



UKZN DABA

YOUR MONTHLY CAMPUS NEWSPAPER • VOLUME 7 • NUMBER 10 • OCTOBER 2010

AWARDS CEREMONY HONOURS Scholarship Recipients

Twenty five types of scholarships were awarded to 132 students at UKZN's Scholarship Awards Ceremony at the Colin Webb Hall on the Pietermaritzburg campus on October 6.

WORDS & PHOTO: SITHEMBILE SHABANGU

Chair of the Scholarship Awards Committee, Professor Trevor Jones from the School of Economics and Finance indicated that the 2010 awards covered a full spectrum of students from new undergraduate entrants to doctoral awards.

Mr Siphesihle Dumisa and Ms Nandipha Sephuma were the recipients of the Mandela Rhodes Scholarship, which is awarded to academically excellent postgraduate students with leadership qualities, involvement in community outreach and entrepreneurial talents.

Facing up to tough competition, Ms Natalie MacKenzie won the coveted S2A3 Bronze Medal, a scholarship awarded for the best Masters Dissertation in Science, Engineering or Health

Science in the University.

Women in Science and Agriculture (WOSA) scholarships were awarded to 14 students. These scholarships aim to increase the number of women studying in scarce-skill areas in Engineering, Science and Agriculture.

This year, for the first time, four students, most of whom are already studying abroad, received Emma Smith Overseas Scholarships. They are Ms Jennifer Upton, Ms Frances Hobden, Ms Toni Palmer and Ms Bianca Finnie.

Other scholarships awarded at the ceremony include the Prestige Entrant Scholarship (Top Ten in KZN) given to students placed in the top ten in matric, and the Prestige Entrant Scholarship (IEB), given to

matric students placed in the top 50 nationally. The Archbishop Dennis E Hurley Scholarship which is aimed at financially needy but academically strong students, who display leadership qualities and are involved in community outreach, was awarded to 19 students, the majority of whom hail from other African countries.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning, Professor Renuka Vithal encouraged students to continue studying and those with PhDs to consider joining the academic ranks at the University. She added that UKZN is the only university in the country to offer free tuition to masters and doctoral students.

See page 3 for a full list of the scholarship recipients



Recipients of the Doctoral Research Scholarship (from left) Mr Justin Visagie, Ms Mamoalosi Selepe and Mr Adeyemi Aremu.

Emma Smith Scholarship now open to all Women

Tertiary education bursary opportunities previously opened to white women only through the Emma Smith Scholarship Fund will now be available to women of all races thanks to a recent Supreme Court of Appeal (SCA) decision.

UKZN had won a Durban High Court battle to have the racially restrictive clause removed. However, curators of the Fund had appealed this decision and taken the matter to the Supreme Court of Appeal who dismissed the matter on October 1.

The Emma Smith Scholarship Fund was set

up in 1941 after the passing away of Sir Charles George Smith who allocated money to the then Natal University College with the stipulation that the funds be utilised for the higher education of indigent white women of English or Dutch descent.

According to the Acting Director of the Student Funding Centre, Mr Richard Morrison, the annual income allocated by the Fund towards tertiary education bursaries amounted to R10 million. However, the Bursary Administrator for the Emma Smith Educational Fund discovered

in 1996 that applications for bursaries by financially needy British-Dutch South African white girls had "dropped below the annual sustainable level of bursars required to fully utilise the annual distributable income from the fund.

"From 1996 the then University of Natal was trying through legal channels to have the narrow ethnic barrier broadened to be more inclusive of all needy females from the specific geographic area as set out in the Will," said Mr Morrison.

According to Mr Morrison the restrictive clause had

resulted in only R1 million or one tenth of the annual funding having been used towards bursaries. He added that statistics had shown that without the 'whites only' clause the Fund would enable the tertiary education of a further 250 females from the greater Durban area.

In response to the implications of the SCA's decision to set aside the racially restrictive clause, Mr Morrison said: "After a long involvement with this Fund I believe it will again serve the purpose for which it was set out by Sir Charles, namely to serve the provision

of Tertiary Education for needy girls whom his mother assisted in her daily rounds of social activity in her community of Port Natal.

"The Student Funding Centre is delighted to be able to extend its bursary services to a wider community in this regard and to continue to see the educational advantaging of an important sector of our society, that being financially needy and academically performing women," added Mr Morrison.

- NEESHA MAHARAJ

Law Students Impress Judges at Moot Final

The Law Faculty hosted the prestigious Ellie Newman Moot Court Final on the Howard College campus on October 7. This is the 39th Year that the competition has been held and it is widely regarded as one of the premier moot competitions in the country.

WORDS & PHOTO: SITHEMBILE SHABANGU

The students argued their cases before a bench comprising the Presiding Judge, the Honourable Mr Judge Jappie, the Honourable Mr Justice Justice P Koen and Honourable Madam Justice E Steyn. The students were given two complicated legal cases to argue and had to submit their heads of argument to the judges prior to the case being presented in court

The overall winner of the competition was Ms Tamryn Viljoen who according to the judges had a technically difficult case to argue but impressed them with the manner in which she handled the questions. They added that she knew the law and presented her argument persuasively. The runner-up prize went to Mr Kamiel Rajah who impressed the judges with his calm presentation and analysis of the law. The other two finalists were Mr Rhee Molefe and Mr Clinton Slogrove. All four participants dealt well with questions and were able finalists.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Head of the College of Law and Management Studies Professor John Mubangizi said: "This year's Moot Court Final takes on added significance as it comes at a time when we are celebrating 100 years of academia in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal. With its roots going as far back as 1910, the Faculty of Law at UKZN is one of the oldest in the country – and certainly one

of the best. In a way, therefore, this Moot Court Final forms part of the centenary celebrations of legal academic excellence in this province."

The first case dealt with the proposed Protection of Information Bill and whether it was constitutional. Ms Tamryn Viljoen represented the South African National Editors' Forum and Mr Rhee Molefe appeared for the Speaker of the National Assembly. The second case dealt with the issue whether lawful duress would permit a party to resile from a contract. Mr Kamiel Rajah represented the applicants, the Local Organising Committee and Mr Clinton Slogrove represented the respondent.

The Dean of the Faculty of Law, Professor Managay Reddi, said that mooting is regarded by the Faculty as an essential component of a well rounded legal education and an important stepping stone for entry into the legal profession.

In addition to the Ellie Newman Moot competition, the Law Faculty has participated in Moot Competitions for first year students in the Free State and in the African Moot Competition in Benin. The Faculty also participated in the Mock trial competition hosted by the University of the North West. Plans are being made to participate in the World Moot Competition being hosted in Pretoria at the end of the year.



