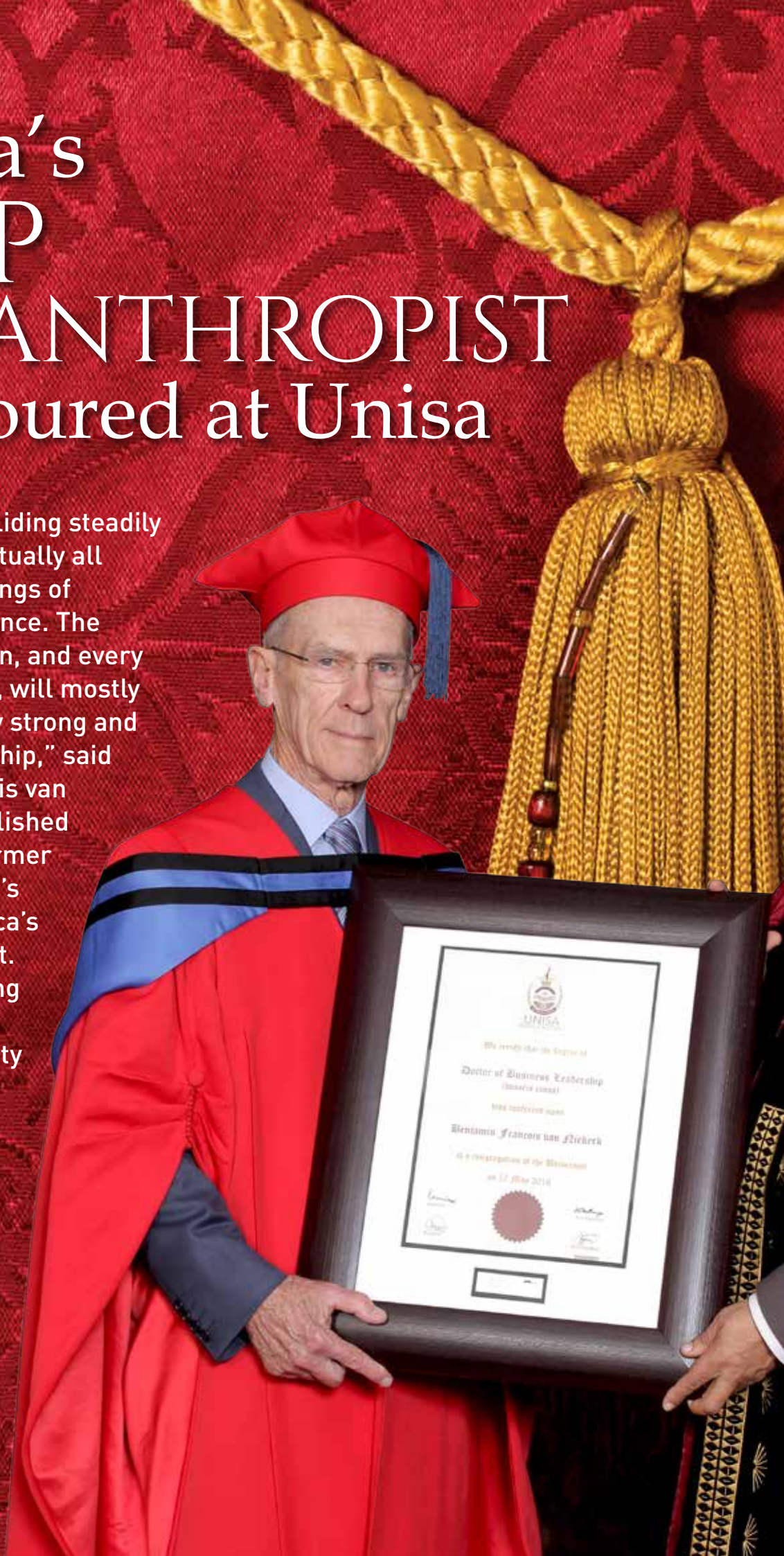


Baruti More, Prof. Joshua Kembo and Abie Mnguni (BMR staff members) preparing the soup packages for distribution among homeless people in Mpumalanga.

Africa's TOP PHILANTHROPIST honoured at Unisa

“Our country is sliding steadily backwards on virtually all international ratings of effective governance. The future of your own, and every other generation, will mostly be determined by strong and visionary leadership,” said Benjamin Francois van Niekerk, accomplished businessman, former member of Unisa’s Council, and Africa’s top philanthropist. He was addressing Unisa graduates after the university conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Business Leadership (honoris causa).

Benjamin Francois van Niekerk pictured with Prof. Mandla Makhanya (Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Unisa) after being honoured with the Degree of Doctor of Business Leadership (honoris causa) on 17 May 2016.



Van Niekerk told students that the way they lead selflessly and lead their small team or division of their company will contribute to South Africa's leadership culture and a common good. The example of leadership he shared was that of King Moshoeshoe who established the Basotho nation and was influenced by his tutor, Chief Mohlomi. "Some 200 years ago, King Moshoeshoe practised contra-intuitive leadership. This is about the wisdom and moral fibre to go against the popular expectation in promoting the ultimate good of those you lead. It's having the courage to go against the tide for the common good of all. It's understanding that always putting the interest of the collective before your own advantage will always be best for you in the end as well. It is very similar to the leadership example of former President Nelson Mandela," he explained.

SA's future determined by graduates

Van Niekerk firmly believes that South Africa's history was shaped by the pronounced diversity of our people, and by the legacy of individual leaders. He also believes that the country's future will be determined by the leadership choices made by the generation graduating. "Together we must recognise and confront the issues that are relevant in dealing with our own future, and our obligation towards generations to come. The real potential of our land can only be realised through principled leadership."

With a humbled heart, Van Niekerk said that he is extremely grateful to Unisa for bestowing the honorary degree of Doctor of Business Leadership on him. "Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the renowned theologian and activist against Nazi injustice, said: 'In life, we hardly realise that we receive more than we give and it is only with gratitude that life becomes rich.' I have gratitude. Thank you to Professor Makhanya and the

Unisa Council for this tribute from my alma mater—albeit that I am today receiving more than I ever gave or deserve. You've honoured me with quite a grand affair and a lifetime memory," he said.

Together we must recognise and confront the issues that are relevant in dealing with our own future, and our obligation towards generations to come. The real potential of our land can only be realised through principled leadership. ”

Van Niekerk is an alumnus of the University of Stellenbosch, where he obtained his BA in Economics. He obtained his Master's in Business Leadership from Unisa's Graduate School of Business Leadership (SBL), from which he also received the Barker Gold Medal. He also served his alma mater, Unisa, in his capacity as a member of the Unisa Council for a number of years.

