

**2022 PROGRESS REPORT:
TRANSFORMATION of the CURRICULUM and ALIGNMENT of the
STUDENT EXPERIENCE**

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1. INTRODUCTION

The global Covid-19 pandemic has changed the higher education landscape forever. Teaching and learning has morphed into digital education faster than anticipated.

Although all NWU staff and students returned to an adapted form of contact teaching and learning at the beginning of 2022, capacity limitations forced the institution to proceed in a blended mode, that was only departed from by some, once all Covid restrictions were lifted. The second semester of 2022 saw a full-scale return to contact within the institution and most activities could proceed in person. However, as will be noted throughout the report, a significant number of NWU staff and students prefer online participation for various reasons. One of the gains for the NWU during the Covid period, was the marked increase in team teaching across its campuses, as well as the active engagement of and interaction between students across campuses, made possible by online platforms like Zoom and MS Teams.

This report aims at highlighting the trends and progress made within the NWU, to transform its curriculum and align its student experience in line with Strategic Goal 1, that requires “a systematic continuous process of curriculum transformation and renewal ...to equip graduates to address contextualised challenges of twenty-first century society, inclusive of calls to decolonise and Africanise the curriculum.”

The first part of this report will focus on the NWU’s student profile for the reporting period. First the 2021 and 2022 contact registration and enrolment numbers for undergraduate and postgraduate students will be analysed, (UG and PG students), Planned versus actual enrolments per faculty will follow. The number of distance students actively participating in teaching, learning, and assessment is considered next. 2021 NWU graduates, dropouts and pass rates are considered before the results of the Student Teaching and Learning Experience Survey (STLES) and the 2022 Unversum report are shared.

The second part of the report focuses on institutional, cross-campus, extra-curricular activities that are offered annually, to support the transformation of the NWU. Reports on the Facing Race Week, Gender Awareness Week and Language Awareness Week are included, as well as a brief summary of other initiatives across the NWU.

In the third part of the report, each faculty indicates which initiatives were undertaken to ensure that academic programmes are coherently designed, intellectually credible, and consistently relevant.

The NWU is pursuing the following strategies to attain this goal, and each faculty will report on its progress to realise these:

- In-depth orientation of students to their fields of study and methodologies therein, as well as a broader understanding of contemporary societal challenges, in the form also of appropriate work-integrated learning (WIL) and service learning (SL) opportunities, to foster an ethic of care and social responsibility.
- Curricula that provide an orientation to various paradigms of thought and explanatory systems including, where appropriate, indigenous knowledge systems, so that NWU students and graduates are introduced to different intellectual traditions, and can substantiate their worldview and the

principles that inform their professional conduct.

- Programmes that are designed to support the learning needs of a diverse student body, by involving students in a range of individual and collaborative learning and assessment activities, so that they can engage as learners who progressively assume responsibility for their own learning.
- Curricula that are designed to help students develop the knowledge, attitudes and skills that will enable them to lead purposeful lives in the service of the science collegiate, their profession and civil society as responsible citizens.

PART A: NWU STUDENT PROFILE

2. THE NWU ENROLMENT TARGETS AND PROFILE 2021-2022¹

Definitions relevant to this report:

Registrations: All students that registered for a qualification in a year. This includes students that discontinue or drop out.

Enrolments: All students that **actively participated** in a qualification in a year. This is a subset of Registrations, but does not include dropouts.

Success rate: Completed Module Full-time Equivalents divided by Enrolled Module Full-time Equivalents. This is according to DHET and HEMIS definitions of module success.

Graduation rate: A calculation based on the number of students who have graduated in a particular year, irrespective of the year of study, divided by the total number of students enrolled at universities in that particular year.

2.1 NWU 2021 AND 2022 CONTACT REGISTRATION AND ENROLMENT NUMBERS (UG AND PG STUDENTS)

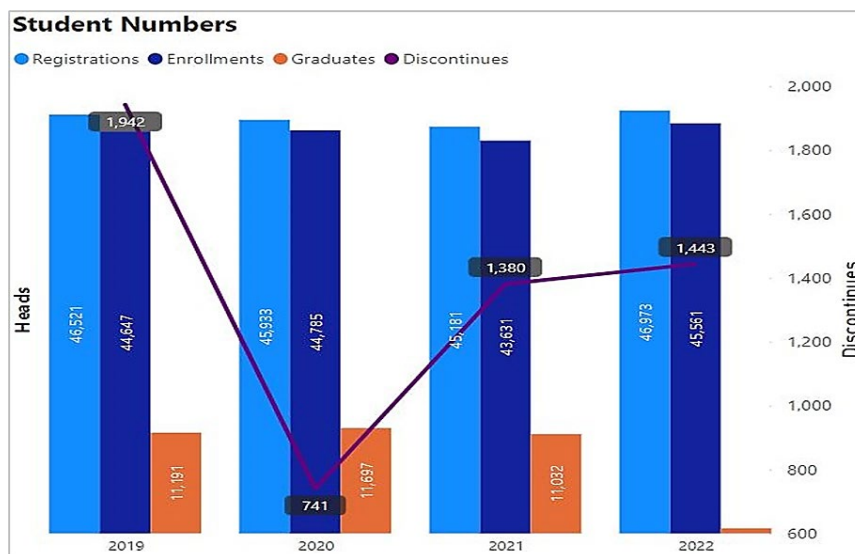


Figure 1: UG & PG Contact enrolments per year 2019 - 2022

As demonstrated in Figure 1, whereas the number of registered contact students increased with 1 792 UG and PG students from 2021 to 2022, the contact student enrolments during 2022² also presented an upwards curve with a total of 1 930 more students who actively participated in their academic programmes during 2022 in relation to 2021. This figure may not seem surprising as during 2020 the academic programme had to be moved into the online environment due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Even in 2022, the university took note of the accumulative nature of stress factors reported by students, including financial

¹ Year of reporting is dependent on audited figures and may thus not always be for the year 2022

² 2022 data not final

problems. The StudyWell project on student well-being and success in accessible forms to student support structures and students, has evolved from being a special project of the DVC T&L Office, to become an interdepartmental collaboration (with Student Counselling and Development) and MUST. Figure 1 is also indicative of a decline in graduates by the end of the 2021 academic year. All in all, students performed well in terms of participation and graduations for the 2021 academic year, with 2022 data still in progress.

Break-down of 2021 contact enrolments: Undergraduate, Honours and Postgraduate qualification types

Per qualification type

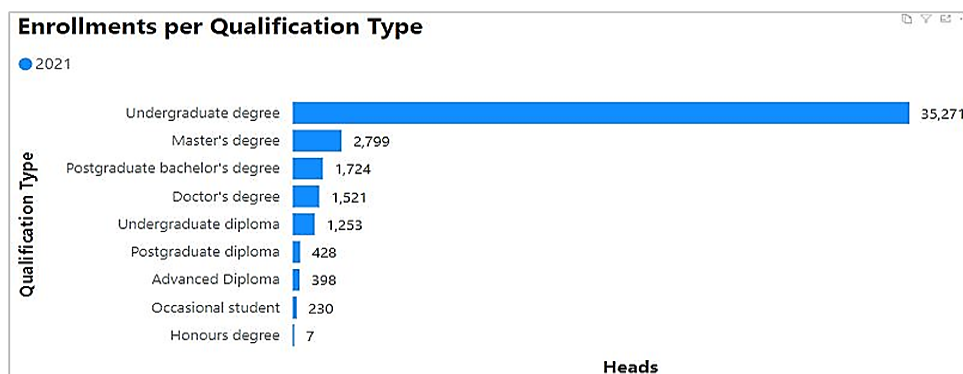


Figure 2: 2021 Contact Enrolments per qualification type

As demonstrated by Figure 2, undergraduate enrolments remained high (total n = 43 631), with most of the undergraduate diplomas and advanced diplomas being offered via the distance mode of provision. The two-fold purpose of the NWU PQM review are (as from Report 1), to reduce the size of the PQM to use and obtain information that will inform decisions regarding the size and shape of the PQM, as espoused in the NWU Strategy and Teaching and Learning Strategy (2021-2025). These decisions will direct the NWU PQM of the future, developed from each Faculty's envisaged academic offering, referred to as the Faculty's PQM. Enrolment numbers of UG vs PG students should not have changed significantly by 2024. What will be evident from 2025/2026 will be fewer UG qualifications, programmes and modules, and more General Bachelor's degrees. The balance of the UG:PG enrolments is not an aim of the PQM review, but hopefully a more structured and yet flexible curriculum may indirectly result in a shift in this ratio.

Another reason to drive towards a better balance of UG and PG students, is the non-sustainability of NSFAS funding over the long run, with 23 520 NSFAS students in 2021 and 26 327 students (24 317 contact and 2 011 distance students) in 2022 of the NWU, currently relying on NSFAS funding to be able to study.

2.1 2022 ACTUAL VS PLANNED ENROLMENTS

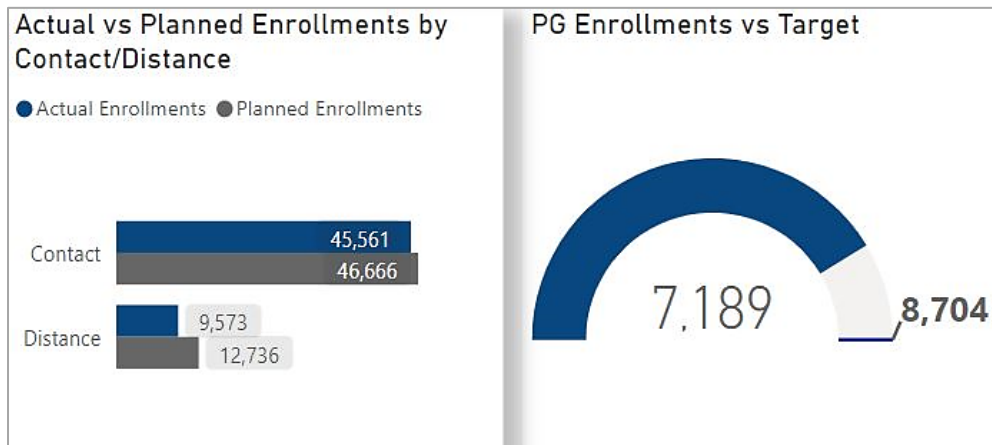


Figure 3: 2022 Actual vs Planned enrolments Contact and Distance and Postgraduate targets

Figure 3 gives an overview of the actual and planned enrolments for 2022 for both the contact and distance mode and postgraduate student enrolments. As at end of the first semester actual contact were 2.42% short in relation to the target, with actual distance enrolments 33.04% off-target.

