



Central University of
Technology, Free State

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Issue 8



Community Engagement NEWSLETTER

Message from the Manager/Editor

"If you come to help me, you can go home, but if you consider my struggle as part of your struggle for survival, then maybe we can work together."

Aboriginal Wise Woman

The above quote epitomises the stance that CUT is taking as far as Community Engagement (CE) is concerned. The Engaged Model looks at CE as a spin-in, spin-out interaction. The CE Strategy advocates the Engaged Model of CE. Further information on this aspect can be seen in my discussions on the Round Table. Read on!

Having said the above, as we near the final or latter stages of 2014, it is time to reflect on what the year has been like. It has been an amazing year with some developments. The CE policy/plan and strategy has finally reached the stage of fruition. Another milestone for CE at CUT is the establishment of a database. We have gone electronic. Staff members and project leaders are now able to access the database electronically. This enables better management in terms of making inputs, etc.

May I take this opportunity to thank each one of you for making CE @ CUT pleasant, enjoyable and successful in 2014! Best wishes for the balance of this year and for 2015.

Regards

Jeeva Munsamy

Community Engagement Manager

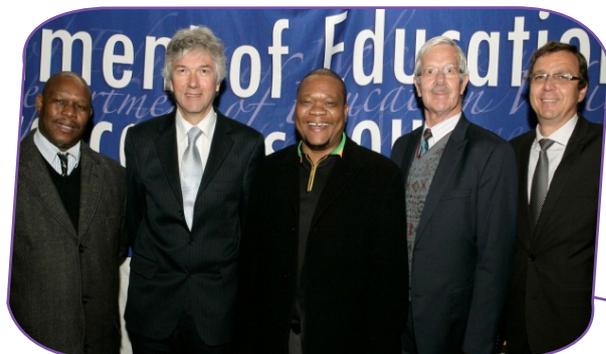
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WINTER SCHOOL PROJECT 2014

The Schools Advancement Academy hosted the Winter School for Grade 12 learners from 30 June 2014 to 12 July 2014. Eight subjects were offered during the Winter School, namely Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, Geography, Engineering Graphics and Design; Business Studies, Accounting and Economics. The project renders support to scarce subjects, and nurtures the talent of prospective students who might enrol at CUT in the STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics).

The project is led by eighteen highly qualified tutors. It received generous funding from Corporate Social Investment (CSI), of Standard Bank South Africa to the amount of R1 million for the year 2014. Below are photographs that illustrate the highlights of the Winter School. (Compiled by Mr G de Villiers)



From left: Mr RS Malope - Head Of Department, Free State Department of Education, Free State; Prof N Garrod - DVC Resops, Mr PHI Makgoe – Hon MEC: Education, Mr G de Villiers – Director: Schools Advancement Academy and Mr A Nicolaisen - Provincial Head, Free State.



Winter School learners at the official opening.



From left: Mr Giel de Villiers: Director: Schools Advancement Academy, Ms Johanna Maphutha: Manager Human Capital – Standard Bank Group, Ms Jennifer Bihi: Project Leader – Winter School and Mr Pule Moshane: Assistant to the Winter School Secretary.



Ms Johanna Maphutha and Mr Viljoen (Tutor: CAD Module).



Ms Johanna Maphutha surrounded by student assistants and learners from different schools.

ANNUAL CAREER INFORMATION WORKSHOP FOR HIGH SCHOOL LEARNERS

The Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology provided career-related and programme-specific information to Grade 10 to 12 learners from 30 June to 2 July 2014. Learners were granted the opportunity to gain first-hand experience of what different sectors in industry are all about. These visits allow learners the opportunity to see what their prospective studies may entail.

Sixty learners participated in the Annual Career Winter School. Learners were briefed on different fields of study such as Building, Civil, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering, as well as IT. They also participated in practical experiments. Site visits were made to Coca-Cola and Tempe Military Base. Furthermore, CUT application forms were handed out to prospective 2015 students. (Compiled by Mr B Jeremiah)

Rhodes University Round Table Discussions

Rhodes University hosted the Round Table Discussions on community engagement in June 2014. The following discussions are based on some of the presentations.

University engagement and academic excellence: a view from the south.

Prof. Nieves Tapas:

Director: CLAYSS www.clayss.org

As the point of departure, Prof. Nieves Tapas emphasised CE and learning and distinguished between CE and service. Various examples of CE and learning in the Latin American context, which is applicable to SA as well, were shared, e.g. designing panels; learning and designing panels with the community; and service-learning.

Lessons:

This CE experience entails talking to the community, listening to and hearing their concerns, needs, etc.

It takes more knowledge to change a situation than an examination.

Who are we studying for? – The relevance of knowledge to the community was emphasised.

You cannot serve the community if you do not do research in the community. Research and CE cannot be separated.

Ivory tower to engaged university- Knowledge should be neutral.

Tension exists between engagement and scholarship.