Entrepreneur with an expansive vision

Van Niekerk is an accomplished businessman and entrepreneur with an expansive vision. This is demonstrated by the diverse businesses he has founded and their global footprint, which extends to other African countries and the European Union. Some of the companies are listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange and the Luxembourg Euro Multilateral Trading Facility.

One of the noteworthy companies co-founded by van Niekerk is the Atterbury Property Group, which has established itself as the leading property developer in South Africa. He served as Chairman of Atterbury Investment Holdings from its inception in 1994 to 2012.

He is not only a successful businessman but he is also a person who gives back generously to society. His vision of philanthropy has been recognised as being ahead of that of his peers. He is acknowledged for his prolonged contribution to the benefit of the entire South African and continental society. His giving is underpinned by his beliefs in the equitable distribution of wealth among all stakeholder groups contributing to the success of businesses, i.e. entrepreneurs, investors, employees, customers, and society. In this spirit, Van Niekerk gave a meaningful shareholding of the Merteck Group to employees, registered an independent community trust, and established the Mergon Foundation.

In recognition of his philanthropic work, Van Niekerk received the South Africa Inyathelo Philanthropy Award in 2010 and the Philanthropist of the Year Award for 2013 from the UK-based African Achievers International Organisation. *Forbes* magazine recently listed him as Africa's top philanthropist for having contributed \$170 million, an amount well above that of his peers.



LEARNING ENRICHED IN REMOTE EASTERN CAPE



Unisa's Department of African Languages conducted a two-day contact session with grade 12 learners in the Eastern Cape, and was rewarded with a bushel of distinctions in the subsequent examinations.

By Bryan Pilane

The Department of African Languages housed in the College of Human Sciences (CHS) at Unisa is facilitating an adoption and visitation of schools community engagement project in various parts of the country. The objective of the project is to raise awareness about and promote the studying of African languages, to assist learners with their performance in African languages, and improve the quality of results thereof. The project also serves as a marketing tool for all African languages offered by the department.

Recently the department was invited to Mount Fletcher in the Eastern Cape by the district's Department of Education officials. This was because of a request made by African language teachers, who wanted the CHS team to have a two-day contact session with grade 12 learners before they sat for their mid-year examinations.

The request came after the outstanding performance shown by learners in Sesotho and isiXhosa in 2015. During the sessions last year, critical topics were dealt with in class and learners were motivated to value their African languages, and were educated about careers they could follow if they studied African languages.

The 2015 academic tuition, which took only one day, produced good results, and crowned Mount Fletcher district top amongst the districts of the province. Of the group who were in that one-day academic tuition, Sesotho learners obtained more than 70 distinctions and isiXhosa learners got 20 distinctions. The district felt the need to report that the performance displayed by the 2015 matric learners was the first in the history of the district.

SCHOOLS



TOP: Lucy Ndlovu (African Languages), grade 12 learners from Tsitsana Comprehensive School, Maria Tembane (African Languages) and Ogodiseng Mokakale (African Languages) at a contact session

LEFT: Grade 12 learners participated in a two-day contact session with academics from the Department of African Languages.

"It leaves us with the strong conviction that Unisa played a major role in improving results in our district, remote as it is. Its remoteness is also characterised by poor infrastructure and facilities since the district is situated at the back of beyond, far from the affluent counterparts. It is for this reason that we feel obliged to approach the Unisa Department of African Languages team to pay us a visit in May 2016," said district director Mbulelo Mpupu.

Mount Fletcher district officials organised for the African Languages team to reach out to all 19 further education and training schools. They grouped learners in two groups, wherein all the schools were represented.

Learners from various schools in the district of Mount Fletcher expressed their gratitude and excitement to have been a part of such insightful workshops and are

looking forward to going back to their resident schools to share the knowledge imparted to them by the African Languages team with their fellow learners.

In conclusion, project coordinator Dr Rosalinah Nakin said the Department of African Languages team members are driven primarily by their passion to improve grade 12 African languages results and also to encourage African language teachers to pursue careers as African language academics. Additionally, she said the project also talks to the college vision to be *the* African centre of excellence in the human sciences by making a continuous and positive contribution in the service of humanity. "We strive for excellence in teaching and learning, research and community engagement that together make a positive difference in the lives of the individuals and communities we serve."

UNISA IS NOT LETTING ENERGY GO TO WASTE



Prof. Mandla Makhanya (Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Unisa) with some community members of Melani Village

South Africa's Nine-Point Plan places the resolution of the energy challenge at the top of the list of actions in our country. As an academic institution, Unisa is aware of its critical role in ensuring this challenge is met, and, through the Exxaro Chair in Business and Climate Change (Exxaro Chair), and together with the South African National Energy Development Institute (SANEDI) and the University of Fort Hare (UFH), is rolling out biogas as a renewable and sustainable source of energy.

On 1 July 2016, the partnership launched a biogas research project at Melani Village situated in Alice, Eastern Cape. Overall, this community engagement and research project is seeking to find solutions on scaling up renewable and affordable rural household energy as well as conserving the environment.

Researchers drawn from three colleges at Unisa (the College of Economic and Management Sciences, College of Science, Engineering and Technology, and College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences) are involved in a transdisciplinary, interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research programme focusing on bio-derived fuels (BDF) and solar technology transition under climate change and the green economy led by Prof. Godwell Nhamo, who is the incumbent of the Exxaro Chair. Biogas is one of the project streams in the research programme.

The project witnessed the installation of 13 household biogas digesters that will generate cooking gas. Waste from cattle, goats and pigs is being used as feed stock. The by-product (digestate slurry) is a very good source of fertiliser (rich in nitrates and phosphates) which can be used for growing vegetables, fruits and flowers.



As part of the site visit, stakeholders and other community members were shown the project benefits in practice. This is the kitchen of one of the community members who uses the gas for cooking.

Bringing practical solutions to society

The choice of Melani Village was informed by many factors, including Unisa's geographically dispersed footprint in South Africa and Africa, the desire to be part of the ongoing national programme to roll out biogas as a renewable and sustainable source of energy, the need to set up research sites in rural settings, and the desire to commission community engagement projects that bring practical solutions to our society.