2.2 2020-2022 STUDENT ENROLMENTS PER FACULTY

Total enrolments per Faculty

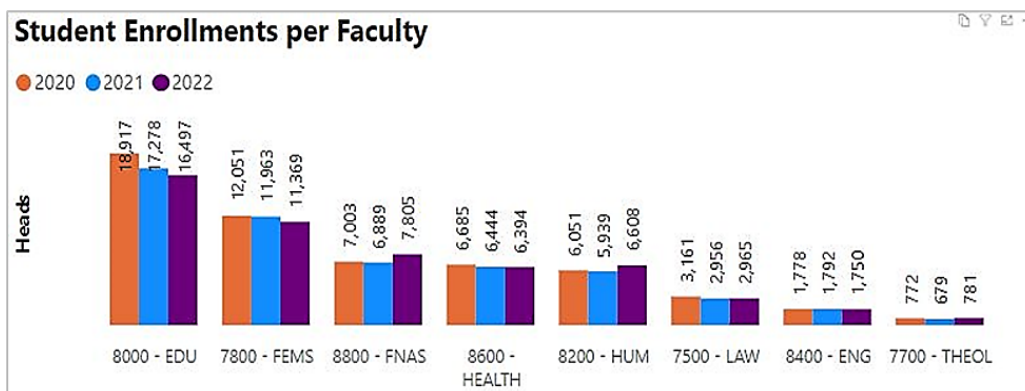


Figure 4: Enrolments per Faculty 2020-2022

Faculty enrolments from 2021 to 2022, as per Figure 4 shows four faculties with a small decline in student enrolments and four faculties with an increase in student enrolments between 2021 and 2022.

2.3 2020-2022 DISTANCE STUDENTS ACTIVELY PARTICIPATING IN TEACHING, LEARNING, AND ASSESSMENT

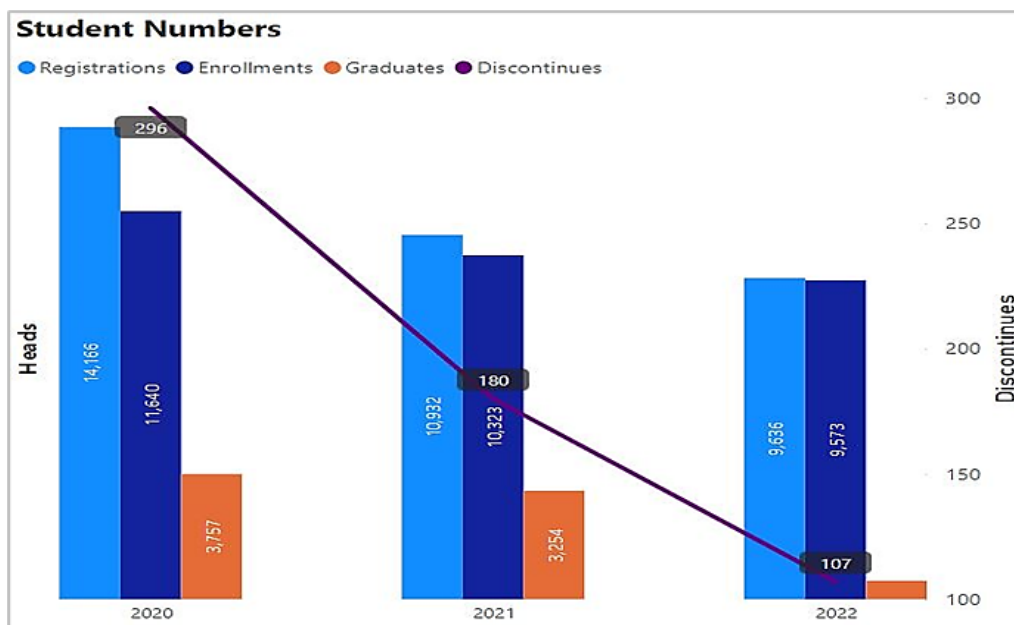


Figure 5: Distance registrations and enrolments 2020-2021

Figure 5 depicts the exact number of distance registrations in 2021. The drop in registrations is mainly due to non-HEQSF aligned Education programmes that reached their end date and was removed from the NWU PQM (e.g., NQF level 6 Advanced Certificate in Education [ACE] and National Professional Diploma in Education [NPDE] programmes and the NQF level 7 BEd-Hons). While there was an excessive decline in registrations 2020 to 2022, only 1.11% of 2022 registrations discontinued as compared to 1.65% in the 2021 academic year. This is a positive sign that more distance students are working towards completing their qualifications within the allowed maximum duration of study as per the requirement of the General Academic Rules.

Figure 6 shows the break-down of enrolments and the activity of distance students in different qualification types during 2021. Growing the distance education offering of the NWU remain one of our strategic initiatives, with two strategic workshops on distance education scheduled in 2022, considering our awareness of the changing nature and forms of (new) work that also play a role in thinking through the positioning of the NWU's distance education (and contact) offering beyond 2025. Faculties will have to do refined planning concerning programme development, Unit for Distance Learning (SALA) and Unit for Distance Learning (T&L) reflect on capacity and resources planning and seek input from management on a possible reconsideration of the NWU Strategy in terms of the focus on SET subjects, with recognition of new areas of knowledge and transdisciplinary research and work emerging in the market.

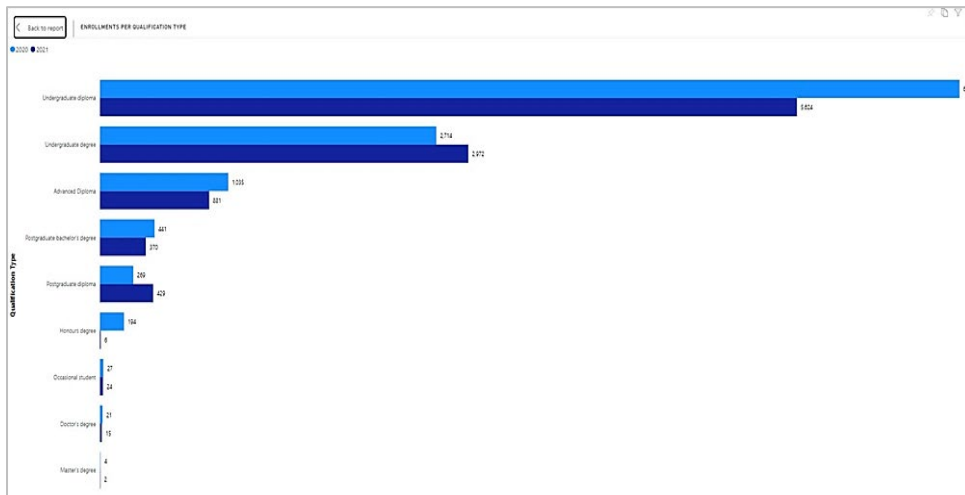


Figure 6: Activity indication of distance students per qualification type in 2020-2021

The positive effect of the General Academic Rule changes and stricter process requirements on distance student activity can be seen when looking at the number of annual discontinuations of study in Figure 7 below. In the past a significant number of discontinued records were due to distance students not writing examinations. Pre 2019, this trend continued over a significant number of years due to the open distance learning policy. From 2019 onwards, a student registered for a distance module had to either participate and write an examination or fail the module (after the second opportunity). Overall, as per Figure 7, the discontinued records declined 2020 to 2021.

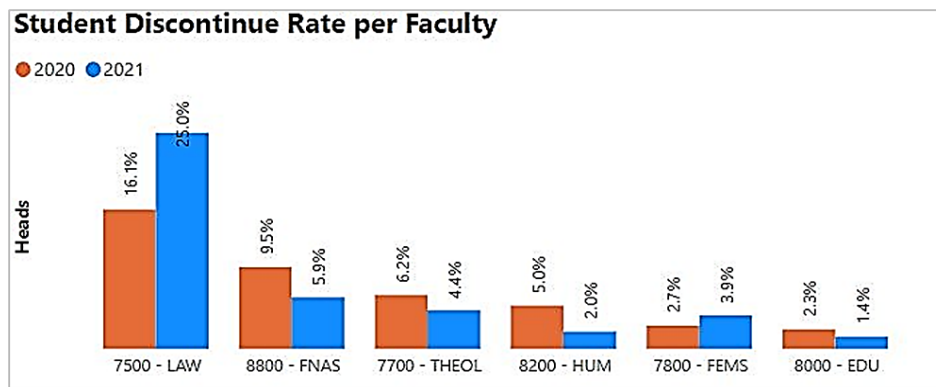


Figure 7: Distance discontinued records 2010-2022

2.4 2021 NWU GRADUATES

As per Figure 8, contact student graduates declined with 6.03% from 2020 to 2021, with a 1% decline in graduates as a % of enrolments indicated as 25% for 2021, versus 26% in 2020. This is also an indication that the NWU navigated the move from contact teaching and learning to emergency remote teaching and learning in a positive manner, with sufficient support in place for students, to uphold academic quality.