From left: Head of the School of Environmental Sciences, Professor Fethi Ahmed; guest speaker, Professor Michael Meadows; and Dean of the Faculty of Science and Agriculture, Professor Deo Jaganyi.

Centenary Public Lecture provides perspectives on climate change

Professor Michael Meadows, one of the foremost geographers in the world, was the guest speaker at a Centenary Public Lecture hosted by UKZN's Faculty of Science and Agriculture on the Westville campus.

WORDS: VICKY CROOKES PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Professor Meadows' talk titled: *The long and the short of it: Perspectives on Climate Change* explored climate change, human-induced and natural, from a perspective gained from his extensive study of longer-term regional climate change in southern Africa.

Based at the University of Cape Town in the Department of Environmental and Geographical Science, Professor Meadows, explained the complex scientific problem that climate change presents and its associated impacts. He showed the audience how variable the earth's system is in its natural state to demonstrate that detection of climate change is the easy part; attribution is the more complex aspect. In order for us to effectively implement policy changes, we have to first establish the types of human activity and other factors responsible for climate change, said Professor Meadows. He suggested that examining the past can help us better understand certain aspects of climate change.

Professor Meadows chal-

lenged the audience to consider the natural human psychological perspective of time. He suggested that it leaves us poorly equipped to understand the difference between directional trends and variability in environmental parameters. He emphasised the highly variable nature of climate and said that predicting the future with any degree of certainty is very difficult. "We don't know enough about 'the long' to fully understand the 'short'", said Professor Meadows.

He went on to explain that the desire of humans to constantly seek to classify things presents a problem when dealing with climate change. "Uncertainty is the key message." He urged us to recognise that we live in a variable world to which we need to adapt, and to learn to accept a more variable future. In response to a question on what we should be teaching our children, Professor Meadows said it's not necessarily climate change on which we should be focusing, but instead, we should be advocating things such as a pollution-free environment, recycling, and

caring for the earth.

Part of Professor Meadows' recent research involves the rock hyrax (*Procavia capensis*), more commonly referred to as the 'dassie.' This small terrestrial mammal, which inhabits rocky terrain, leaves behind an extraordinary record of climate change, said Professor Meadows. Rock hyraxes are very particular about where they urinate and defecate – generation after generation of rock hyraxes tend to use the same spot over and over again. Their urine and fecal pellets build up over time to form boulder-sized dunghills or middens. These middens are then analysed in the laboratory and the results provide an accurate record of the changing climate and vegetation patterns. Professor Meadows and one of his former postdoctoral research fellows, with funding from the European Research Commission, are due to embark on a five-year study titled: *Hyrax: Rock Hyrax Middens and Climate Change in Southern Africa during the last 50 000 years.*



Students in the 2010 Moot Court Final, (left to right) Mr Kamiel Rajah (runner-up), Mr Clinton Slogrove, Ms Tamryn Viljoen (winner) and Mr Rhee Molefe.

The Final Bow ...

A student reminisces

Three years seemed like a lifetime back in first year with the 2008 intake. But here we are at the precipice of our undergraduate degrees. What a journey it has been, 2010 here we are.

WORDS: SIMPHIWE NGWANE PHOTO: LUNGA MEMELA

We survived the ridiculously long annual registration queues and the queues to activate our student cards at the RMS offices. During first year most students dabble in a mild case of nihilism amongst many things. The shackles of high school were buried deep and one began to experiment with what Michael Foucault calls self-stylization. The first semester whizzed past and one then proudly differentiated themselves as a second semester student, not a first year anymore; moving up in life, so to speak.

The intricate balance between academia and chill time is one that is precarious and perplexes the best of us. For many students the line between the two is still blurry and grey but a line is there, was there or should have been drawn. The free time was amazing; little did we know that we needed to be constructive with our "free time". A foreign creature called a tutorial was unleashed on us; we began to frequent the LANs and libraries. After the many gruelling exams coupled with *aegrotals* and some supplementary exams it is surreal that we are just a few weeks away from our final exams.

UKZN has been a site of great teaching and influence in our lives. The various personalities and character traits of the UKZN academics have been imprinted in the crevices of our minds. Opening our minds and imparting the very important concept of *cogito ergo sum* and its quintessential place in life. The friendships we forged and mere acquaintances have all played a part in our educational and personal journey called university. We embarked on creating ourselves, adding and dropping various elements as we went merrily along. As this chapter comes to an end let us not see it as an end but an end to a beginning. Farewell chocolate brownies from the Hexagon Café in PMB campus, cheers enormous Jubilee Restaurant vetkoeks (with cheese and polony) at HC and the snowballs from Makhlabane at WC.

Epworth High School in Pietermaritzburg has a common tradition for matrics to linger around Jacaranda trees in the hope that a flower will fall and land on their head; this a sign that



Mr Simphiwe Ngwane hopes that a Jacaranda flower will bring him luck in the exams.

they will do well in the exams. So the next time you walk up Residences Crescent from Island Office or by Thusini Walk by TB Davis building in HC or perhaps on the lawns of the Cecil Renaud library in PMB be conscious of the Jacaranda trees in bloom and cross your fingers.

As we make our final frantic walk or drive to OMSH, WOB, the Sport Complex and other writing venues let us savour it and take it all in. Those hours in the venues will soon be forgotten but the memories of college life will for ever more be canonized and linger in our minds. As we complete our various bachelor's degrees the skills and volumes of knowledge we received over the years have been truly worth it; *cogito ergo sum*. Remember though, the Chancellor might confer us with our degrees but the university of life confers us with honorary PhDs.

Walt Whitman's poem *Sail out for Good, Eidolon Yacht!* is truly applicable as we part; *Raise mainsail and jib – forth... Depart, depart from solid earth – no more returning to these shores*. Let us go forth in our individual paths and various endeavours and chart uncharted waters. Come end of November 2010 we will become Alumni of UKZN, *auf weidersehen and godspeed*.

Mr Simphiwe Ngwane is a 3rd year BA History and Classical Civilization student and the recipient of the 2009 McIntyre History Essay Award.