As academic institutions we have a critical role of ensuring that the global and national mandates are realised through our excellent and innovative performance in the knowledge creation space, and through its translation into practice in our communities. ”

The benefits for the community of these types of projects are manifold and they happen both in the construction phase and after. The communities of Melani Village have already benefited through temporary construction jobs from the installation of the 13 digesters. They will further benefit from the supply of renewable energy and also from interacting with the team of researchers. Other benefits will be realised in time freed-up by not having to search for alternative energy sources, such as firewood. The environment will further benefit from reduced carbon emissions, given that at present South Africa relies mainly on Eskom's coal-fired power plants.

Prof. Mandla Makhanya, Principal and Vice-Chancellor at Unisa, explained that the university has taken a conscious decision to highlight environmental and sustainability matters in the institution's strategy, and to address them in a manner similar to what responsible modern-day corporates do – a situation where sustainability offices are stand-alone entities in these progressive organisations. “As academic institutions we have a critical role of ensuring that the global and national mandates are realised through our excellent and innovative performance in the knowledge creation space, and through its translation into practice in our communities,” he said.

Energy is never destroyed, it's just distributed

As UFH celebrates its centenary in this year, this makes the collaboration with Unisa, SANEDI and the Exxaro Chair even more valuable. Dr Mvoyo Tom, Vice-Chancellor of the university, is excited by this partnership and collaboration, more so at a time when renewable energy seems to be a global solution. “We are happy to host this particular session in the development of research, along renewable energy lines and making sure that we use every aspect that's provided by nature. We must remember that energy is never destroyed, it's just distributed,” he said.

Nhamo believes this project will answer some key questions in terms of expansion and scaling up. “We hope that, through this initiative, we are going to answer the question of why the simple technology of biogas is not up-scaled in South Africa.” In Africa, Tanzania has the highest number of digesters with over 10 000 installed. Nhamo pointed out that much needs to be done in order for South Africa to be in that league of countries providing sustainable rural renewable energy. To this end, the government's Working for Energy programme remains key to realise such success.



Community members learn how the process works and are encouraged to maintain the biogas digesters so that they reap the full benefits.

We hope that, through this initiative, we are going to answer the question of why the simple technology of biogas is not up-scaled in South Africa? ”



Community members Ntombizoto Busani, Nomakula Mxoli and Nokhaya James are very happy about this project. "It helps us with cooking and saving electricity; it is very helpful even during load shedding we still can cook."

hp On campus

by African Data



HP 250 G4

Intel® Core™ i3-5005U 4GB DDR3L
1600MHz 500GB 5400rpm DVD
+/-RW Windows® 10 Home x64
1Year Warranty R 7 449



HP 250 G4

Intel Celeron 2.16GHZ 2GB DDR3
500GB 5400rpm DVD+/-RW
15.6HD LCD Windows 8
1Year Warranty R 5 699



Lenovo™ ideapad 100s

Intel Z3735F 2GB RAM
32GB SSD
11.6 Integrated Intel® HD Win 10
1Year Warranty R 4 499



**M109
R399**



**M300 - U
R749**



**M108 - U
R599**



7.0" HD LCD Display 1024 x 600	GSM GPRS EDGE Phone Calls
HSPA+	4GB Flash RAM
1.3 GHz QUAD CORE Cortex A7 CPU	CAMERA 0.3Mpx front 2.0Mpx back



7" Prestigio Multipad Wize Bundle with Padded Pouch with Zip FREE Earphone R1649

CAMERA 2.0Mpx back	Android 4.4
7.0 IPS Display 1024 x 600	Wi-Fi
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Bite-sized news snippets from your university

“I am a Unisa ambassador,” says Ethiopian Minister



Dr Woldekidan Workneh Gebeyehu (Minister of Transport of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and former Commissioner of the Ethiopian Federal Police) graduated with a PhD in Police Science from Unisa on 23 May 2016. He is pictured at his graduation ceremony, flanked by Sakhi Simelane (Chairperson of Council, Unisa) and Prof. Mandla Makhanya (Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Unisa).

An international science star is born



Unisa PhD student Nozipho Gumbi represented South Africa at the prestigious 2016 FameLab international finals in the United Kingdom on 9 June. Nozipho was able to stand proud even after Abhi Veerakumarasivam, from Malaysia, was crowned FameLab champion for his winning talk on our individual responsibilities towards fighting cancer.

NSRC hosts Tanzanian student delegation



In May Unisa's National Students' Representative Council (NSRC) had the privilege of hosting a delegation of students from the United Republic of Tanzania. The day featured a bilateral session on models of student governance, and giving attendees the opportunity to share best practices. Pictured here are Mohamed Mohamed: SRC President, Kampala International University Dar es Salaam campus (far left: second row) and Ephraem Molle: SRC President Kilimanjaro Christian Medical College (sixth from the left: second row) accompanied by Habibu Awesi : 2nd secretary of the High Commission of the United Republic of Tanzania (far right: first row) and Dr Mokiwa (fifth from the left second row). The Unisa delegation was led by Simukai Murerwa (middle front) accompanied by the Acting Dean of Students, Irende Mohasoa (middle front).



Unisa launches innovative teaching and learning tool



A team of lecturers from the Department of Communication Science in the College of Human Sciences recently launched a teaching and learning tool to assist students to overcome the pitfalls of plagiarism. The new Writing for Academic Integrity tool utilises Google sites and offers a series of fun and informative video tutorials. The tool was developed by Dr Elnerine Greeff, Dr Hannelie Marx, Prof. Yolandi Slabbert and Dr Louise van Dyk.

Youngest DBL graduate a true millennial



Graduating on 24 June with a Doctor of Business Leadership (DBL) qualification, Denisha Jairam-Owthar (33), the youngest person to receive this qualification, is an example of how the generation known as millennials are achieving more in a shorter period of time.

Finnish students explore South Africa's most colourful culture



The Department of African Languages in collaboration with the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology in the College of Human Sciences hosted a group of linguistic students from Finland. The group visited Unisa to attend lectures on the isiNdebele language, culture, heritage, and history. Pictured here are (from left) Prof. Axel Fleisch (African Studies, University of Helsinki), Nomsebenzi Malele (Department of African Languages), Prof. Riho Grünthal (Finn-Ugric Languages, University of Helsinki), Prof. Matti Miestamo (General Linguistics, University of Helsinki), Prof. Sonja Bosch (Department of African Languages), and Prof. Chris van Vuuren (Department of Anthropology and Archaeology).