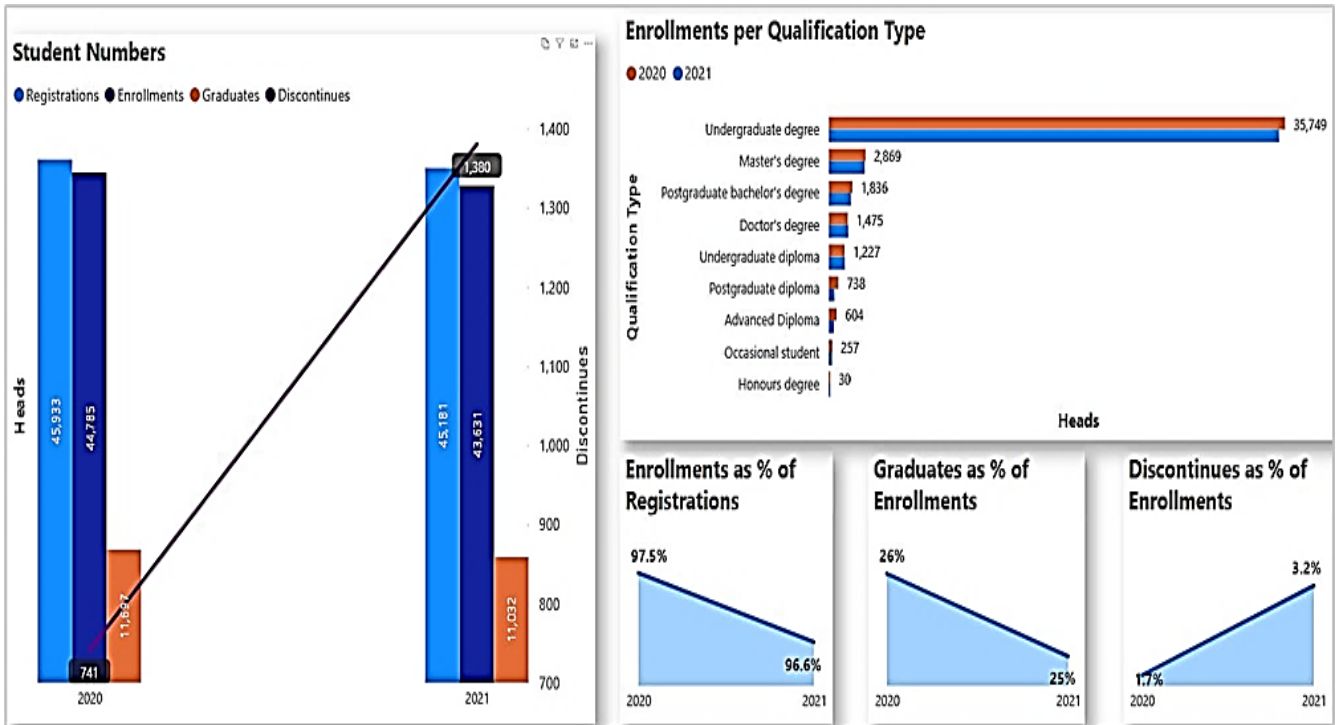


Figure 8: Contact graduates as percentage of enrolments 2020-2021

Figure 9 illustrates the contact graduation rate per Faculty from 2020 to 2021 noting a slight decline in five of the eight faculties.

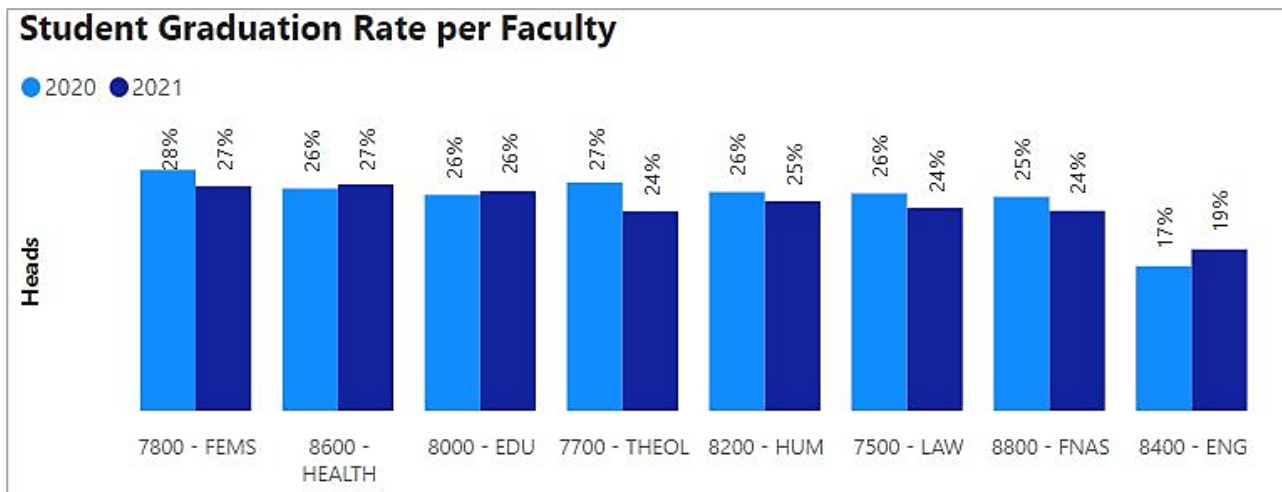


Figure 9: Contact graduation rate per Faculty 2019 and 2020

Figure 10 indicates the distance student graduates as % of the distance student enrolments for 2020-2021.

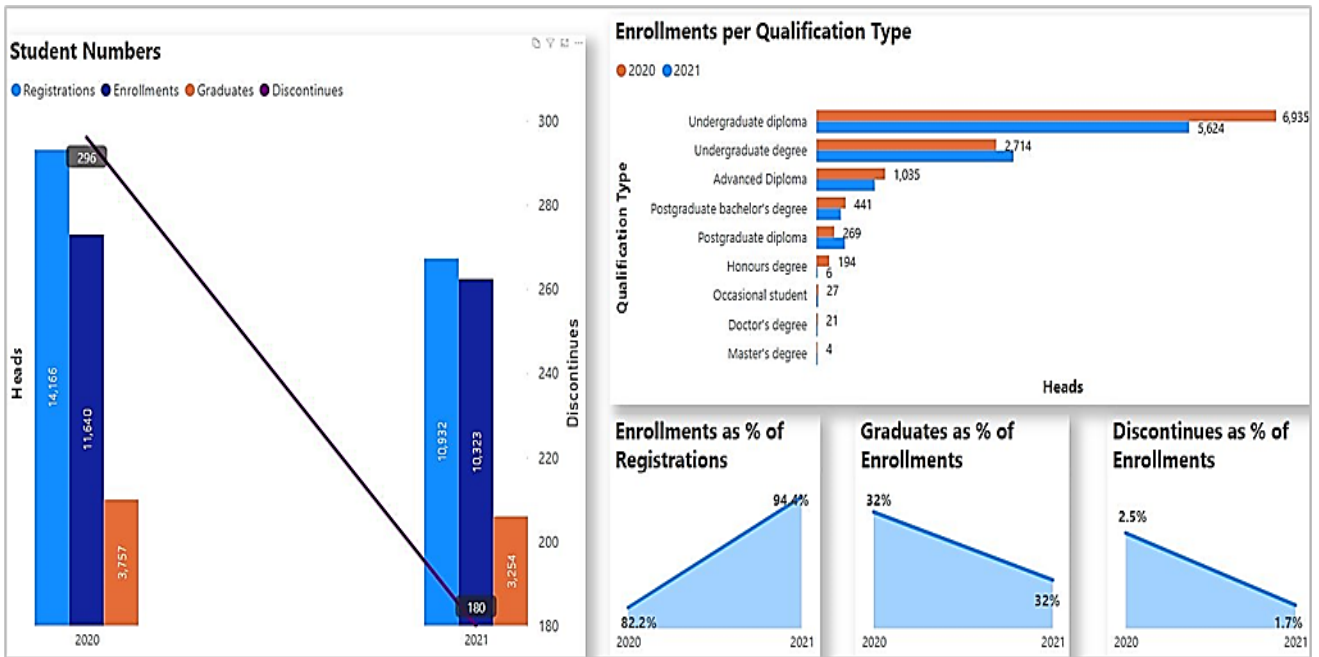


Figure 10: Distance graduates as percentage of enrolments 2020 and 2021

As per Figure 10, distance student graduates declined with 15.46% (503 graduates) from 2020 to 2021, but graduates as a % of enrolments remained at 32% for 2020 and 2021 (keeping in mind the explanation on the decline in distance registrations and enrolments in 2021), with 2022 data still in progress.

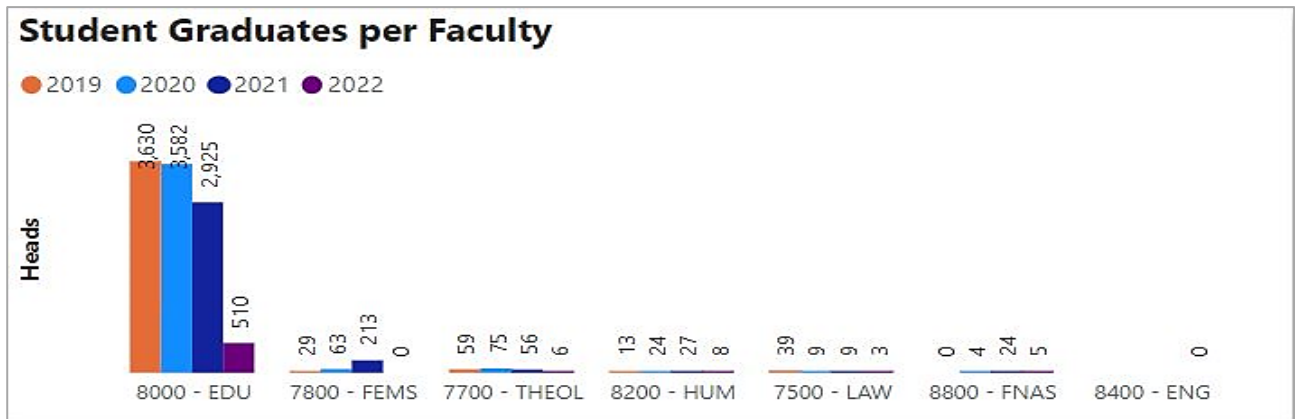


Figure 11: Distance graduates per Faculty

Figure 11 illustrates the distance student graduates per Faculty for 2019-2021, with 2022 graduates still in process of completion. Faculty of Education and Faculty of Theology noted a decline in graduates for 2021.

