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Centre for Higher Education Development

ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

CENTRE FOR EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

CENTRE FOR INFORMATION LITERACY

HIGHER AND ADULT EDUCATION STUDIES AND DEVELOPMENT UNIT

CENTRE FOR OPEN LEARNING

DEAN'S OFFICE

Fresh approaches, based on systematic knowledge of teaching and learning, are needed to ensure that the universities, including UCT, can maximise their contribution to the country.



Dean's Report



The vision of the Centre for Higher Education Development (CHED) is to be a cross-faculty unit that contributes to continual improvement in the quality and effectiveness of higher education – at UCT and nationally – through widening access, promoting excellence through equity, developing the curriculum in partnership with faculties, and enhancing the competence of graduates by ensuring the provision of key skills.

CHED's research arises from institutional and national need as well as individual interest. Higher education has sole responsibility for producing the graduates that provide the core of the advanced knowledge and skills that are essential for South Africa's social and economic development. This represents a major challenge which the sector is still far from adequately meeting. The government has identified skills shortages as a central obstacle to development, but despite some successful institutions and areas of excellence South African higher education remains a low-participation, high-attrition system still characterised by 'race' and class inequalities in access and success rates that severely impede progress. Fresh approaches, based on systematic knowledge of teaching and learning, are needed to ensure that the universities, including UCT, can maximise their contribution to the country.

CHED's research mission is geared to addressing this need through investigating and developing educational theory and practice that are effective in our context. It aims to ensure that educational development work, at and beyond UCT, is based on rigorous and ethical research that serves such objectives as equity of access, realising the academic potential of students from all sections of the population, improving graduate output and outcomes, and generally strengthening the quality of teaching and learning in higher education. Much of the research focuses on teaching-and-learning approaches, curriculum design – often in relation to specific disciplines – and the conditions that promote learning. There is also a strong strand of research on and for higher education policy,

sponsored by bodies such as the Department of Higher Education and Training, the Council on Higher Education, Higher Education South Africa, international charitable foundations, and the National Business Initiative.

South Africa's challenges are substantial but not unique, and a key feature of CHED's research is to draw on, extend and disseminate, the body of tertiary teaching-and-learning knowledge that has been rapidly growing internationally over the past three decades. To this end, many CHED academic staff are developing productive associations with individuals, institutions and scholarly bodies abroad, and CHED's Centre for Educational Technology is leading the way with linkages elsewhere in Africa. CHED's intellectual contribution to national education debates continues to be strong, as indicated in publications in accredited local and regional journals such as *SA Journal of Higher Education*, *African Journal of Research in Mathematics, Science and Technology Education*, *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies*, and *SA Journal of Libraries and Information Science*. However, international interest in South African higher education research is evidenced in the growing number of CHED publications in leading international journals such as *Teaching in Higher Education*, *Studies in Higher Education*, *International Journal for the Study of Southern African Literature and Languages*, *International Journal of Community Research and Engagement* and *International Journal of Education and Development using ICT*.

CHED's research activity and output are increasing. Indicators of growth include a doubling of accredited journal articles from 2005 to 2010, and a five-fold increase in the value of research contracts between 2007 and 2010. CHED now has eight NRF-rated researchers, and, with nearly two-thirds of its permanent academic staff actively involved in the Emerging Researcher Programme, we believe that this number will increase steadily. There are intriguing new areas of inquiry emerging, including taking understanding of aspects of curriculum to a new level through analysing the knowledge characteristics of curricula and qualification types, with significant implications for key issues such as articulation between academic, professional and vocational learning, and access to postgraduate study.

With this trajectory and staff commitment, we are confident that CHED's research identity and impact will continue to grow.

**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR NAN YELD
DEAN OF HIGHER EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT**

TAKING AFRICA'S KNOWLEDGE TO THE WORLD

UCT has joined the open content revolution, with its own Open Content Directory (<http://opencontent.uct.ac.za/>), which allows easy, free, online access to a selection of UCT teaching and learning resources. Funded by the Shuttleworth Foundation and developed as part of the Open Educational Resources Project in the Centre for Educational Technology (CET), the directory showcases UCT's collection of open educational resources. The subsequent development of the broader OpenUCT initiative will increase the institution's participation in the global open research, teaching and social responsiveness environment, making a range of UCT's knowledge resources available to anyone with Internet access.

"Launching the Open Content Directory is a significant step towards making UCT's African knowledge more accessible to the world," says Vice-Chancellor Dr Max Price. "The open movement is already giving Africans easier access to knowledge from the world's top universities." In addition, CET's Associate Professor Cheryl Hodgkinson-Williams said that making such materials available outside academic circles will help create a culture of lifelong learning in South Africa.



ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

CHAPTERS IN BOOKS

DAVIDOWITZ, B. AND ROLLNICK, M. 2010. Adjustment of under-prepared students to tertiary education. In M. Rollnick (ed.), *Identifying Potential for Equitable Access to Tertiary Level Science*, pp. 89–106. Netherlands: Springer. ISBN 9789048132232. [CREE]

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LONG, C., DUNNE, T.T. AND CRAIG, T.S. 2010. Proficiency in the multiplicative conceptual field: using Rasch measurement to identify levels of competence. *African Journal of Research in Mathematics, Science and Technology Education*, 14(3): 79–91. [CREE]

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PAXTON, M.I.J. AND TYAM, N. 2010. Xhosalising English? Negotiating meaning and identity in Economics. *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies*, 28(3): 247–257.