SADC youth on a quest to develop Africa



In June the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) held its first Southern Africa cohort over a period of four weeks at Unisa. This year's programme saw 130 participants from various Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries being groomed and skilled to become the leaders of tomorrow. The YALI initiative was launched in 2010 by US President Barack Obama, in an effort to invest in Africa's future leaders.

ISTE Ethiopian PhDs attain upper academe echelons



Two of Unisa's Institute for Science and Technology Education (ISTE) graduate students have been appointed as college deans at their respective Ethiopian universities. Pictured here are (from left) Dr Bekele Gashe Dega (Dean: College of Natural and Computational Sciences, Ambo University, Ethiopia), Dr Sam Kaheru (Senior Lecturer: University of Venda), Prof. Jeanne Kriek (Supervisor: ISTE) and Dr Mengesha Ayene (Dean: College of Natural Science, Wollo University, Ethiopia).

Unisa graduate and new mother achieves 27 distinctions



Jaqueline Nkambule, wife and mother to a one-month-old baby boy graduated cum laude with 27 distinctions from the College of Human Sciences during Unisa's autumn graduations. She obtained a BA in Psychological Counselling (cum laude) and hopes to pursue a qualification in community psychology in the future.



Leading by example



In a symbolic gesture and as part of celebrating Nelson Mandela Day, Professor Mandla Makhanya, Principal and Vice-Chancellor of Unisa, spent his 67 minutes planting vegetables at the Tshegofatsong Special School in Mamelodi. The school caters for mentally challenged learners from the community of Mamelodi and it relies on donations to better their facilities in order to accommodate more children on a yearly basis.

Zambian chapter in capable hands



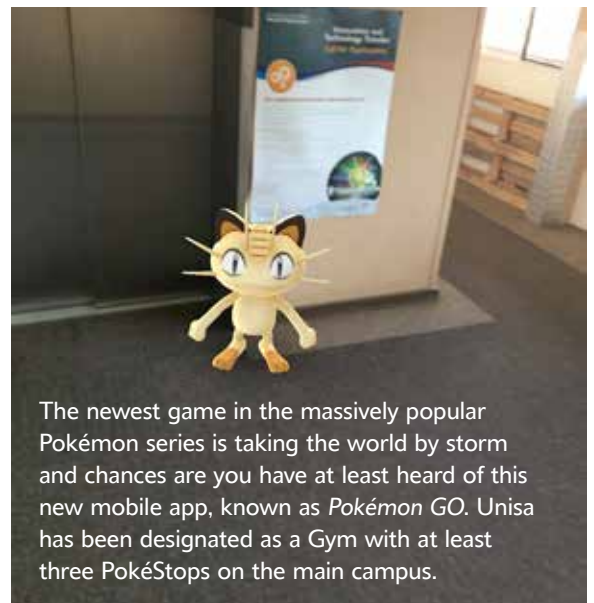
Bonaventure Mutale has been elected as convener of the Zambia chapter of Unisa's Alumni Association. Mutale is no newcomer to the chapter as he has served as a committee member for almost two years.

Award-winning



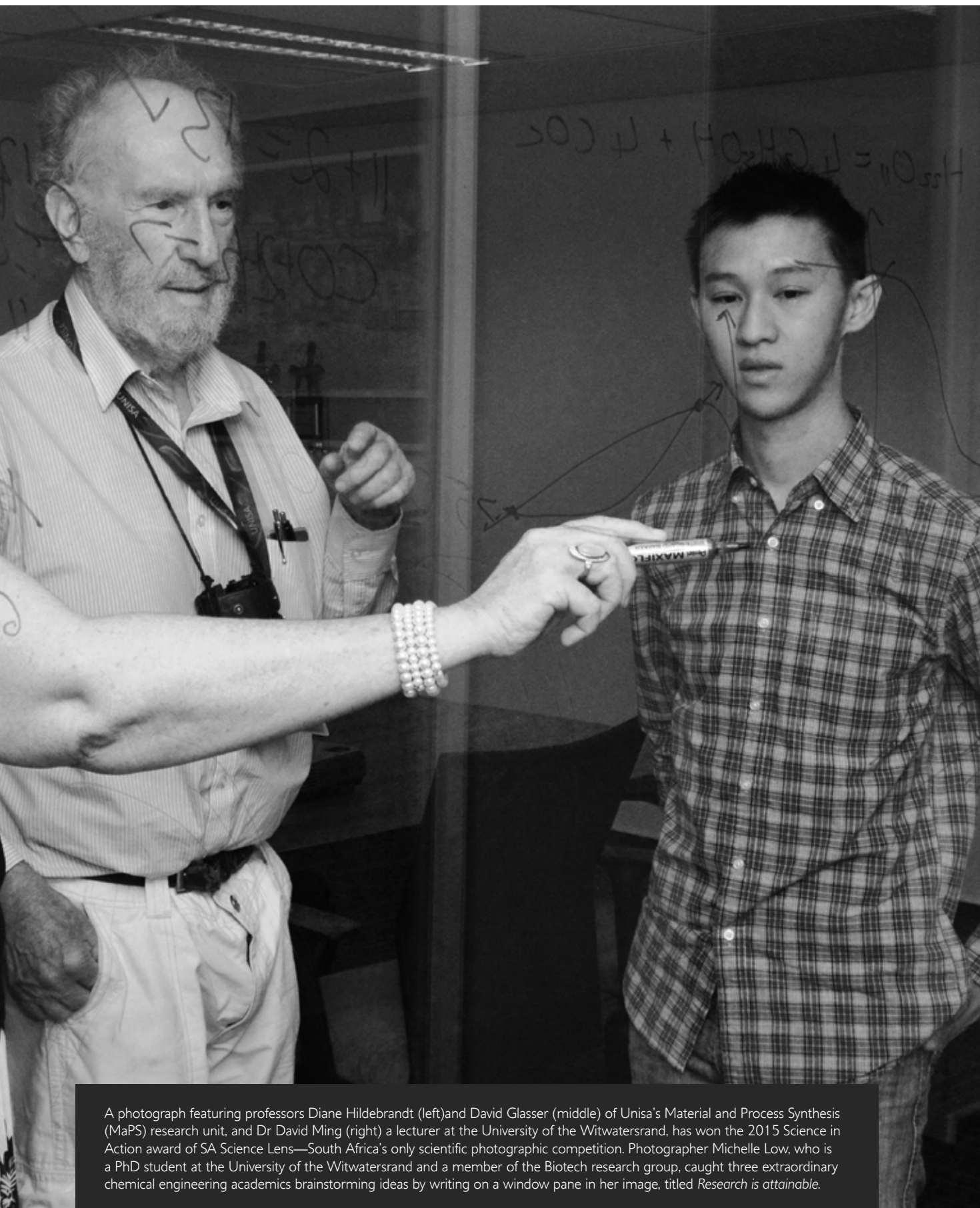
Research is attainable © Michelle Low

You can PokéStop at Unisa!