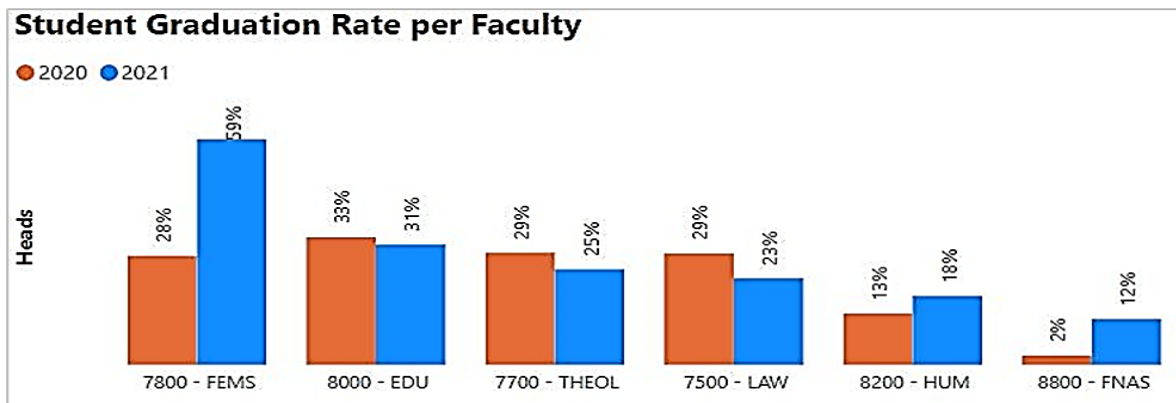


Figure 12: Distance graduation rate per Faculty

Figure 12 illustrates the distance graduation rate per Faculty for 2020 and 2021, noting a decline in the Faculty of Education, Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Theology.

The graduates have been declining over the past two years (with n = 3 757 for 2020 and n = 3 254 for 2021). This is mainly due to a marked decline in distance graduates (also related to the significant decline in distance registrations). As already noted, the decline in distance graduates is related to the phasing out of non-HEQSF aligned Education certificates and diplomas (ACE and NPDE) as well as the NQF level 7 BEd-Hons degrees, where the replacement programmes' cohorts are not at the stage of graduating yet.

2.5 2020 AND 2021 NWU DROPOUTS

Dropouts are defined as students that registered but did not graduate in the year of registration and did not register again in the next academic year.

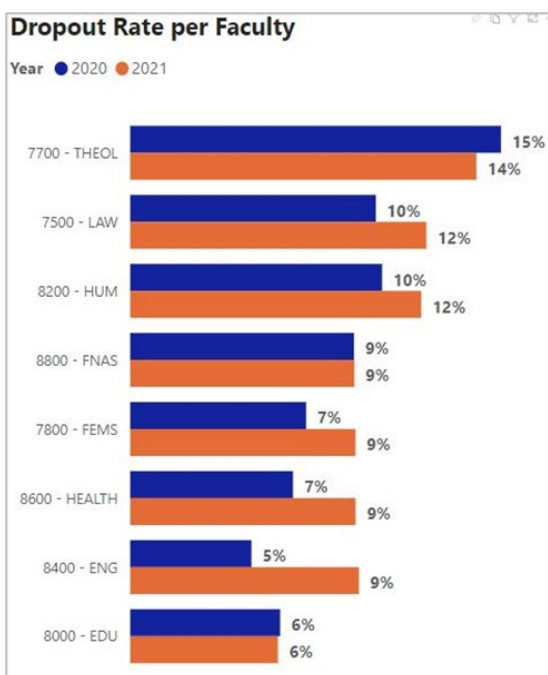


Figure 13: 2021 UG Contact Dropout rate per Faculty

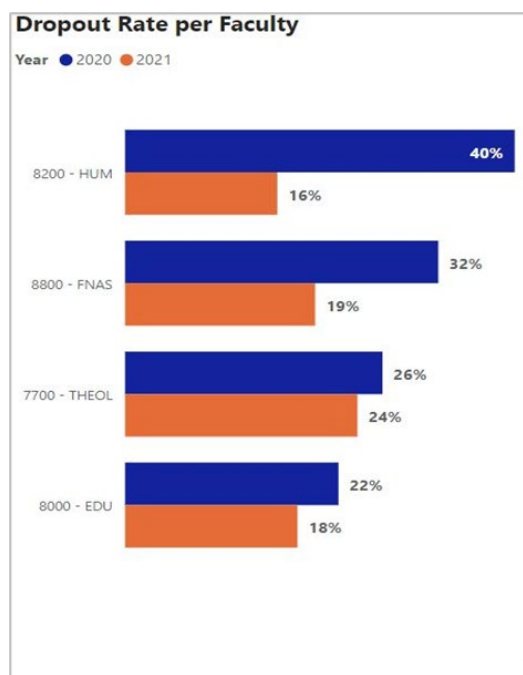


Figure 14: 2021 UG Distance Dropout rate per Faculty

Figures 13 and 14 illustrate the dropout rate per Faculty for both contact and distance³ UG students per Faculty respectively, in descending order, while Figures 15 and 16 offer comparative figures in dropout rates per qualification types offered in both modes of provision in 2020 and 2021. The Faculty of Health Sciences had no distance student enrolments for 2021 academic year.

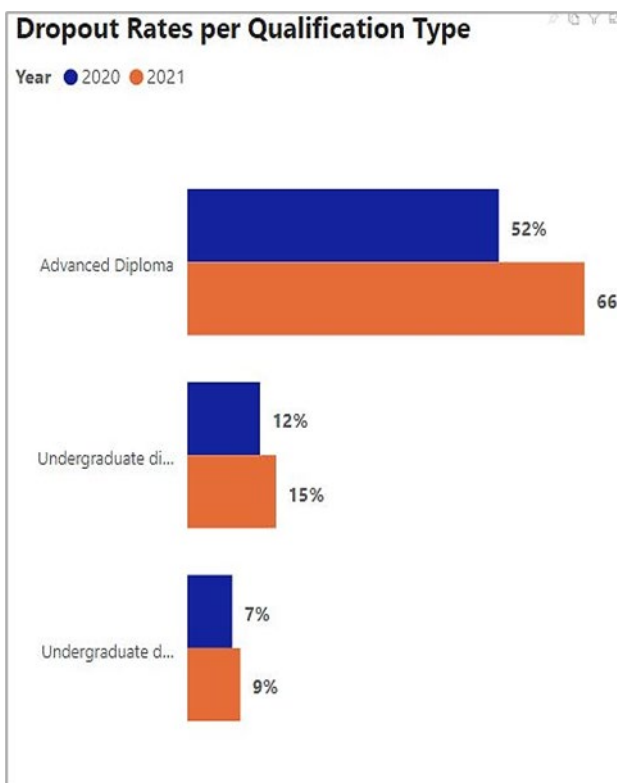


Figure 15: UG **Contact** students Dropout rate per qualification type 2020 to 2021

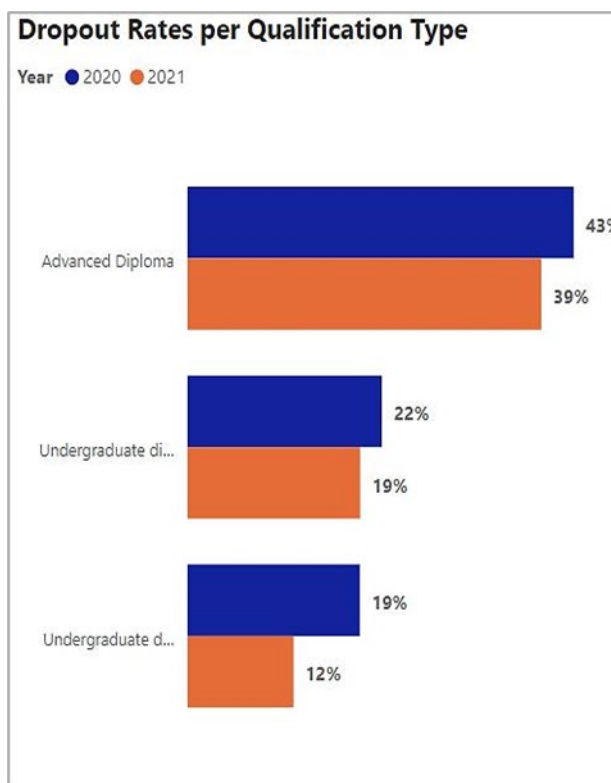


Figure 16: UG **Distance** students Dropout rate per qualification type 2020 to 2021

The dropout rate for the contact Advanced Diploma increased with 14% from 2020 to 2021 and for all the Undergraduate Diplomas with 5%. The dropout rate for the distance Advanced Diploma declined with 4% from 2020 to 2021, and a notably significantly lower dropout rate of 10% was recorded for the Undergraduate Diplomas. Once again, an interesting trend during the challenges of the pandemic in 2020.

Figure 17 indicates the dropout rate per curriculum level for undergraduate degrees. The drop-out rate at the third- and fourth-year level has significantly decreased from 2019 to 2020 but increased again from 2020 to 2021. In the beginning of 2020, there was a call for increased student support at the exit level of the 3 and 4-year Bachelor's degrees to curb dropout rates at these curriculum levels. The data for both 2020 and 2021 academic years demonstrates success of these initiatives

The drop-out rates at the final year level of a 3 or 4-year Bachelor's degree may also still be in relation to

³ Due to method used to manage distance student records, accurate dropouts are not possible for distance students.

the NWU PQM that offers specialisation at a too early stage at the UG level, and that students realise that they are interested in another field of study only by the third year of study. As noted, one of the main reasons for the PQM review over the next 3 years, will be to ensure that the proliferation of undergraduate degree specialisations is addressed. The dropout rate, especially in the final year of study, does have a negative impact on graduation rates and therefore needs continual attention.