Scholarship Awards

SCHOLARSHIP	STUDENT NAME
PRESTIGE ENTRANT SCHOLARSHIP: KZN	Ridwaan Amod, Mufta Hargovan, Ashish Mothilall, Luyanda Cyprian Ndlovu
PRESTIGE ENTRANT SCHOLARSHIP: IEB	Robyn Anne Johnson, Nicole Claire Purdon
PRESTIGE EQUITY ENTRANT SCHOLARSHIP	Siwandiselwe Nombuso Gumede, Lungelwa Samantha Kunene, Phindile Kunene, Sindiswa Sphiwokuhle Maphumulo, Seneme Sonke Mhlongo, Nonjabulo Ngcobo, Zanele Ngwane, Mbalenhle Pearl Njoko, Nwabisa Samkelisiwe Radebe, Ntombifikile Angel Zulu
LC ROBINSON SCHOLARSHIP	Christopher Mark Maine
BRENDA M GOURLEY SCHOLARSHIP	Zakariya Badat
PRESTIGE UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP	Kumari Naidoo
DOCTORAL RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP	Odeyemi Oladapo Aremu, Mamoalosi Alix-Maria Selepe, Justin Paul Visagie
EMMA SMITH OVERSEAS SCHOLARSHIP	Jennifer Jess Upton, Frances Sarah Hobden, Toni Ruth Palmer, Bianca Kirsten Finnie
ARCHBISHOP DENIS E HURLEY	Daniel Egiegba Agbiboa, Lucy Thokozile Chibambo, Ethel Chitindingu, Quraisha Dawood, Sibongile Nqobile Precious Dlamini, Siphesihle Bongwa Dumisa, Ruvimbo Audrey Gonyora, Netsai Bianca Gwelo, Anniegrace Hlatywayo, Christopher Ikechukwu Ifeacho, Chummah Judex Kaunda, Bridget Nonde Masaiti, Mhlengi Vella Ncube, Andrew Emmanuel Okem, Dumisani Ngwenya, Isaac Maduabuchi Okoli, Felix Ifeanyi Okoye, Victor Mwamba Peni, Euodia Volanie
RICK TURNER SCHOLARSHIP	Chrispin Chikumbutso Kampala, Rosaline Yumumkah Kanjo, Samson Nelson Thembinkosi Zondi
ABE BAILEY TRAVEL BURSARY	Toni Ruth Palmer, Cherese Thakur
TB DAVIS SCHOLARSHIP	Seffat Mohammad Chowdhury, Chun-Tsung Feng, Samista Jugwanth, Mathew Christopher Page, Yashren Reddi, Nicholas Michael Rice, Jonathan Roscoe Turck
MABEL PALMER SCHOLARSHIP	Frances Rachel Morrow
MARYAM BABANGIDA SCHOLARSHIP	Sonja Mary Gammage
SAMUEL EDELSTEIN SCHOLARSHIP	Kenda Leigh Knowles, Michelle Louise Tait
HANNAH JOEL SCHOLARSHIP	Alicia Balraj, Thierry Ainsley Theodore
DR TOWNLEY WILLIAMS SCHOLARSHIP	Mark Duncan Williams-Wynn
MK ROSENBAACH FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP	Karmsheel Ramsugit
GC WEIGHTMAN-SMITH SCHOLARSHIP	Benjamin Alexander Bell, Rosemary Beukes, Kirsty Jane Brittain, Lisa Diane Burgdorf, Kristy Anne Burt, Alice Kathleen Fabian, Marianthe Stella Kaldelis, Jody-Ann McLean, Ugendran Nadasen Odayar, Robert James Pool, Minke Witteveen
ML KISCH SCHOLARSHIP	Laura Margaret Atkinson, Geoffrey Martin Beck, Jacqueline Poppy Bruce-Eagles, Ryan Beresford Brunette, Charlene Joan Cole, Charles De Maudave Bestel, Megan Du Toit, Daniella Egli, Kristin Jenna Mclean, Dashen Naidoo, Heather Jane Pattenden, Elizabeth Sandra Ramsay, Susan Wilson, Mathew Eduard Wright
WOSA SCHOLARSHIP	Deepika Ishwerduth Bennie, Rachelle Dominique De Charmony, Phumzile Precious Fankomo, Saffiya Habib, S'thandile Vuyisile Mahlaba, Hemisha Maken, Masoko Tshenakaho Malesa, Shamika Manilal, Tiisetso Palesa Modisane, Annaliza Moodley, Renisha Nikeyi, Korusha Pillay, Theresha Subroyen, Anna Zawiliska
LEAP-MELLON SCHOLARSHIP	Ashmita Arjoon, Michelle Browne, Nicolette Claire Caister, Carmel Therese Mary Chetty, Mhlonipheni Protas Dladla, Buhle Maud Donda, Deborah Siobhan Ducasse, Gabriel Govender, Bulelwa Keke, Purity Phumzile Nokuthula Langa, Mantha Thandiwe Makume, Jessica Ruth Matchett, Kerry-Ann Frances McCullough, Relebohile Lylian Mocketsi, Zwelibansi Mpehle, Sivashni Naicker, Sithembiso Magnus Ngubane, Nonkululeko Nzama, Jamila Patel, Alcino Dayton Pillay, Virendra Ramdhany, Tamlyn Candice Strydom, Imke Karin Summers, Jessica Winsome Myrtle Thompson
MANDELA RHODES SCHOLARSHIP	Siphesihle Bongwa Dumisa, Nandipha Mary-Anne Sephuma
S2A3 MEDAL AWARD	Natalie Dawn MacKenzie
CECIL RENAUD POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP	Peter Dawoud

Fourth Annual Teaching and Learning Conference

The 2010 Teaching and Learning Conference hosted by UKZN's University Teaching and Learning Office (UTLO) took place on the Pietermaritzburg campus from September 20-22.

WORDS: NEESHA MAHARAJ PHOTO: SUPPLIED

The stimulating three-day Conference with the theme: *Diversity, Transformation and the Student Experience in Higher Education and Learning* brought together 300 academics from among other countries, the USA, UK, Sweden, Israel, Iran, Swaziland, Kenya and Rwanda. The three plenary sessions by invited keynote presenters provided rich insights into the student learning experience; the importance of indigenous languages in teaching and learning; and the provision of an integrated curriculum which ensured the disabled were not excluded from a quality tertiary education.

Mr John Pampallis, Special Advisor to the Minister of Higher Education and Training, who delivered a message on behalf of the Minister, Dr Blade Nzimande drew attention to the numerous competing challenges facing universities in South Africa. He commended UKZN for the progress it had made by bringing teaching and learning into the spotlight.

Victor Borden, a Professor in Higher Education at Indiana University, USA, delivered the keynote address on the theme: *Accountability for Student Learning: Views from the Inside Out and Outside In*, while in his keynote address, Dr Siva Moodley, the Director of the Department for Students with Disabilities at UNISA addressed the theme: *Promoting an Inclusive Curriculum: A shared Responsibility*.