The newest game in the massively popular Pokémon series is taking the world by storm and chances are you have at least heard of this new mobile app, known as *Pokémon GO*. Unisa has been designated as a Gym with at least three PokéStops on the main campus.

image puts Unisa MaPS in focus



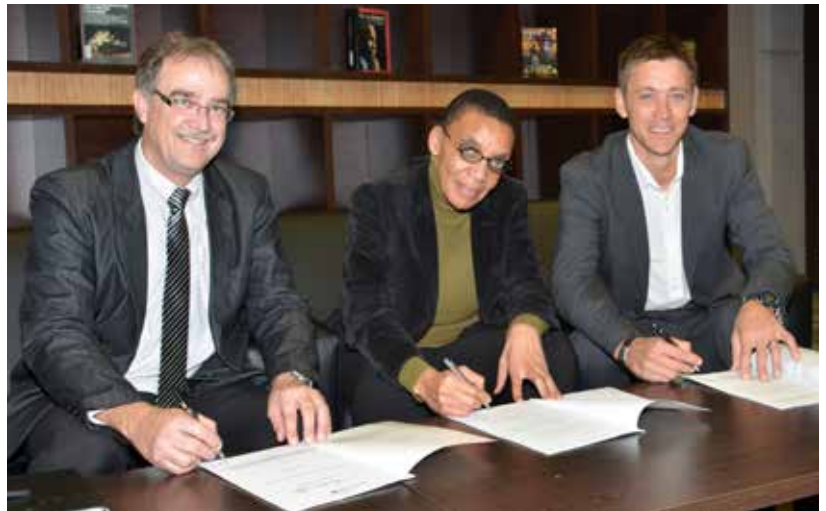
A photograph featuring professors Diane Hildebrandt (left) and David Glasser (middle) of Unisa's Material and Process Synthesis (MaPS) research unit, and Dr David Ming (right) a lecturer at the University of the Witwatersrand, has won the 2015 Science in Action award of SA Science Lens—South Africa's only scientific photographic competition. Photographer Michelle Low, who is a PhD student at the University of the Witwatersrand and a member of the Biotech research group, caught three extraordinary chemical engineering academics brainstorming ideas by writing on a window pane in her image, titled *Research is attainable*.

Research is attainable © Michelle Low



Partnership of giants makes educational resources a priority

It's a partnership of giants as Unisa, the SABC, and Google come together to make educational resources freely available for access by learners, teachers, and parents. Following the signing of a memorandum of agreement on 23 June, the partners are ready to get this project off the ground. The primary purpose of the project is to create a Google domain that will give learners and teachers easy access to content related to the school curriculum. Pictured at the signing are (from left) Danie Swart (Head: SABC Education), Prof. Gugu Moche (Vice-Principal: Teaching, Learning, Community Engagement and Student Support) and Andrew Payne (Enterprise Business Director: Grove Group, one of Google's Premier Enterprise Partners).



Unisa Space Art Gallery one of SA's best

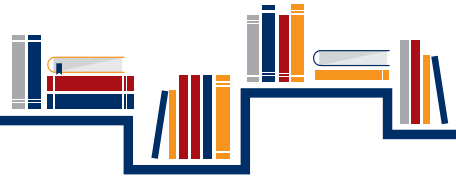


The Culture Trip, a one-stop website for the best of global and local art, food, culture, travel, design, architecture, photography, fiction, film, and music has named the ten best places to find contemporary art in South Africa, and the Unisa Space Art Gallery is one of them. Pictured here are the Space Art Gallery team: (from left) Zingisa Nkosinkulu (Education Officer), Jacob Lebeko (Assistant Curator), Simangele Sithole (Administrator) and Bongani Mkhonza (Curator).

Jazzing up rhythmic collaborations

Eight of South Africa's most prolific jazz musicians, together with representatives from the SAMRO Foundation, Joy of Jazz Festival, and the Unisa Music Directorate, recently travelled to the Netherlands, specifically to the Amersfoort Jazz Festival and Amersfoort Jazz and World Music Conference. Over four days the artists performed four concerts, including the opening concert, which specifically focused on the South African jazz artists and music of South Africa. Pictured here is Trumpet player Mandla Mlangeni performing at the opening concert.





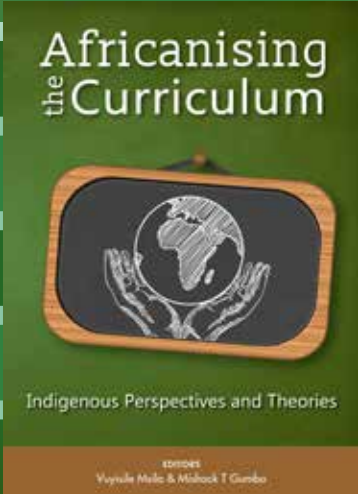
YOUNISA looks at a number of new publications that will appeal to Unisans in all walks of life.

Africanising the curriculum: Indigenous perspectives and theories authors: Prof. Vuyisile Msila, Dr Saul Shava, Dr Tshilidzi Netshitangani, Dr Collins Potokri, and Prof. Mishack Gumbo.



Professor Vuyisile Msila, head of the Institute for African Renaissance Studies (IARS), and Professor Mishack Gumbo, lecturer at the Department of Science and Technology Education, who are the editors of *Africanising the curriculum: Indigenous perspectives and theories*, summarise:

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO AFRICANISE THE CURRICULUM?



- 1 Never before have the debates on Africanising the curriculum in institutions taken centre-stage as today.
- 2 The decolonisation of the curriculum is among the first steps in conceptualising a new African-centred curriculum.
- 3 To herald a different and progressive era, African education needs to reflect new values and principles, especially those of the Constitution of South Africa.
- 4 Whilst the focus is on Africanisation of education in higher education, Africanisation of curricula should begin at school level.
- 5 The search for the Africanisation of the curriculum is an exploration of relevance.
- 6 Curricula such as technology can and should respond to indigenous cultures.
- 7 Curricular change and Africanisation will enhance transformation agenda in institutions of higher learning.
- 8 Afrocentricity means "a quality of thought and practice rooted in the cultural image and human interests of African people".
- 9 Bringing an alternative Africanised curriculum means using an African philosophy of education that is a philosophy that explores the lives of African communities.
- 10 The quest for an African identity is a project not only for us, but for coming generations as well.