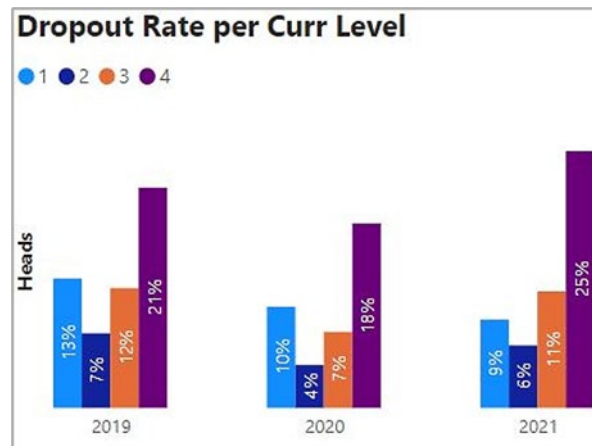


Figure 17: UG Dropout rate per academic year level 2019-2021

Figure 18 displays the dropout rate per Faculty, where a healthy decline in the dropouts is noted in the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Theology. No data available yet for 2022.

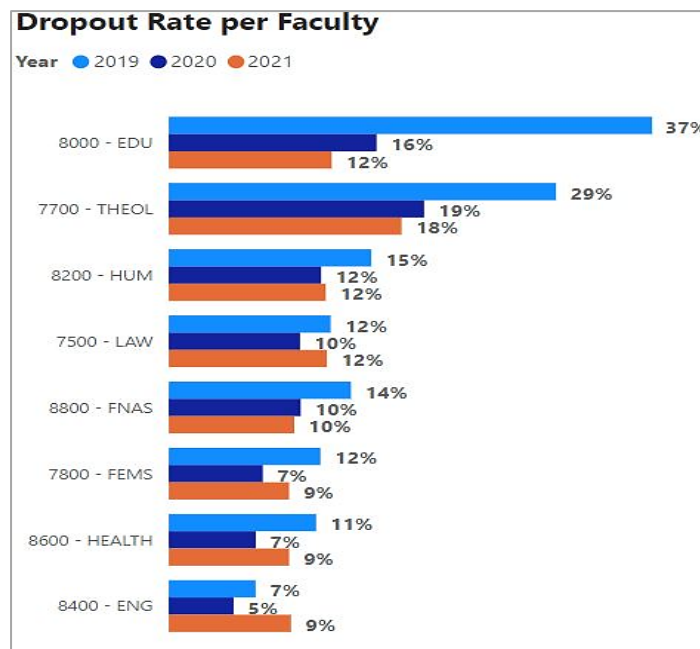


Figure 18: UG Dropout rate per Faculty 2019 - 2021 (contact and distance)

Of great importance is to balance the dropout rates with the high pass rates that have been reported on in the following section, and specifically per Faculty in Figures 19 to 21.

2.6 2020 - 2022 NWU MODULE PASS RATES

Please note that when evaluating the module pass rates, the DHET definition is used as required for HEMIS submissions⁴. As 2022 data are still in process and not final, a comparison is drawn on the first semester pass rates of each academic year.

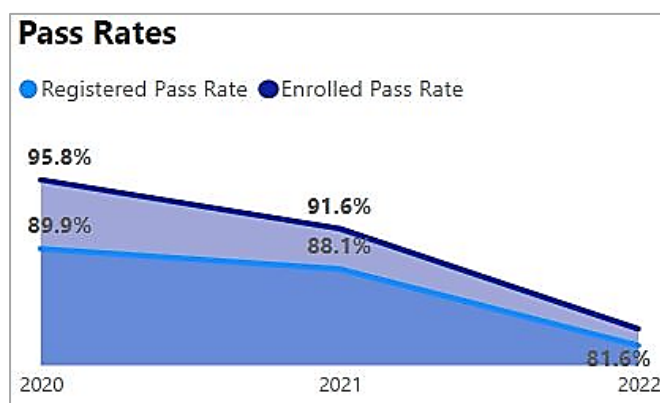


Figure 19: Undergraduate first semester module pass rates 2020-2022

The university has maintained a good overall first semester module enrolled pass rate of above 80% at the undergraduate level over past years, with an enrolled pass rate of 95.8% in 2020, with a decline to 91.6% in 2021 and 83.0% enrolled pass rate for 2022, indicated in Figure 19. The high pass rate in 2020, can mostly be ascribed to the adjustment to the continuous assessment modality that had to be instigated and approved at speed by the Senate, and implemented by faculties when the Covid-19 pandemic came to the forefront. Teaching and Learning has had to be managed in 2020 and 2021 on the basis of Contingency Planning arising from our experiences of past disruptions and emergencies. Semester 1 for 2020 was a steep learning curve for all faculties and their students, and it took time to find the right balance in scope, levels of difficulty, and type of assessments that were appropriate for the online environment. Our adjusted student value proposition in 2021 resulted in a hybrid approach, where technology is used in Hyflex learning spaces/venues, to enable better self-pacing, self-direction, and collaborative learning in (asynchronous and synchronous) online and face-to-face contact teaching and learning.

When comparing presentation methods between faculties, there remains a marked difference between the first semester undergraduate pass rates of contact and distance students⁵ (Figure 20 and 21), yet the registered pass rates also in the distance environment has shown a significant increase.

⁴ Completed Module Enrolments divided by Enrolled Module Enrolments = Module Pass Rate

⁵ Before 2020, year modules in distance education were split into two different semester modules, thus pass rates for the Faculty of Education cannot be compared between years.

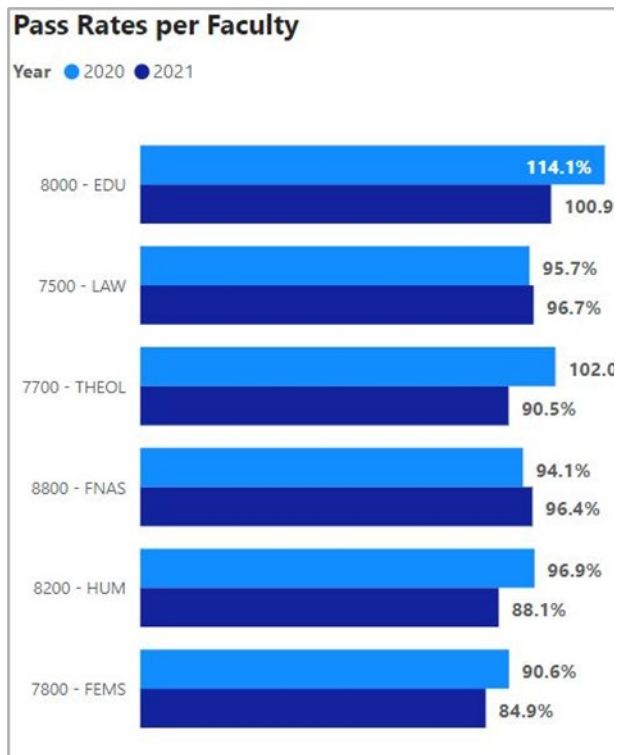
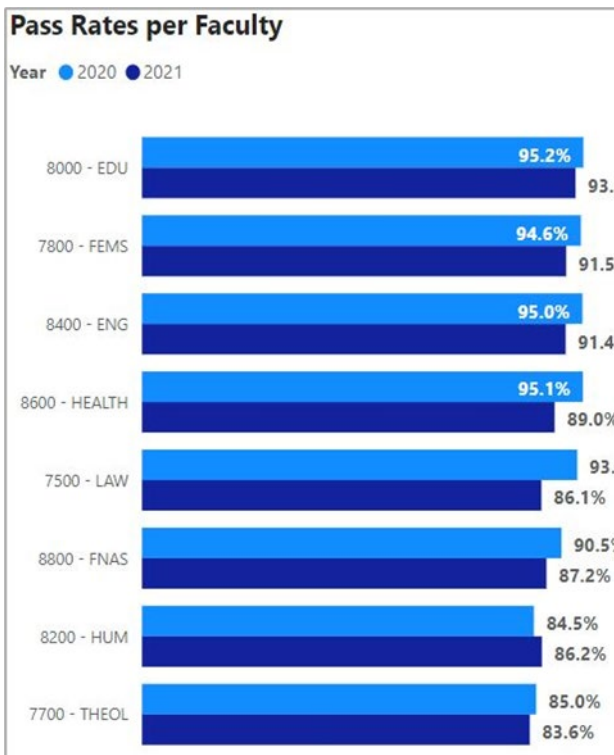


Figure 20: UG Contact pass rate per Faculty 2020&2021 **Figure 21:** UG Distance pass rate per Faculty 2020&2021

Figures 20 and Figure 21 respectively, are simply included to illustrate a comparison of the first semester module pass rates per Faculty and presentation method from 2020 and 2021⁶, noting an overall decline in undergraduate contact pass rate from 2020 to 2021. The reasons for the increased pass rates in 2020 have already been discussed. For the distance programmes, the 40 Learning Support Centres (LSCs) in the RSA and 4 in Namibia, facilitated contact sessions for the first time in two years, for paper-based Grade R diploma students only. Attendance of the sessions varied between 0% and 73%.

Note: No data for 2021 for distance registered pass rates, indicates the Nursing students of the Faculty of Health Sciences, registered as contact, but with distance presentation method. As per HEMIS rules, Exam-only students are seen as passed students but not as enrolments. This may lead to a pass rate higher than 100%.

⁶ The module pass rate of service modules in a programme belonging to one faculty, are ascribed to the faculty that owns and presents the service module (e.g., while the BSc IT falls within Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences, a number of the modules of the programme is presented by the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences and the pass rates of last mentioned attributed to FEMS).