The Language Plenary Panel, a regular feature of the Conference, featured Dr TM Sengani of UNISA; Fulbright Fellow Ms Morgan Kelly Radford, of Harvard University; and Professor Ayub Sheik from UKZN's Faculty of Education. Each provided provocative perspectives on the theme: *Developing Indigenous Languages for the 21st Century Higher*

Education Student.

In his opening address, UKZN Vice-Chancellor Professor Malegapuru Makgoba, spoke of the Transformation Charter which emerged from the findings of the *Report of the Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions*. He outlined how the Transformation Charter would map out a vision for institutional transformation. Professor Makgoba also highlighted the importance of ethics in teaching and learning.

"People often think that when we talk of ethics, it pertains to research relating to animals or human beings. The whole notion of teaching and the way we teach has an ethical component that we don't emphasise. Teaching an inappropriate curriculum or the incorrect content is unethical... how you teach and what you teach – must observe the rules of honesty and integrity which should define the University. Anything that falls short of this is a transgression of ethics." said Professor Makgoba.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning, Professor Renuka Vithal spoke on the broad issue of diversity and the challenges this brings to teaching and learning. She called for the recognition and affirmation of, for example, gender, culture, religion and language in teaching and learning. "We should be teaching in a way that recognises and affirms diversity as a resource rather than a problem. The fact that we are all different will allow for a far more enriching learning experience than if we were all the same." said Professor Vithal.

Professor Vithal expressed satisfaction that the Conference, in its four year existence has

provided networking opportunities for academics at UKZN and around South Africa to converse on matters relating to teaching and learning; the opportunity to discuss new creative ideas; the opportunity for collaborative teaching and learning ventures; and the opportunity for furthering research endeavours.

Chair of the Conference, Dr Rubby Dhunpath alluded to the significant increase in participation in the Conference which had grown from a humble 50 paper presentations in 2009 to 140 in 2010. "This signals an increasing awareness and acknowledgement of the centrality of teaching and learning in Higher Education, parallel to research". He added that the increase in participation may also be attributed to the introduction of a range of initiatives to promote scholarship in teaching and learning across the University. "While still a predominantly UKZN conference, the Conference is attracting a growing interest from other universities in the country, the rest of Africa and other continents".

The conference also provided opportunities for celebration and comic relief. At the Conference dinner, Professor Donal McCracken delivered a hilarious yet thought provoking historical snapshot of 100 years of University history.

Professor Vithal thanked the University community for making the Conference a huge success and warmly invited all to the 5th Annual Teaching and Learning Conference entitled: *Postgraduate Teaching & Learning, African Scholarship and Curriculum Innovation in Higher Education* to be hosted on September, 26, 27 and 28, 2011 on the Westville campus.

Food, a Primary Learning Requirement

Language, teaching approaches and OBE. Five words and three broad concepts which were dissected from every angle at the 4th Annual 2010 Teaching and Learning Conference.

WORDS: DAMIEN TOMASELLI PHOTO: ALISTAIR NIXON



Conference delegates in discussion.

There is another system that also needs to be in place for students to be able to engage with their particular course material and that is access to food on a regular basis. Dr Unathi Kolanisi and Dr Joyce Chitja, both from the School of Agricultural Sciences and Agribusiness discussed their case study, which was conducted on UKZN's Pietermaritzburg campus, on first year students' access to food.

The study alluded to the fact that high rates of dropout occur at tertiary institutions with three key factors identified: institutional, environmental and socio-economic factors. Many students are dropping out because they are hungry. The case study included students who receive financial aid packages, which do not make sufficient provision for food.

The researchers found that students lack knowledge of nutrition. Healthy and less expensive foods are not popular among students because they take more time to prepare. Cooking and storing meals in advance was widely overlooked as an option. Many students live in the University residences in shared living spaces where stealing one another's food is common. The consequence is that students buy expensive junk food with low nutritional value. It was also found that many students are

under pressure to send money back home to their families. Dr Chitja emphasised that it is indeed expensive to educate an African child due to the dire socio-economic background of the majority of African students entering universities for the first time. They are often the first in their families to attend universities. Innovative solutions are required.

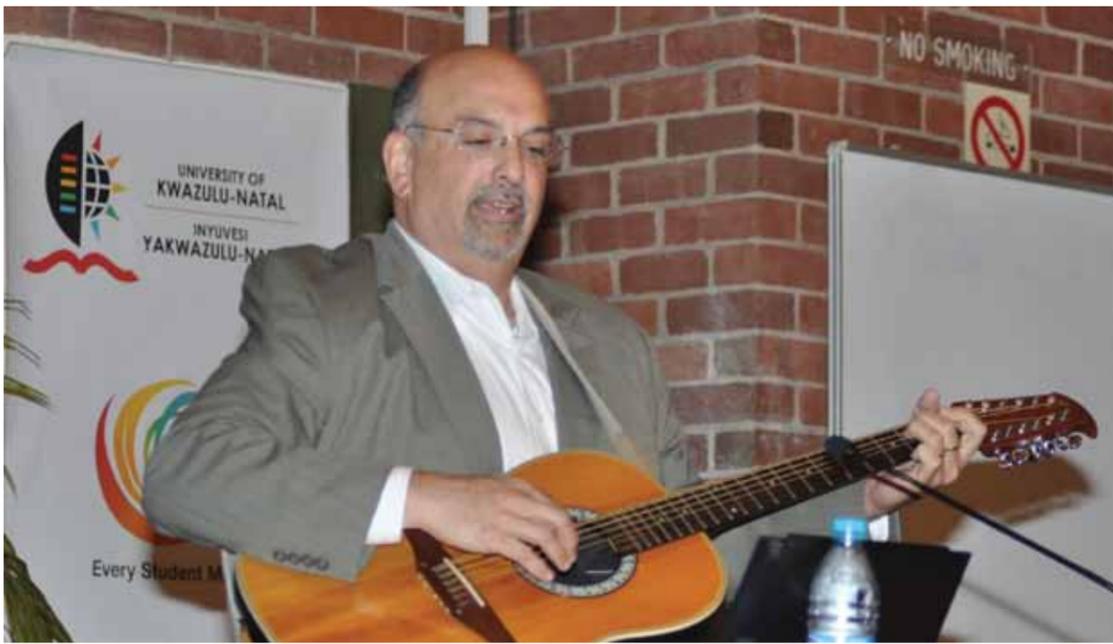
A local UKZN student commented that students often mismanage their funds and lack the ability to budget for food. "No able parents would send their children to university without giving them money for food," countered Ms Zama Khanyile from the Pietermaritzburg Student Counseling Centre, who added that it was not uncommon to hear from students who have gone without food for periods of three to five days.