New from Unisa Press

A very important cog in Unisa's knowledge production strategy is Unisa Press, the largest university press in South Africa with the most extensive publications list. In addition to its academic publications and journals, Unisa Press also publishes works with a more artistic and literary bent, tantalising the senses with vivid images and striking text. YOUNISA showcases five such publications.

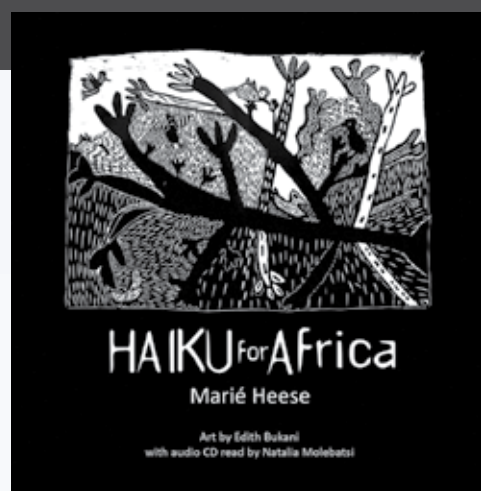
Haiku for Africa

- Marié Heese

Mother Africa shares her wisdom within this collection of more than fifty haiku, through the voices of three formidable women – author Marié Heese, artist Edith Bukani and voice artist Natalia Molebatsi.

This gift book contains an audio book on CD.

Author Marié Heese takes us on a journey, following the footprints of women before us, women amongst us; women just like us to experience the continent of Africa afresh. Enjoy glimpses of shifting landscapes, the shadow of a smile – fleeting moments captured in a handful of words. An ideal moment of repose is captured with wisdom and poise.



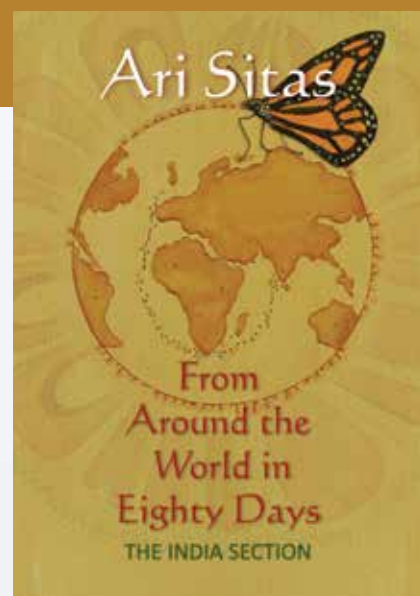
From Around the World in Eighty Days – The India Section

- Ari Sitas

Have a kerala coffee on the go; hop on a train to see the Elephant Man; stop for a moment to sip on a Sula or order a chai. Ari Sitas awakens our senses with this unique sensory encounter. Experience the sights, sounds and smells of India with Aouda and Passepartout. This book forms part of the prestigious Unisa Flame Series for interdisciplinary works.

Ari Sitas awakens our senses with this unique sensory encounter. With full colour original Kerala art, this truly is a unique work.

Around the World in Eighty Days – The India Section takes us on a seven-day journey to India. A reconstruction of Jules Verne's journey of 1872, Phileas Fogg, Auda and Passepartout are transferred to the 21st century, in a dialogue of what was and what is and what remains ... undecided ...



For more information on these titles, contact Letitia Theart:
theart@unisa.ac.za or (012) 429 3448
Visit Unisa Press online at www.unisa.ac.za/press

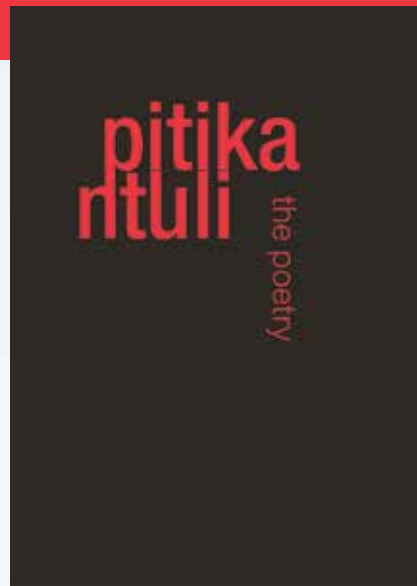


The Poetry

- Pitika Ntuli

Released in a new, pocket-sized format, *The Poetry* continues the intertwined dialogue between sculpture and poetry but, more so, makes the poetry of Pitika Ntuli accessible to a wider audience.

Pitika Ntuli, poet, sculptor and philosopher, has been honoured by the Arts and Culture Trust and Vodacom Foundation with the 2013 Lifetime Achievement Award for Visual Art. On receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award, Ntuli explained, "Art is language that allows me to express disagreeable ideas agreeably. My life in art has been a ceaseless struggle to find a language that will capture the nuances of my times, and give concrete expression to the dreams that come by day and night. Sculpture is a bullfight that batters and bruises, and stretches the limits of endurance; but in the end you remain with a renewed aesthetic vision and a body pulsating with a spirit found from the relentless search for an ultimate shape or form, that would speak and answer the yet unasked questions."



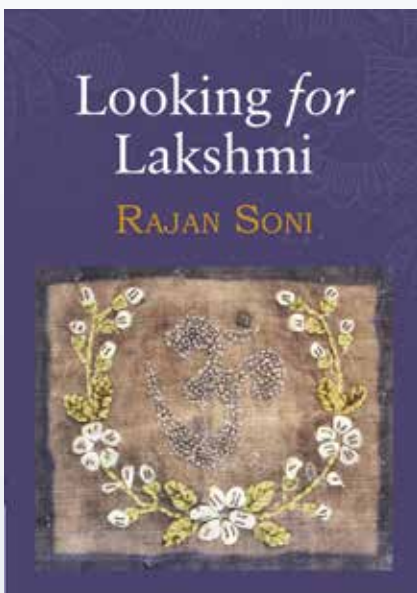
Looking for Lakshmi

- Rajan Soni

'Rajan Soni's gentle lyricism gives content to the abstractions of provenance and becoming. While we are all aware of the constitutive intersection of the roots and routes of identity, *Looking for Lakshmi* maps vividly the various journeys that ushered the author into being.