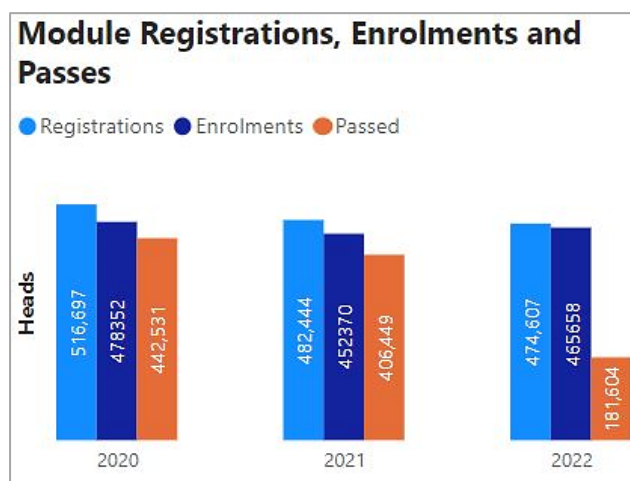


Figure 22: Module registrations, enrolments and passes 2020 - 2022

In line with the NWU Strategy and APP goal 1, the NWU will keep striving towards high quality teaching and learning, and increased pass rates within each of its faculties, across both modes of provision. As illustrated in Figure 22, the overall module enrolment count increased from 2021 to 2022, the modules passed slight decline from 2020 to 2021, noting that 2022 data is still in progress. Completing semester 1 of 2022, the NWU adjusted value proposition addressed three key issues on 1) presence, where the University aim to offer better services to students, on our campuses where the infrastructure and staff are geared to support them and increase success; 2) engagement in the form of interactive contact sessions presented by lecturers, engagement with tutors and facilitators, consistent communication, support and training for staff in Hyflex venues and interpreting services; and through 3) assessment where the majority of our first, second- and third-year students (post) Covid-19 experienced their first tertiary sit-down assessments the first semester of 2022, which required additional guidance, prior to the June assessment / examination period, on approaching the type of assessments that were conducted.

2.7 STUDENT TEACHING AND LEARNING EXPERIENCE SURVEY: SEMESTER 1 REPORT 2022

2.7.1 Background

The Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) started administering the online survey in 2018. One of the first attempt outcomes was the realisation that the system lacks the functionality to retrieve the lecturer-module information for the STLES process. Different lecturers can be responsible for teaching the same module on one or more of our campuses, so it is crucial to link data to a unique URL for each lecturer. For CTL to assign a unique URL to each lecturer for every module they teach, we requested that faculties provide this information by completing a lecturer-module Excel template. During the second semester of 2019, we distributed a module validation link to the lecturers to get the most accurate data. The decision taken is that this will be the process from now on.

2.7.2 Overview of the implementation process for the first semester of 2022

CTL distributed 2517 survey links for both contact and distance modules individually to 1163 lecturers via email during the first semester.

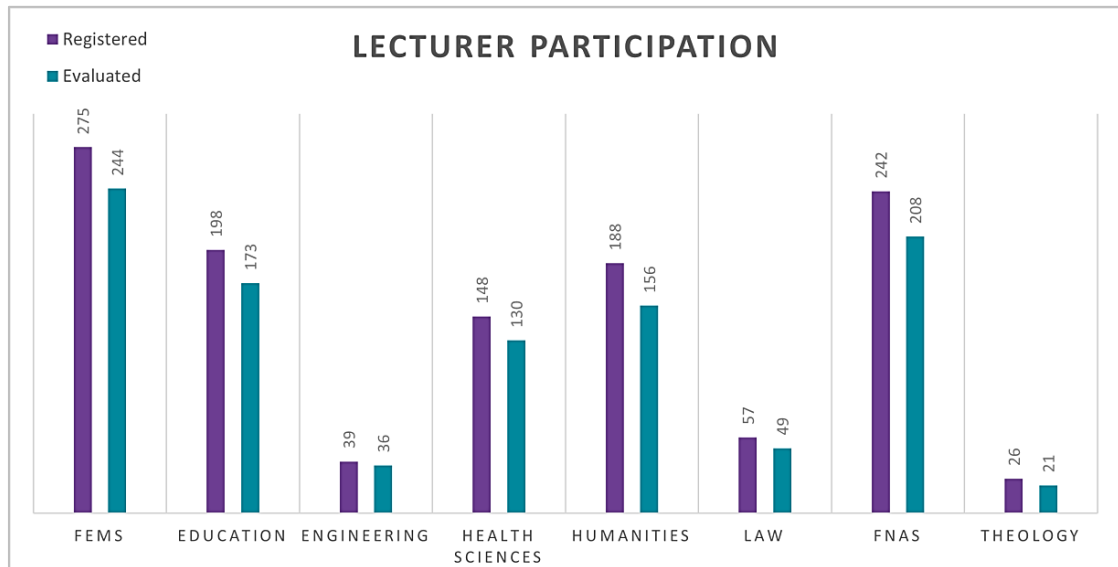


Figure 23: Number of lecturers who participated per Faculty during the first semester

The STLES was open during the first semester from 9 May 2022 until the beginning of August 2022. It is the responsibility of the lecturers to share their unique links with their students via eFundi. This is done to ensure that only the lecturer's students complete the survey for that particular lecturer. Currently, the students complete the survey anonymously. Therefore, we cannot guarantee that the students only complete the survey once per module, especially when the students take the survey in the computer labs with shared IP addresses.

A total of 1440 contact and distance modules were registered during the first semester. However, only 1072 modules were evaluated by the students. CTL provides Faculty management with a spreadsheet that is updated daily, which indicates which modules have been registered. Sharing this information has helped to increase the number of registered modules.

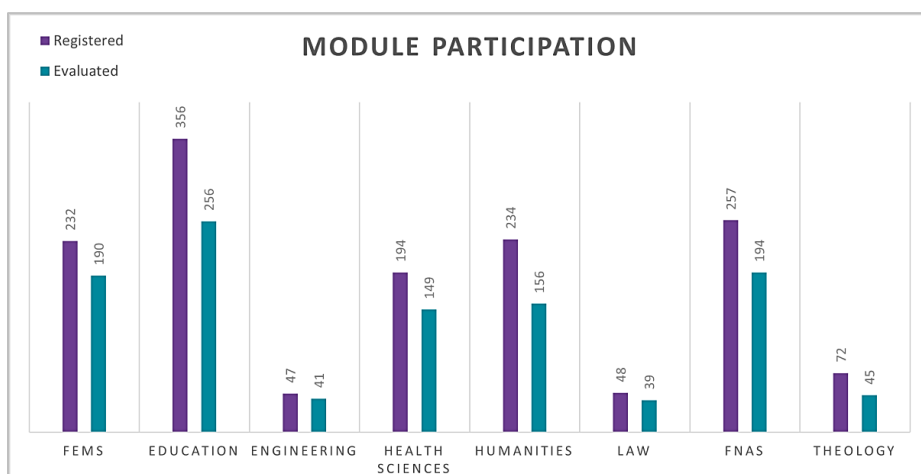


Figure 24: Number of modules that participated per Faculty during the first semester

2.7.3 Overall completion rates per faculty

More than thirty-four thousand (34533) responses were captured for contact and distance modules on the three sites of delivery during the first semester. Despite the increase in questions, we received many responses from students to gain more insights into student perspectives on specific issues in teaching and learning.

Faculty	2019 Sem 2	2020 Sem 1	2020 Sem 2	2021 Sem 1	2021 Sem 2	2022 Sem 1
Economic and Management Sciences	9618	10760	7073	8175	4704	9406
Education	4641	7758	5603	5608	3786	5160
Engineering	404	486	602	1010	467	424
Health Sciences	3739	4688	7548	4479	5400	3231
Humanities	2864	3620	5700	4353	2878	5393
Law	620	1321	1587	2353	1270	1262
Natural and Agricultural Sciences	3233	5095	3769	4334	2326	4622
Theology	280	208	330	223	358	235
Total	25375	33936	32212	30535	21189	30112

Table 1: Number of responses per Faculty for contact modules over three years

Faculty	2019 Sem 2	2020 Sem 1	2020 Sem 2	2021 Sem 1	2021 Sem 2	2022 Sem 1
Economic and Management Sciences	23	154	134	423	281	126
Education	647	1405	1706	5164	4324	3832
Engineering	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	14
Health Sciences	0	34	20	4	0	0
Humanities	281	29	1110	237	409	204

Law	N/A	115	1	5	17	15
Natural and Agricultural Sciences	20	59	155	150	122	132
Theology	50	149	282	116	75	74
Total:	1021	1945	3480	6099	5228	4421

Table 2: Number of responses per Faculty for distance modules over three years

Table 1.1 summarises the responses per Faculty for contact modules over three years, and Table 1.2 summarises the responses per Faculty for distance modules over three years. In total, there were 30112 (contact) and 4421 (distance) responses during the first semester of 2022. This does not mean that 34533 students completed the survey for the semester, as the students are requested to complete an evaluation for each of their modules.

Figure 25 indicates how many responses each Faculty received during the first semester of 2022 for contact and distance modules.

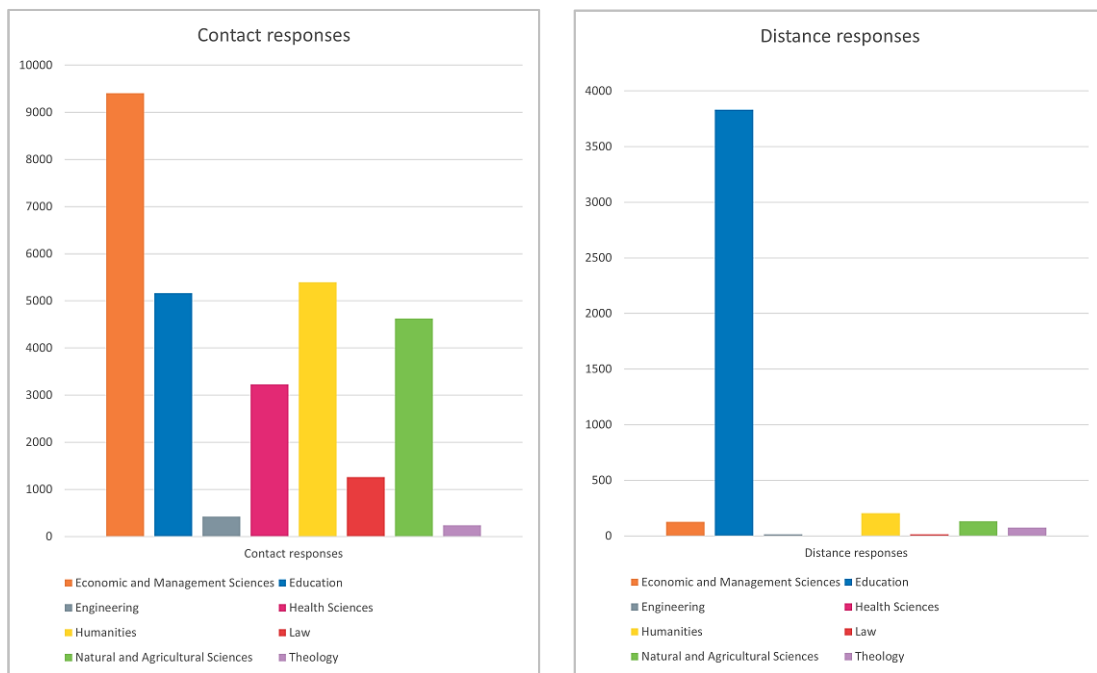


Figure 25: Number of contact and distance responses per Faculty: Semester 1

2.7.4 Reports generated for the university, faculties, schools, and lecturers

CTL distributed reports to 1010 individual lecturers during the first semester of 2022. The summary reports are shared with Faculty management, and the individual reports are shared with lecturers via Nextcloud. The reports were available and updated every week, one week after the survey opened, so that lecturers could monitor the response rate from their students.