Engineering Professor Thomas Afflu noted that "You cannot teach a student who is hungry." He added that many African countries put comprehensive university financial packages for students in place after independence, and South Africa should consider this model as an option.

The African Centre for Food Security (ACFS) is continuing with this study and hopes this research will provide insight into food access issues at UKZN and possible innovative solutions.



From Left: Professor Malegapuru Makgoba; Professor Renuka Vithal; Mr John Pampallis; and Dr Rubby Dhunpath.



After a stimulating address, Professor Borden went on to synthesise his presentation in song, much to the delight of Conference delegates.

Accountability for Student Learning

Views from the Inside Out and the Outside In

In his keynote address *Accountability for Student Learning: Views from the Inside Out and the Outside In*, Professor Victor Borden argued that public interest in the outcomes of Higher Education has increased around the world as a college education has become essential in preparing citizens for the careers and lifestyles that can improve the quality of life within our communities and countries.

WORDS: RUBBY DHUNPATH PHOTO: ALISTAIR NIXON

Fulbright Fellow, Victor Borden (PhD) is Professor of Higher Education at Indiana University, Bloomington and Senior Advisor to the Vice President for University Regional Affairs, Planning, and Policy. Professor Borden's general area of scholarship is on the assessment of organisational performance within Higher Education Institutions.

As more people participate in and pay attention to our institutions, the focus of accountability shifts from members of the academy to the individuals being served and their representatives. There is clear evidence that external accountability pressures have stimulated members of the academy to engage in assessment. At the same time, accountability pressures often undermine internal improvement efforts because of fundamental differences between the "outside in" perspectives of policy makers and the "inside out" perspective of academic staff. Specifically, policy makers desire relatively simple, comparable, unambiguous information that provides clear evidence as to whether basic goals are achieved but members of the academy find such bottom line approaches threatening, inappropriate, and demeaning of deeply held values.

Professor Borden presented a framework for understanding and dealing effectively with the paradoxical relationship between ac-

countability and quality improvement. A framework is proposed that accommodates the differing approaches required to serve each purpose: promoting common interests in student achievement and improving the quality of life within the communities we serve while minimising the conflicting tensions that arise from the differing points of view. The framework requires members of the academy to take responsibility not only for quality assessment and improvement, but also for developing more standardised approaches to describing the essence of their work to external audiences. At the same time, he urged, policy-makers must take professional responsibility for developing measures and methods of accountability that accommodate important differences in the missions of diverse Higher Education providers and the diverse student populations they serve.

In a workshop entitled: *Developing and Sustaining a Culture of Institutional Research*, Professor Borden made a compelling case for institutional research to provide an empirical basis for reforms that promoted institutional effectiveness. Institutional research has been defined in a variety of ways over time but the definition always relates the conduct and dissemination of research and analysis to the practice of administering, managing, or improving Higher Education programmes, institutions, and systems: prac-

tices that are characterised by decision-making as a core process. It is not coincidental that the institutional research profession has developed and flourished at a time when Higher Education Institutions have adopted increasingly professionalised models of administration and management. But Higher Education Institutions are complex composites of hierarchical/bureaucratic and collegial models of administration and governance – often termed a professional bureaucracy. As a professional bureaucracy, Higher Education Institutions are typically characterised by highly decentralised and loosely coupled authority structures.

The workshop explored the benefits of developing and sustaining a systematic institutional research capacity to support ongoing efforts of Higher Education staff to improve both effectiveness and efficiency. Borden explored a collaborative organisational learning framework that accommodates both a rational decision-making ethos, as well as a more organic and dynamic action inquiry approach. Participants considered how institutional research could be used to address current high priority institutional issues. They also explored the various ways in which institutional research capacities are structured and determined an approach to developing such capacities at their own institutions.

Academic Development Programme

Helps at risk students

Students' academic progress is monitored by the University and those who are at risk of not completing their degrees on time are notified in order for them to get assistance.

WORDS: DAMIEN TOMASELLI PHOTO: ALISTAIR NIXON

Those who fail to attain 75% of their total credit points out of the modules they wrote are classified as "At Risk" of failing to finish their degrees in time. In order to assist them to recover, the University has introduced the ADO (Academic Development Officers) Pilot Programme.

During a presentation at the Teaching and Learning Conference, ADO, Mr Nigel Chiweshe from the Faculty of Management Studies; ADO and tutor Mr Joseph Jere, from the school of Information Systems and Technology; and Mr Paul-Francois Muzindutsi, a UKZN Master of Commerce Finance student outlined some of the challenges the ADO Programme is addressing. One of the challenges is increasing student participation in the Programme. Although campaigns have been instituted, including the use of flyers, posters, a presence during orientation and visits during lectures for the specific modules where help is available, many students remain unaware of the ADO consultation programme.

According to Mr Jere this is due in some part to apathy but there is also reluctance to meet with ADOs because of the stigma attached to being an 'At Risk' student. One solution has been to open up the Programme to all

students so that stigma may be avoided.

A further difficulty is that ADOs are only available for five hours a day, making it difficult to meet with all students, particularly part timers. There are only nine ADOs available in the entire Faculty of Management Studies. "...but we are trying. I tell students to come in weekly, even if it's just to say hello in order to build a rapport with the student to encourage them to come and ask questions whenever they have some" says Mr Jere.

The programme also helps students and support staff network with one another. Students may face the danger of not completing their studies for a number of reasons, such as financial and personal problems. They would typically approach an ADO who is not trained to deal with a particular issue, but may be able to help identify appropriate persons with whom the student should speak in order to address their particular problem.

The Programme has been in existence for three years, and Mr Jere says that students are starting to buy into the idea as they can see the results when they seek academic assistance or through their friends who have sought help. He can be contacted on ext. 5978 or jeren@ukzn.ac.za.



Conference delegates during a presentation.

"ALWAYS A BLAZING ROW"

An irreverent comparative university history

Professor Donal McCracken, a senior professor of History based in the Centre for Communication, Media and Society at UKZN, having until recently been a Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences for the past 15 years, presented his reflections on 100 years of university history in KwaZulu-Natal at the 4th Annual Teaching and Learning Conference dinner.

WORDS: DONAL MCCRACKEN PHOTO: ALISTAIR NIXON



Professor McCracken addresses the dinner.

2010 marks the centenary of the establishment of Natal University College (NUC), an affiliate of the University of the Cape of Good Hope. The first dozen or so students admitted to NUC called themselves 'Aboriginals' and were taught in a small hut in 'sleepy hollow'.