Engagement is the weakest pillar - it is easy to lose sight of this pillar as focus is on research and teaching- (CE is

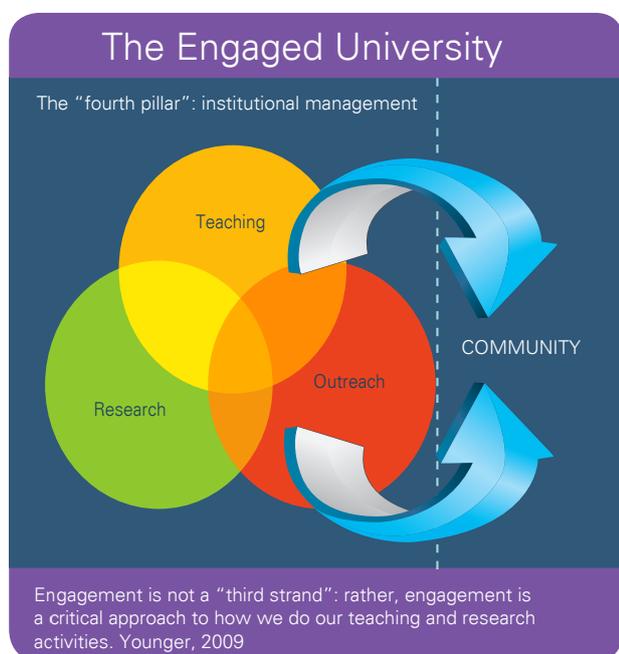
the lesser prominent mission to teaching and learning and research)

The engaged university is moving to a fourth pillar - this is how we can reach out to the community. We need to be open to inputs from the community.

Therefore, engagement is critical to how we do teaching and research. Points to consider: Are we researching and teaching what is relevant to our community?

We need to 'decolonise' the university. We should not be imitating the European universities too often, as no two universities are the same.

We need to offer an appropriate service to meet the needs that are identified by the community through listening/ communicating. The result would be great service and great learning - that's what we call service-learning.



Concluding remarks and questions

Engaged scholarship has its own views. Therefore, one has to do with one's own research. The knowledge has to be sound, even though the theoretical basis is different. It should still present sound science.

Community engagement, scholarship and 'the twenty-first century university'

Prof. Jerome Slamet (Stellenbosch)

'What is a university, a 21st century university and an engaged university?' We are confronted with the following:

- Pattern-building causes complexity in society, whereby we follow others closely - and in this case, other universities.

- There is emphasis on collaborative knowledge production and knowledge ecology.
- There is a situation of 'knowledge democracy' - whose knowledge is important? There are different forms of knowledge.
- We have collaborative learning which involves technology. The role of technology - how students learn and what they learn is important.
- One needs to take cognisance that the content studied is made known in different ways; an example is the web, etc. This exposes students to different levels of thinking and as a result there is discussion between students and lecturers. Often more discussion and less lecturing take place.
- There is pressure on public funds for higher education, and the university of the 21st century finds innovative ways to obtain funding. The entrepreneurial university looks for ways to increase revenue.
- There is also the 'massification of Higher Education' whereby HEIs are 'democratised' and 'popularised'. Diversity as a trend is seen as the way to go.
- HEIs are also part of the network society - be a part of networks to address problems.
- An important feature is internationalisation, which opens research opportunities and prepares students for the world.
- Universities must consider sustainability, which includes both economic and ecological sustainability.

Community Engagement

- For all of the above reasons, Community Engagement needs to be a precise, standardised term used at universities. Engaged scholarship is the favoured way of referring to CE.
- What is the ontology of the university? Does the university have two or three functions? Is it Teaching and Learning, Research and Community Engagement, or Teaching and Learning and Community Engagement, or Research and Community Engagement?
- We need to move beyond the circles of the Venn diagram (Teaching and Learning, Research and Community Engagement) and thus 'shake off' its explanatory /defining powers.
- There should be strategic discussions regarding universities' visions. What is the kind of discussions that the engaged university should be having?
- Rewards system: We need to remain intact. We need to get out and find ways of measuring our community engagement and the status that is given to CE.
- We need to find credible ways of recognising CE. Thus, social innovation as a term for CE will not produce the desired results of achieving the engaged university.

(Compiled by Mrs J Munsamy)

Shifts involved in engaged scholarship

	From	To
Community relationships	Partnerships and mutuality Deficit-based understanding of community. Academic work done for the public	Reciprocity Asset-based understanding of community Academic work done with the public
Knowledge production/ research	Applied Unidirectional flow of knowledge	Inclusive, collaborative, problem-oriented Multi-directional flow of knowledge
Epistemology	Positivistic/scientific/ technocratic Distinction between knowledge consumers Primacy of academic knowledge University as the centre of public problem solving	Relational, localised, contextual Co-creation of knowledge Shared authority for knowledge creation University as part of an ecosystem of knowledge production addressing public problem-solving
Political dimension	Apolitical engagement	Facilitating an inclusive, collaborative, and deliberative democracy
Outcome	Knowledge generation and dissemination through community involvement	Community change that results from the co-creation of knowledge

Adapted from Hartley et al, 2010:402)

Upcoming events:

1. SAHECEF Board Meeting and AGM: 28 - 29 November 2014 at Cape Peninsula University, Cape Town.
2. NRF Symposium 30 November 2014 - 01 December 2014 at Cape Peninsula University, Cape Town.
3. Talloires Network Conference: 2 to 4 December 2014 at Spier Estate, Stellenbosch, Cape Town.



GENERAL ENQUIRIES

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