The contact reports have generated means and averages and have three sections. *Section A:* Teaching and learning practices. This section clustered questions related to educational approaches, assessment practices, and curriculum (module). This section could measure teaching and learning practices within the

classroom or remote learning space. A subsection of section A is the Overall lecturer performance and average per question. This section indicates the lecturer's average score per question, and the overall lecturer performance is calculated from questions that the lecturer has control over within their teaching. This indicator could be used for measuring teaching and learning performance. *Section B*: Student perceptions of the module and remote teaching and learning. This section includes questions on issues such as support and guidance that they received, and their perceptions of the content of the modules. *Section C*: qualitative feedback from four open-ended questions. This qualitative feedback is only included in the lecturer reports and not in the Faculty and school reports.

The distance reports have two sections. *Section A*: Teaching and learning practices. This section clustered questions related to educational approaches, assessment practices, and curriculum (module). This section could measure teaching and learning practices within the distance or remote learning space. A subsection of section A is the Overall lecturer performance and average per question. This section indicates the lecturer's average score per question, and the overall lecturer performance is calculated from questions that the lecturer has control over within their teaching. This indicator could be used for measuring teaching and learning performance. *Section B*: qualitative feedback from the two open-ended questions. This qualitative feedback is only included in the lecturer reports and not in the Faculty and school reports.

CTL amended the survey questions after consulting with faculties to allow students to share their perspectives on issues within teaching and learning that would make for easier analyses of the raw data. The survey now consists of 26 Likert-scale questions, 3 Checkbox questions and four open-ended questions. The overall average student satisfaction for contact modules (83%) and distance modules (82%) pertaining to teaching and learning during 2022 adheres to the DHET requirements.

Table 1.3 summarises the average contact and distance student satisfaction percentages for NWU and the various faculties during the first semester of 2022. Figure 26 summarises the contact student satisfaction rate per category per Faculty for semester 1. Figure 27 summarise the distance student satisfaction rate per category per Faculty for semester 1.

2022 STLES students' satisfaction rate								
Faculty	Educational approach		Assessment practices		Module evaluation		Overall T&L practices	
	Contact	Distance	Contact	Distance	Contact	Distance	Contact	Distance
Economic and Management Sciences	85%	83%	83%	79%	83%	83%	84%	82%
Education	84%	82%	83%	80%	83%	83%	83%	82%
Engineering	80%	93%	79%	93%	79%	93%	80%	93%
Health Sciences	84%		83%		83%		83%	
Humanities	85%	90%	82%	97%	82%	97%	83%	88%

Law	83%	83%	80%	73%	81%	85%	81%	80%
Natural and Agricultural Sciences	82%	82%	81%	80%	81%	85%	81%	83%
Theology	86%	87%	86%	85%	85%	89%	85%	87%
NWU Total:	84%	82%	82%	80%	82%	84%	83%	82%

Table 3: Percentage of contact and distance student satisfaction: Semester 1

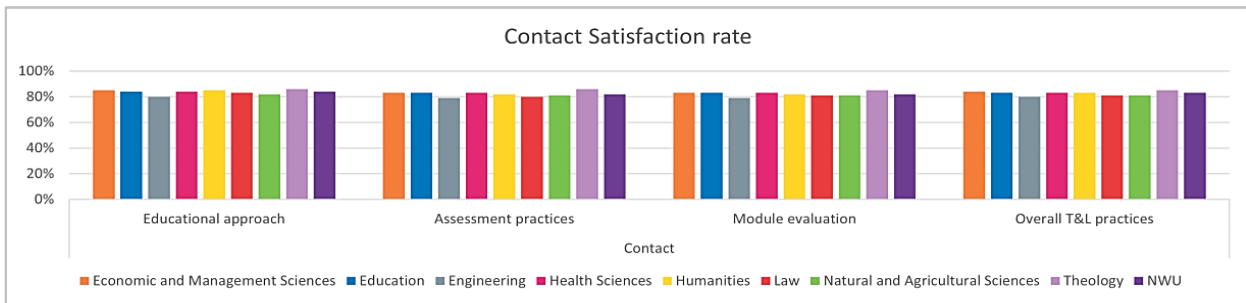


Figure 26: Satisfaction rates per category per Faculty for contact modules: Semester 1

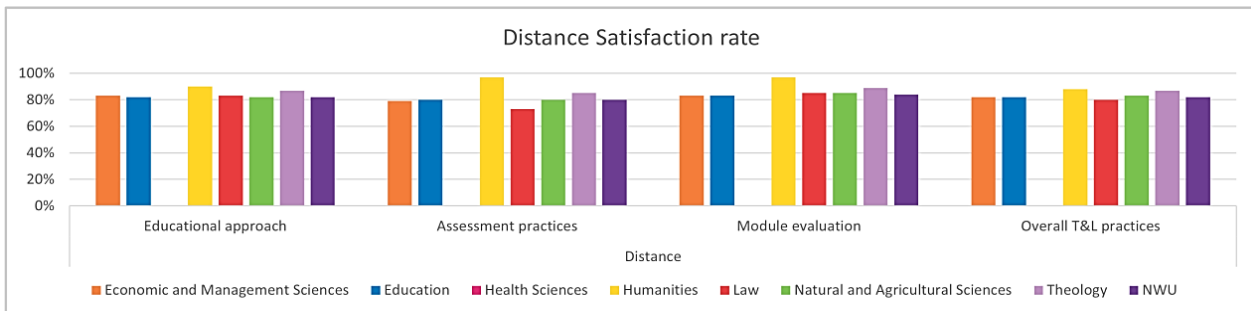


Figure 27: Satisfaction rates per category per Faculty for distance modules: Semester 1

2.7.5 STLES dashboards

In collaboration with colleagues from Strategic Intelligence, CTL developed a dashboard that summarises the quantitative data obtained from the STLES. The dashboard allows faculties to compare STLES data instantly across modules, campuses and faculties. The dashboard excludes all personal information linked to a lecturer. This dashboard will be updated at the end of each semester when the reports have been finalised. In addition, CTL hopes to include the qualitative themes from the student responses to the open-ended questions in future. Please visit this link to view the dashboard* and navigate to the tab on the left titled STLES data:

<https://app.powerbi.com/groups/me/apps/47c5a8b6-46c3-4a81-bb45-a9a2eca7d617/reports/c29c654c-e977-45c2-b7e8-18680e6df78c/ReportSection56ba30ddb594e73ec99d?ctid=331c86e7-d032-436f-bc53-f2552d031012>

*Take note: You must be signed into your NWU Microsoft 365 account to view the dashboard. Please follow these steps should you need assistance accessing the dashboard: <https://intranet.nwu.ac.za/strategic-intelligence->

[information-portal- landing-page](#)

Additionally, CTL has developed STLES reporting dashboards for each Faculty. On the dashboards that are updated every Monday, faculties can see which lecturers have registered and received links for their modules (updated daily), see the instructions on how a lecturer must register their modules and view their reports on Nextcloud, and have quick access to the Nextcloud reports by clicking on the school or campus which they want to view (these are updated at the end of each semester). Only Faculty management has access to those Nextcloud reports. CTL also developed a dashboard for the NWU, which links to the other Faculty dashboards as a one-stop shop for the DVC: T&L and CTL Management. The NWU dashboard with the Faculty dashboard links can be accessed here: <https://bit.ly/NWUSTLES>.

CTL further provided feedback to the students at the beginning of the year on the previous semester's results. This was done in the form of an infographic and linked as a banner on eFundi. It received 2277 views since 14 March 2022 when it was uploaded. CTL will continue to provide feedback to the students in this manner at the end of each semester once the reports have been finalised.

2.7.6 Qualitative data analyses

The following section provides a summary of the qualitative analysis that was done. Faculties can now request analyses to be conducted on their students' qualitative responses.

2.7.7 Teaching and learning practices

Figure 28 describes challenges or issues relevant to the teaching and learning practices of the module(s). The majority of the responses, 5942 (29,3%), indicated that the lack of data made it difficult for them to participate in online teaching and learning. Over 5000 (24,9%) responses indicated that the students were unaware of the academic support services available to them when they struggled. Other responses included: 3278 (16,1%) indicated the use of technology for teaching and assessments limited their ability to do well, 3007 (14,8%) indicated that the lecturer did not communicate enough with them, and 1791 (8,8%) indicated that the module's eFundi site was difficult to navigate.