2010 is also the centenary of the shooting of Bob the elephant in Mitchell Park Zoo. Well, Bob killed his *mahout*, and that is *nearly* as grave a sin as a junior lecturer killing the Dean. Anyway, death was the only appropriate punishment. So poor Bob was shot, his remains being displayed in the Natal Museum. Some years later, recalling that event and remembering the significance of the year 1910 a professor at the University of Natal, Durban campus remarked, "I can think of nothing worse – to be shot and stuffed and sent to Pietermaritzburg for eternity."

When, like Moses, I led my 100 UDW Humanities staff members across the Great Valley of Intellectual Despair from Westville to Howard College, I thought that The Merger would be hell-on-earth. It was not. Whatever problems faced us over the ensuing five years, they were not primarily the result of the merger. What struck me was the gulf existing between the old camps of Liberal Maritzburg and Pragmatic Durban – and I suspect that more blazing

rows have occurred over the previous 100 years over that great divide than over such modern imperatives as academic freedom or that elixir of modern South African university life, transformation. Territory will always eclipse ideology, even in the university world.

Despite the rivalry, the government ratings and the snobbishness between them, universities in the English-speaking world are remarkably similar places these days. Eccentricity, once the cornerstone of any university worth the name, has been hounded out and, with massification world-wide, has been replaced by a homogenised approach, where the structured conformity of non-conformity has replaced what once was that most precious of university traits, the brilliant but absent-minded professor.

The pursuit of increasingly *defined knowledge* has, I fear, had the tendency to replace human prudence and wisdom. Remember Benjamin Jowett, the master of Balliol College Oxford, being asked if a good person could be happy on that instrument of torture, the rack? He replied, "It depends; it is possible if it was a very good person and a very bad rack".

Yet in the modern Silicon Ivory Tower academics continue to have the emperor's-new-clothes mentality. *Plus ça change, plus c'est la meme chose*. In other

words, they still don't live in the real world. Like the DVC who was reportedly issued with 'the university revolver'. I could never imagine that gentle soul plugging anyone. Of course, a more worldly dean might be less restrained.

This living in an unreal world has wide repercussions, even on lecturers' families. I forget exactly which university lecturers' children founded the secret society of IOLADS (International Organisation for the Liberation of Academics' Daughters and Sons) ... My own memories of university life in Ireland in the 1950s and 1960s are a bewildering hotchpotch. On the one hand, I remember a reception at our barn-like home. Sitting crossed legged on a ragged Persian carpet watching an eminent historian being sick into a wastepaper basket. Thirty years later I reminded him of the incident and he suggested that maybe if I wanted my career to progress, we should keep the memory to ourselves.

But I also remember my father marching to Belfast demanding that the proposed new university be in Derry and not in the unionist-dominated Coleraine region. This issue provoked the greatest tertiary educational row since the Irish Universities Act of 1908, becoming a catalyst sparking the Troubles in Northern Ireland in 1966/67.

And as the University of the Cape of Good Hope mirrored the Royal University of Ireland, with its so-called 'godless' affiliated Queen's colleges, so blazing rows over sectarian university education resonated over the establishment, 50 years later, of South Africa's racial bush colleges. The names were different, the rhetoric about the same.

I think there are major challenges to the historian of universities in Ireland and especially in South Africa, where, as my father used to say, 'quoting the prophets' verged on eclipsing scholarship. In the case of the University of Natal, one has to recognise that 'people of colour' were admitted in small numbers and Mabel Palmer and Florence MacDonald's extension unit did offer an opportunity in a pretty hopeless situation. That Palmer was not everyone's cup of tea and undoubtedly exploited the well-meaning MacDonald is another

matter. As Professor Bill Guest has pointed out, in 1939 there were only 858 students at the University College (51 percent in Durban), 49 students were described as 'non-Europeans' – or as someone remarked the other day, 809 were non-Black. By 1963 the University of Natal, as it was called from 1949, had 666 black students. The Medical School, with its famous Alan Taylor residence, commenced in 1951 with an initial intake of about 35 students. None of these stats are earth shattering.

I dare not name the greatest academics which we have produced because I am not sure what great means. Was the scientist who spent a 'heroically unproductive' career, publishing nothing and assembling collections and cataloguing specimens, one section of which was labelled, 'Pieces of string too small to be of use', great? Maybe. What I do know is that despite the never-ending change in universities people are still, as Alan Paton said, spirit. And any dean can tell you that in universities, sin is still sin, greed still greed, jealousy still jealousy and revenge still revenge.

Academics' attitude to management in the modern university was summed up by one University of Natal academic who, when asked how one should approach the Vice-Chancellor as distinct from a lecturer, replied in the words of the poet, 'Be polite but not friendly to bishops, but be kind to the poor parish priest'.

Nothing new in that. In the mid-1930s the professor of Classics at Queens University Belfast decided it would be more convenient if he gave his classes at home. So he instructed his students to take the train 20 kilometres to Bangor where he lectured them. The Vice-Chancellor came to hear of this arrangement and the recalcitrant academic was summoned. On entering the sanctum sanctorium, before the Vice-Chancellor could speak, the professor raised his hand for silence and said, "Vice-Chancellor, I have only one thing to say to you and it is this: I do not hold with Vice-Chancellors". He then turned and left the room.

Sadly, I know of no such act of suicidal bravery in South Africa. In the old University of Natal Paul Bews was not only a fine botanist, but an enlightened Vice-Chancellor, perhaps a close rival to Ernie Malherbe. I was

once told that a candidate for Vice-Chancellorship had been deemed to be ineligible because the selection committee heard that his bedside reading was a discipline text-book.

At UDW leadership was a brief and perilous affair. In 10 years as Dean, I witnessed four Vice-Chancellors and seven DVCs. Who said that First World War fighter pilots survived for longer?

Of course, in 18th century Ireland things were very different. The great VC of Trinity College Dublin was Provost Baldwin. His relationship with his students was probably the best any VC has ever had. He had no hesitation in joining his students when they sallied out into the street to take on the hated apprentice butcher boys, shouting as he did, "Follow me boys, and I'll head you. I am appointed by your parents and friends to care for you and I'll fight for you till I die".

Nearly a century later an equally notorious VC, Provost Mahaffe, welcomed King George IV. Oscar Wilde when asked how on earth the good Lord could create someone as odd as Mahaffe famously replied, "I cannot conceive". The party of all university parties was held during the king's visit, at which 12 full bowls of whiskey punch toasts were drunk. The king, barely able to stand, exclaimed what all undergraduates in any age wish to hear – that credit without examination would be granted that term. And yet, with all this tomfoolery, Trinity produced Edmund Burke, Henry Grattan, Dean Swift, Oliver Goldsmith and Oscar Wilde.