POTGIETER, M. AND DAVIDOWITZ, B. 2010. Grade 12 achievement rating scales in the new National Senior Certificate as indication of preparedness for tertiary chemistry. *South African Journal of Chemistry*, 63: 75–82. [CREE]

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLISHED CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

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LE ROUX, K. 2010. "I was thinking the wrong thing" / "I was looking in a particular way": In search of analytic tools for studying mathematical action from a socio-political perspective. In U. Gellert, E. Jablonka and C. Morgan (eds), *Proceedings of the Sixth International Mathematics Education and Society Conference*, 20–25 March 2010, Berlin, Germany. Berlin: Freie Universität Berlin. ISSN 20779933. [CREE]

CREE – Centre for Research in Engineering Education. Also see page 41.

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CENTRE FOR EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

CHAPTERS IN BOOKS

CARR, A.M. 2010. Stories of Change: e/merge @ the University of Cape Town. In U.D. Ehlers and D. Schneckenberg (eds), *Changing Cultures in Higher Education – Moving Ahead to Future Learning*, pp. 355–356. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag. ISBN 9783642035814.

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LUO, A., NG'AMBI, D. AND HANSS, T. 2010. Towards building a productive, scalable and sustainable collaboration model for open educational resources. In W. Lutters, D.H. Sonnenwald, T. Gross and M. Reddy (eds), *Proceedings of the 16th ACM International Conference on Supporting Group Work*, 7–10 November 2010, Florida, USA. New York: Association for Computing Machinery (ACM). ISBN 9781450303873.

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CENTRE FOR INFORMATION LITERACY

AUTHORED BOOKS

DARCH, C. AND UNDERWOOD, PG. 2010. *Freedom of Information and the Developing World: The Citizen, the State and Models of Openness*. Oxford: Chandos/Woodhead. 317pp. ISBN 9781843341475.

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HIGHER AND ADULT EDUCATION STUDIES AND DEVELOPMENT UNIT

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CLIFF, A. AND MONTERO, E. 2010. The balance between excellence and equity on an admission test: contributions of experiences in South Africa and Costa Rica. *Ibero-American Journal of Educational Evaluation*, 3(2): 8–28.

FINDING THE POSTGRADUATE VOICE

In January 2010, Dr Lucia Thesen and Associate Professor Linda Cooper hosted a colloquium on “The postgraduate condition: writing, risk and the making of new knowledge”. The colloquium, hosted with funding from the Programme for the Enhancement of Research Capacity (PERC) and facilitated by Professor Brenda Cooper, brought together scholars to find common themes towards a publication about how risk plays out in postgraduate writing. Participants included Kate Cadman (University of South Australia), Mary Scott (Institute of Education, London), Suresh Canagarajah (Penn State), Moeain Arend, Clement Chihota, Moragh Paxton (all UCT) and Somikhazi Deyi (CPUT). More recently, Theresa Lillis of the Open University and PhD students Aditi Hunma (UCT) and Emmanuel Sibomana (Wits) have joined the project.

The project begins with a question: how do researchers project intended meanings through writing, so that others, whom they do not know, will hear them as they intend? This is a deeply political question. “Writing forces us to commit to this path, for now, and to leave other paths behind. It inscribes an identity that lasts long beyond the moment. Many student and novice researchers – particularly those writing from the geopolitical periphery – experience a sense of loss in the compromises arrived at in the completion of the thesis. It is in this written product that knowledge production finds material form. In the process of writing, modes of expression and experiences are revised and erased along the way.”

Thesen and Cooper’s project is concerned about accounting for the deletions and silences that are part of the process of research writing, and to understand the consequences of what is lost in postgraduate student writing. “Our interest in understanding what is ‘no longer there’ in the final product leads us to explore the notion of risk, and to look at it afresh and productively in relation to concepts such as voice.”



MCMILLAN, J.M.E. 2010. Through an activity theory lens: conceptualizing service learning as ‘boundary work’. *Gateways: International Journal of Community Research and Engagement*, 2: 39–60.

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CENTRE FOR OPEN LEARNING**CREATIVE WRITING****POEMS PUBLISHED IN ANTHOLOGIES**

FISKE, I.J. (WRITING AS DE KOK) 2010. Five poems. Our Sharpsville. Transfer. Ground wave. The Archbishop chairs the first session. Time to go. In R. Malan (ed.), *Burning a Hole in the Page: A Reader’s Guide to Seventy South African Writers*, pp. 69–72. Pietermaritzburg: Shuter & Shooter (Pty) Ltd. ISBN 9781430600022.

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the first session. In J. Clare (ed.), *Captured in Time: Five Centuries of South African Writing*, pp. 460–462. Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball Publishers. ISBN 9781868423781.

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DEAN’S OFFICE**CHAPTERS IN BOOK**

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NKOMO, D. 2010. The utilisation of outer texts in the practical lexicography of African languages. *Lexikos*, 20: 371–389.

PAXTON, M.I.J. AND TYAM, N. 2010. Xhosalising English? Negotiating meaning and identity in Economics. *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies*, 28(3): 247–257.

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