Its portraits – of different times, contexts and people – transform cultural history into lived reality. As readers, we are blessed by Soni's invitation to travel with him.'

Michael Titlestad, Professor of Literature, University of the Witwatersrand



Driftword

- croc E mooses

Published within the innovative Unisa Flame Series, Henrik Brand, aka croc E mooses, comes of many places and from nowhere; he is of here, only here, yet not. The dislocations of today and their sudden openings are croc E's field of dreams and



protest, proclamations and heresy. The poems and songs by croc E Moses challenge us to place ourselves – where are you now in the cosmic entanglement? Are you the puzzle you're intent on fleeing?

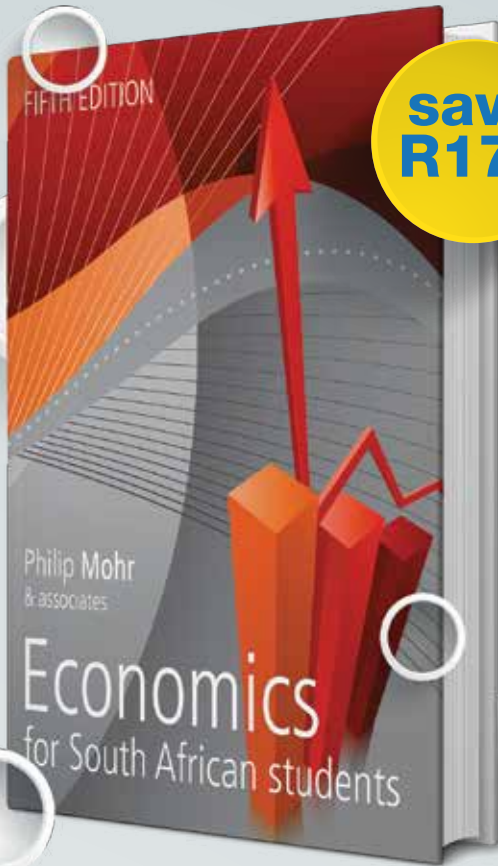
Many of the songs/poems partly stem from this Canadian-born poet's living within South Africa – yet somewhat outside of institutions and corporations, unbound by securities and ever uncertain, as many artists are.

Driftword offers readers a refreshingly raw voice of a modern-day songster bringing poetry, song and performance together. The book is accompanied by an audio CD, competing the poetic offering by providing a set of poems performed to carefully curated sounds, drumming and music.

⇒ *Back to Varsity* ⇒

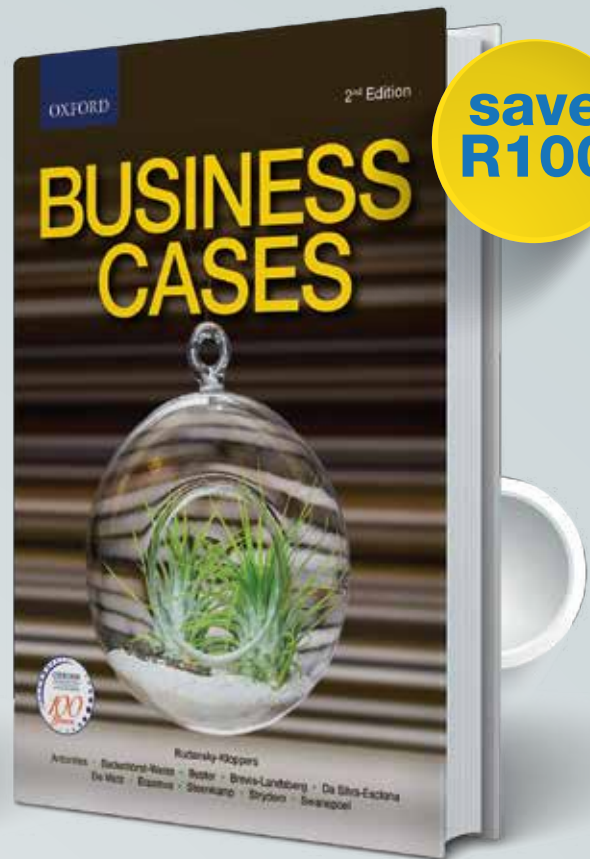
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Conquering the mid-year crisis

For many of us the problems of the present seem so overwhelming that it feels pointless to think about the future, never mind thinking about how to make it to the exams. Yet it is much wiser to have the opposite attitude – a positive one. The most powerful motivation for change is having a positive vision of your future.

By Deirdre Potgieter, Unisa Directorate for Counselling and Career Development (DCCD)





Why did you enroll at Unisa? What are your dreams? What do you aspire to be?

Vision is the result of dreams in action. A strong vision precedes significant success. Students with a vision are powerfully enabled but those without are more likely to be at risk. We, the staff of the Directorate for Counselling and Career Development (DCCD), want you to succeed in your studies, and one of the key factors in being a successful student is putting your vision into action. More than that, we want you to enjoy the journey towards achieving your vision. You are more likely to reach your vision if it is:

- **Effective** – you succeed in your learning by responding to feedback from your lecturers;
- **Efficient** – as a distance learner your time is precious; you need to use it as productively as you possibly can;
- **Economic** – get the maximum rewards from the energy you put into your studies.

But there's another e-word: **effort!** There is no way around that. If you manage your studies well, you should find that your efforts are well focused and sustained so that they guarantee your success and turn your vision into a reality.

Why do people feel frustrated at this time of the year?

The first glow of your enthusiasm may have faded, perhaps as a result of the excitement of registration and the newness of the experience has worn off. Reality has dawned. You may find that your studies are more difficult than you anticipated, or not as interesting as you thought they would be. You may be at the beginning of your second semester, back at the grindstone.

You may be losing interest because of family commitments, or your work or social environment may be demanding too much time and effort from you. Furthermore you made several commitments when you registered at Unisa. The first is your financial commitment. It costs a lot of money to enrol and to buy your textbooks. Apart from the expense, other feelings may make you feel tense and anxious, such as realising

that it is quite difficult to manage your studies effectively. This may drain your confidence and cause stress. This in turn affects the emotional commitment you made to your family and colleagues. The result is that, at this mid-year point, you may be thinking of cancelling your courses or simply dropping out.

Students often find it difficult to believe that thousands of other Unisa students share their feelings. This is a small consolation but we will try to give you a fresh perspective on the matter which we hope will help you cope successfully with the problem.