Eccentricity does produce results and real nonconformity excites students, creates a sense of wonderment, breaks them free from societal and parental dogma. The first universities were full of eccentrics – primarily teaching not researching. Those professors were paid directly by their students (an excellent Quality Performance mechanism). To survive, one had to inspire and embed into the psyche notions of the universality of scholarship and the age-old truth that knowledge is not a reality but a journey. As Robert Service in one of his epic novels about the Yucan has an old prospector saying, "It isn't the gold that I am wanting, so much as just finding the gold".

“We are still teaching the way we were a 100 years ago”

This remark was made by the Head of the School of Information Systems and Technology Professor Manoj Maharaj at the 2010 UKZN Teaching and Learning Conference.

WORDS: DAMIEN TOMASELLI PHOTO: ALISTAIR NIXON

In a presentation conducted with Information Systems and Technology masters student Mr Albert de Lange, technology as a teaching tool was discussed with the focus on the use of podcasting in a lecture environment.

Podcasting allows audiovisual information to be captured and made available at a later stage through the web. Podcasting can also make use of computer screen and audio capture. An example of audiovisual lessons can be experienced on the Khan Academy website (www.khanacademy.org) which boasts more than 1 000 tutorial videos in several subjects. Numerous other websites provide access to thousands of podcasts on almost any topic imaginable.

Podcasting provides the student with an added dimension with which to interact with learning material. This technology also allows the student to become an active participant in creating learning content and not just a passive “absorber” of lecture material. The active nature of this learning environment provides the student with what Professor Maharaj termed a “multi-modal learning environment” involving listening, watching, reading and writing to various degrees. Providing almost immediate access to lecture content also frees the student from concentrating on copying lecture notes in class, thus allowing them to listen and

participate in the lecture more freely.

The School of IS&T provides podcasts in various formats that are suitable for desktop computer use as well as for viewing on suitable mobile telephones. Wireless enabled mobile devices, together with wireless networks on campus, provide students with easy (and free) access to these podcasts. This allows students to make constructive use of their time. For example, those who use public transport may go over their lecture again while traveling home. An example of podcasts created at UKZN may be found at <http://is.ukzn.ac.za/podcast.aspx>

What was most disappointing to the presenters was the slow uptake of this technology by academics at the University. There is clearly an element of technophobia, maintains Professor Maharaj, but what is most worrying is that while students are ready and willing to embrace technology-assisted teaching and learning, many academics are just reluctant. It is clear that this attitude will widen the gap that is already becoming evident between the learners of today and their lecturers. The presenters made it clear, by a simple demonstration, how easy it was to create a “live” podcast and indicated that it would take just five minutes for someone to learn how to use the basics of



Delegates at the 2010 Teaching and Learning Conference.

this technology. It was also made clear that this methodology is not technology specific, and works on a Windows as well as on an Apple platform.

In response to a question on copyright infringement Professor Maharaj commented, “If information is already in the open domain it’s not something that can be copyrighted.” Clearly, should the lecturer incorporate copyrighted material in the lecture, permission has to be sought and acknowledgement provided. However, as is the practice at many leading

international institutions such as MIT, the Open University and others (for example, <http://www.apple.com/education/itunes-u/>) lecture podcasts are created under the Creative Commons license. See <http://creativecommons.org/> for different types of license agreements.

The Web has made knowledge ubiquitous, which means that lecturers are no longer the only source of information for students. Lecturers should use technology to enhance the student’s learning experience by journeying with them in the “accumulation of

information and the creation of knowledge,” said Professor Maharaj. “Students are getting away from us,” he added, and suggested that technology should not be seen as something that has the potential to replace lecturers, but should be used as a tool with which to enhance the learning process.

Anyone who wants to make use of podcasting can contact the School of IS&T or email Professor Maharaj directly, maharajms@ukzn.ac.za

Discipline of Optometry commemorates World Sight Day

Students, staff and passers-by at UKZN’s Westville campus benefited from an eye-care awareness campaign conducted by the Discipline of Optometry to commemorate World Sight Day on October 14.

WORDS & PHOTO: LUNGA MEMELA

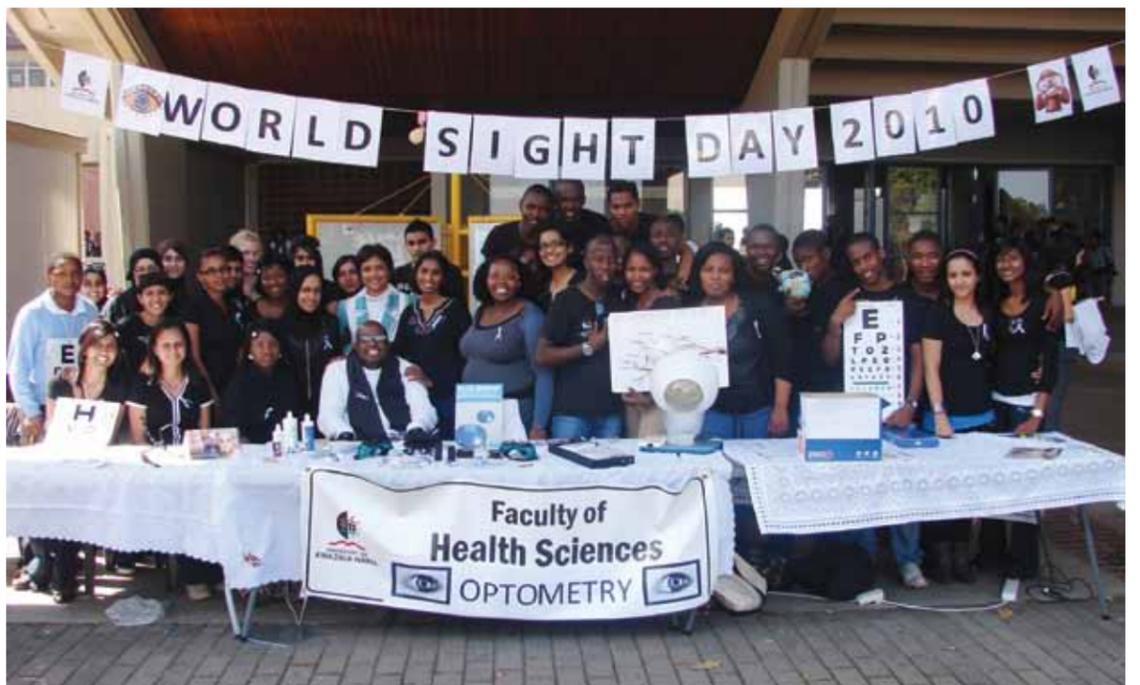
This year’s theme was “The Right to Sight” which is the campaign slogan for Vision 2020, a global campaign to eliminate avoidable blindness by the year 2020.

Ms Pirindha Govender, a lecturer in the Discipline of Optometry said that event hoped to create awareness of the importance of good vision and vision problems amongst

students and staff, and about the global situation with regards to visual impairment and blindness which represents an international public health concern.

Apart from vision screening conducted by students at the Westville campus quad, an awareness video was screened across all campuses of the University.

“It is important to create awareness of the eye clinic and



Students and Staff from the Discipline of Optometry commemorate World Sight Day on the Westville campus.

its services that are available on campus,” said Ms Nasrin Essack, a third year Optometry student. “People don’t need to live with

defects and these tests are done absolutely free,” she added.

The eye clinic is open to the public. Specialist clinics such as

Low Vision, Binocular Vision, Paediatric Vision and a Contact lens clinic are conducted in addition to the general clinic.

The UKZN Griot Of Managers and Forms

What do academics actually do? My mother is still puzzled why I am still in my office when students are on vacation. Some think that academics teach. Research, we know, is what we do after hours when we are not 'working'.

WORDS: KEYAN TOMASELLI

But what lecturers really do is fill in forms. Forms for this, forms for that: iEnabler, HEMIS, IRMA, KPAs, SAPSE etc. The most recent SARS-linked HR software distributed to all staff wants lists of all our publications which are already on IRMA. But rather than hyperlink to IRMA, HR wants us re-enter information already in the system. This, after the system refused to accept an arbitrary date I concocted for the start of a disciplinary membership in the late 1970s for which neither I nor the association has a record. Some of the systems work, some don't. None of them talk to each other or to national software systems, which means that the same information has to be constantly regenerated manually under different categories from scratch to cross-populate all of the above.

Not only do we live virtually in acronym-obsessed software, but we have to manoeuvre through a spreadsheet economy managed by remote upper management. This strata very often forgets that our real jobs have something to do with education and that often invisible constituency – students. Administrators want reports on this, reports on that, verifications of the other, all required by yesterday. Sometimes we get admonished because the deadline passed before the forms were disseminated.

Our students, sensing our frustrations, conceal themselves behind doors and bushes, and pounce the moment a helpless lecturer is sighted. I once did a survey of a female professor in an understaffed programme trying to get to the toilet and back to her desk. Hordes of students mobbed her when she exited her office, all clamouring for immediate attention as she struggled to get across the corridor. Not to be outwitted, the female students followed her into the toilet while the rest surrounded her on her return. Just going for a pee takes a real act of will at UKZN – especially during registration periods and at the start of term.

UKZN is the only institution of the many that I've lectured at where this kind student pack behaviour occurs. A sympathetic face and an administratively savvy lecturer always attract those in need.

Does the form-filling make the institution's administra-

tion anymore efficient? Students can't make sense of them, staff are often bewildered, and academics resent being dragged away at peak marking periods to undergo 'training' on how to populate computerised software written by programmers who think that academia is a sausage factory. Expensive underage external consultants with dodgy degrees were previously employed to generate spreadsheets to guide world-renowned senior professors and highly rated researchers on how to do their jobs. Administrative benchmarks that have no relation to the real world were imposed on academics who often responded with irritation and creative number crunching. Now, we all know that numerical methods are only as good as the assumptions on which they are based. So, I guess, like iEnabler, we are in freefall ...

A professor from America once commented in exasperation, "I've never before worked in a University that has such a lien on one's time". An instructive comment this, as this was before the merger, before corporatisation, but after massification. He went back to the US for respite – the same country that has instrumentalised the world.

The corporate university now has multiple layers of management, and each one creates work for the level below, to the extent that students, who are the majority and at sub-tier seven, are often invisible – except for the noise they make. How else does one explain the surprise of some in upper management when they find rooms booked, (some) students in the classroom, lecturers unavailable for this or that workshop or endless form-filling training.

The lecturers find themselves inevitably sandwiched between students from below and managers from above. Lecturers have been made into the work horses located at the eduface struggling to balance data-generation and exponentially increasing administration with educational and research activities. Ultimately, something's got to give. What gives is sustained interest by lecturers in university government, starting at School level. Too much to do, too little time to do it, too few lecturers, so skip the meeting or the training workshop and forget the instruction for one article annually. Lecturers try to find their way to the

classroom, where students detect lecturer exhaustion, where the lecturers try to turn to advantage the fact that half the class is usually there for only half the time. The serious students are still waiting to pounce on lecturers in the corridors. This story may not apply beyond the Humanities, but it is a story the managers need to be told.

For management, work means going to meetings and generating more work that needs to be done at night and weekends after the meetings are over. For academics, work requires that meetings be paced with other academic activities. When one is in a meeting one can't be found, when one is lecturing, one is always found. So, to paraphrase the old Springbok Radio serial, Squad Cars, "they [the students] prowl the corridors by day, and party by night", while the aca-

demics actually do need a vacation. Hi, Mom, see you soon.

PS, Andrew Stengel of Electrical Engineering on my last column asked: "I'm curious about your referring to Prof Richard Dawkins as Dworkins", and wondered where this started and why". Andrew had done a fruitless search on the internet, hoping to discern "a more exotic explanation" than simply a spelling error. Nice to know that folks are actually STUDYING my articles, from Engineering nogoal, as did Roger Peplow who responded empathetically to my column about noise on campus. Seems that us Humanities types do have some things in common with the sciences after all!



Tomaselli is director of The Centre for Communication, Media and Society. He writes this column in his personal capacity. This is a true story, only the facts, names and places have been changed, and the setting bears no resemblance to UKZN.

Sudoku

				6		2		4
					3		5	
	8					3		
9		4		7			1	
2			8		1			3
		1			9			2
			7			1		
5			1		6			
					2			7

THE UKZNDABA TEAM

Nomonde Mbadi – Executive Director; Smita Maharaj – Director: Communications; Deanne Collins – Publications Manager; Neesha Maharaj – Journalist; Lunga Memela – Journalist; Sithembile Shabangu – Journalist; Vidhya Singh – Layout & Design.

Produced by Corporate Relations. Tel: 031 260 1245/8668/2957 www.ukzn.ac.za