Students often find it difficult to believe that thousands of other Unisa students share their feelings. ”

We can start by looking at the reasons that people study at tertiary institutions, particularly at Unisa. The one outstanding reason that people study is to develop in a number of ways. We will briefly discuss four areas of development, namely the areas of intellectual, career, social and spiritual development.



1. Intellectual development

What is intellectual development? It's certainly a lot more than simply memorising facts so that you can pass an examination. Intellectual development indicates the ways in which students can learn to create ideas, to express them their own words and to communicate them to others. It is learning how to interpret study guides and textbooks and to make sense of what is communicated in them. It is an ability to communicate with others sensibly, logically and clearly (whether in discussion or writing) and also understanding and appreciating the learning process as one of the great joys in life. Learning gives people the opportunities to broaden their perspectives and to set new goals for themselves and their future.



2. Career Development

Educators are still debating whether the purpose of studying at university is to provide a broad education (called "liberal education") or vocational training (called "professional training"). We suggest that it is probably a bit of both. We believe that career development means not only assisting people to plan their careers and become aware of opportunities in the world of work, but also to appreciate the arts and sciences. By doing so, one can develop thinking skills that are directly applicable to the vast majority of career fields.

To illustrate this point, we wish to refer to a recent survey among successful business leaders. They were asked what qualities they would look for in job applicants. Surprisingly enough, they generally agreed that the main quality was not knowledge of a specific career field, but rather qualities such as the ability to reason, the ability to express oneself clearly and forcefully in writing, and having a broad base of knowledge of the world around one.



3. Social development

Social development reminds us that no man is an island. Each one of us must learn the value of contributing to the common welfare of the community we live in.

Getting along with others and gaining their support go a long way towards enriching our lives. The same social skills will also enable us to function much better in groups throughout our time at university and throughout our working lives.



4. Spiritual development

Finally, spiritual development entails gaining a sense of one's own values as well as an appreciation of other people's values. It further entails, having a sense of ethics and a general appreciation of life, God and the natural forces of the universe.

In other words, if people understand the purpose of their lives and why they are on earth, they tend not only to feel better about themselves but can also work better with others who may not share their views. Allow time for reflection to gain a perspective on the purpose of your life and that of your studies.



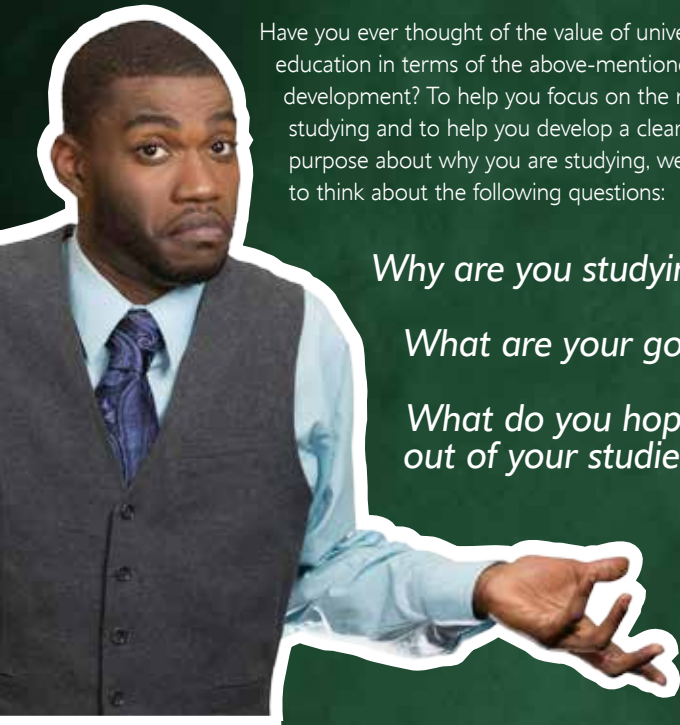
Why am I studying?

Have you ever thought of the value of university education in terms of the above-mentioned areas of development? To help you focus on the reasons for studying and to help you develop a clear sense of purpose about why you are studying, we want you to think about the following questions:

Why are you studying?

What are your goals?

What do you hope to get out of your studies?



Here are some possible reasons why you are studying. Tick those that you identify with. You may have other reasons too, but the purpose of this exercise is to find some good reasons for sticking to your studies and to persuade you to keep you studying through those dark days that we all experience from time to time.

I am studying because

- I am bored.
- I need a challenge.
- The topic I'm studying will be useful in my job.
- Mastering the course could lead to promotion.
- Mastering the course could lead to more choices of potential employment.
- Someone told me that it was a good idea to study.
- I've always wanted to study this course and now's my chance.
- I simply like learning new things.
- A friend or colleague studied and recommended that I should too.
- I want to prove to myself and others that I can do it.
- I want to keep up with my children.
- I want to get an educational qualification at a higher level.
- I want to become more self-confident.
- I study to develop my mind, and mental ability.
- I want to make up for the educational opportunities I missed in the past.
- I also have other reasons (add them to your list)

Write down your reasons and stick them up in you study corner to remind you of them.

It is usually of key importance to improve your career prospects. Distance learning is valued as one way of enhancing one's chances of improving one's economic circumstances.

Go back to your checklist and check your reasons for studying. If your reasons for studying are extrinsic, in other words they come from outside and are not based on your own inner (intrinsic) motivation, then the mid-year crisis is often more stressful. Make sure that you have some good intrinsic reasons for studying – do this for YOU! There will be times when you will need these reasons to inspire you. When the going gets tough, it's useful to keep up your motivation by reminding yourself of the reasons for doing your course.

So, by now you have a few strategies to help you cope with the mid-year crisis. To wrap up, there are three key factors which you should remember to help keep you on track:

1. Create a vision and remind yourself of your vision for the future. Think about, dream of and build a vision of your own future, especially in the really tough times.
2. Go about your learning in a focused strategic manner, find out what is required in your course to reach your intended goal. Ask yourself: What is this course really about? What are the requirements for mastering the course? Why am I doing this? Take control and accept responsibility for your learning and participate actively in your learning process by talking to your lecturers and the university about your learning experience.
3. Develop a model for change if you are not progressing with your studies.



If you are finding it difficult to cope with the mid-year crisis, face up to the problems that may be hampering your studies. If you need help to overcome these problems, you are welcome to contact the counsellors of the Directorate for Counselling and Career Development DCCD, at the regional campuses.

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