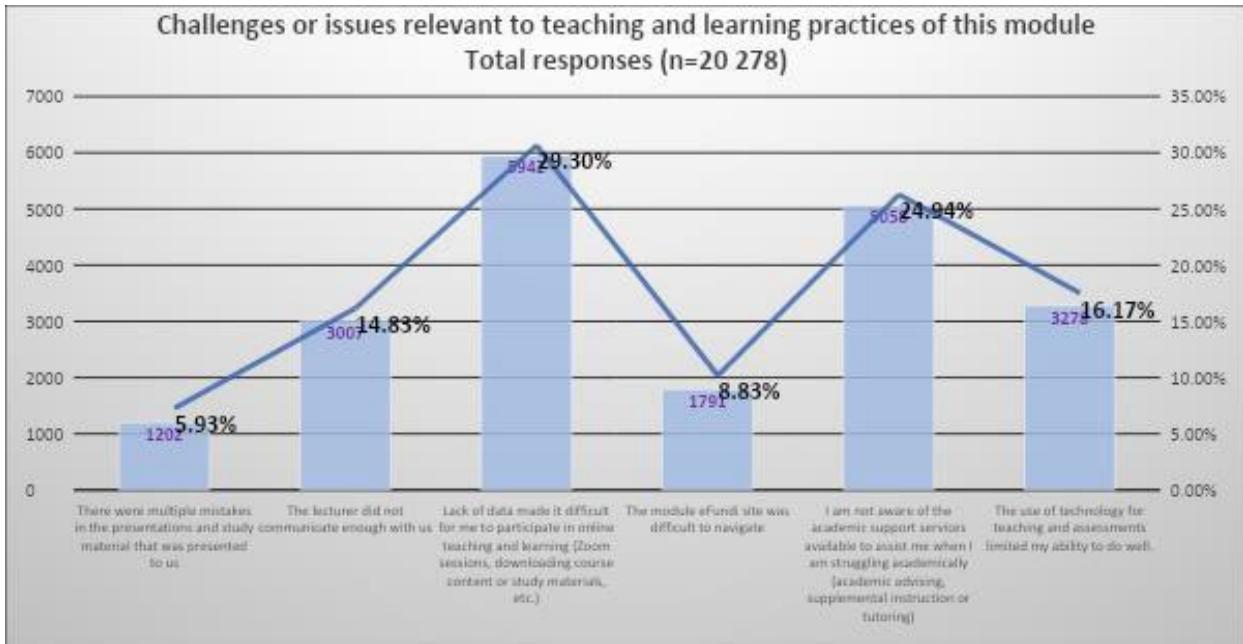


Figure 28: Students' feedback on challenges or issues regarding teaching and learning practices within modules

A total of eight themes were identified under challenges with teaching and learning practices. The majority of the responses were regarding module content. For this theme, various challenges were reported, including a lack of understanding of the content and definitions. Network issues prevented students from attending online classes or disrupted their ability to connect during online classes. A lack of data was reported as a hindrance in attending online classes. Some responses indicated challenges such as finding it difficult to form groups, finding group members, and group members not participating enough during group work. It was reported that some eFund sites were difficult to navigate, and for some courses, having more than one eFund site caused confusion. Some responses indicated that not having enough time to complete tasks was a challenge. Some responses suggested that additional contact classes would benefit the students. Some students reported that they experienced challenges in using new technology.

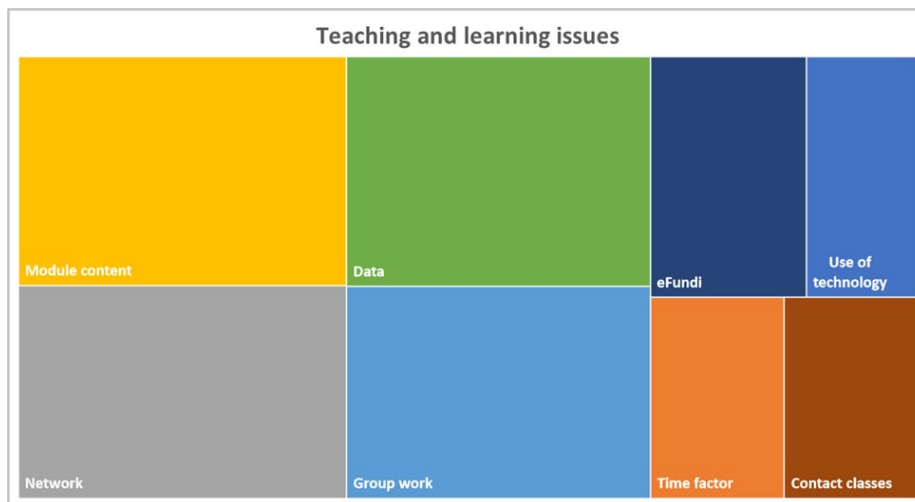


Figure 29: Themes identified within challenges or issues regarding teaching and learning practices within modules

2.7.8 Assessment

Figure 30 indicates the students' perceptions regarding assessments within the module. Most responses indicated that the students' assessment deadlines for different modules were at the same time and that it was challenging for them (6394). The second most experienced issue was that the students struggled to apply their knowledge from the module to the assessment (4869). Another indicated problem was that they were not given enough examples and practice questions to prepare for tests and quizzes (3850). It is concerning to see that 2801 responses indicated that they believed that there were not enough assessments in this module.

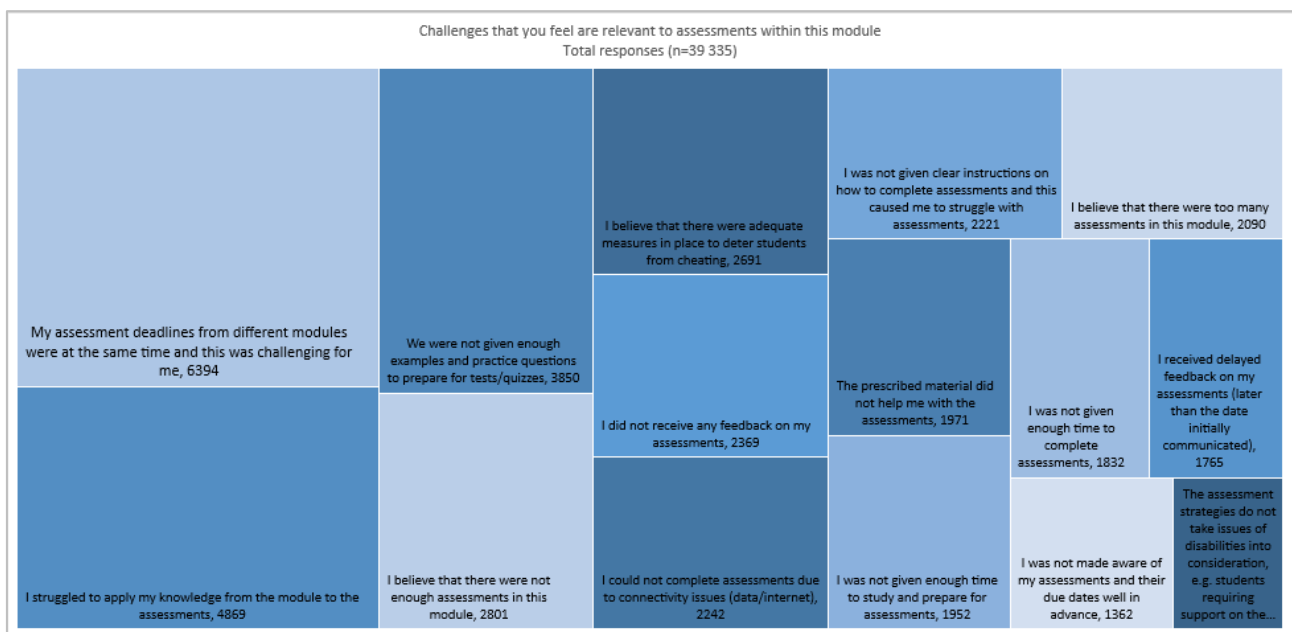


Figure 30: Students' feedback on challenges or issues regarding assessment within modules

Major issues that were reported under assessments include module content, time factor and lack of sufficient assessments. Some students indicated that they struggled to understand the module content. For the time factor, students indicated not having enough time to complete their assessments. A lack of sufficient assessments was reported as a challenge due to the limited number of assessments to enhance and improve their marks. The prescribed material was either not available or not helpful in preparing for assessments.

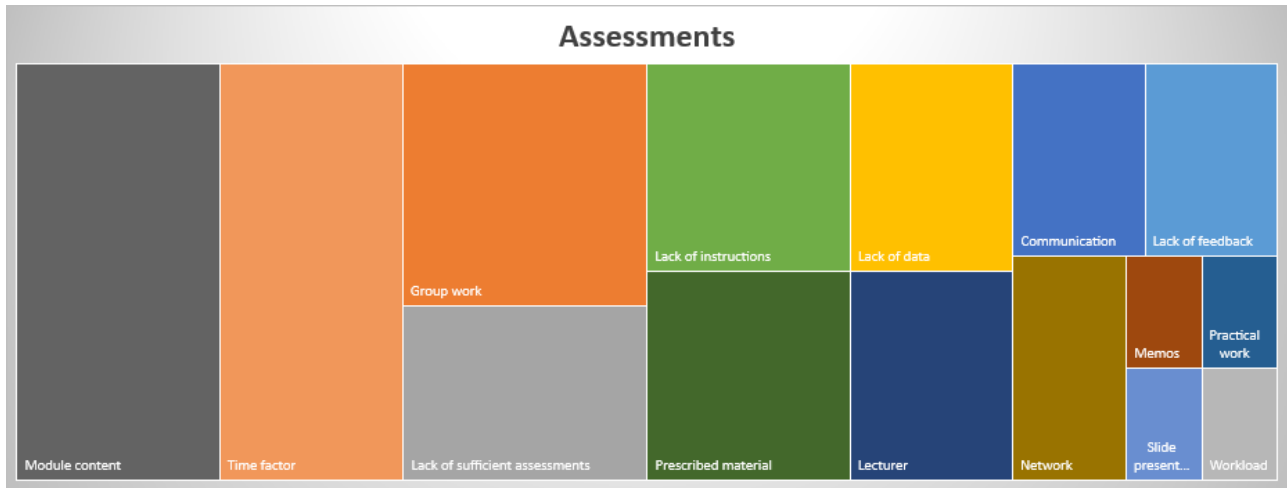


Figure 31: Themes identified within challenges or issues regarding assessments within modules

2.7.9 Module content and study materials

Figure 32 indicates the challenges that students felt were relevant to the content of the module. Most responses were that the module workload was too much (4676), followed by the issue that they found this module too difficult to master (4488) and that they could not understand the content of the module (3136). Other reported issues had over 2000 responses.

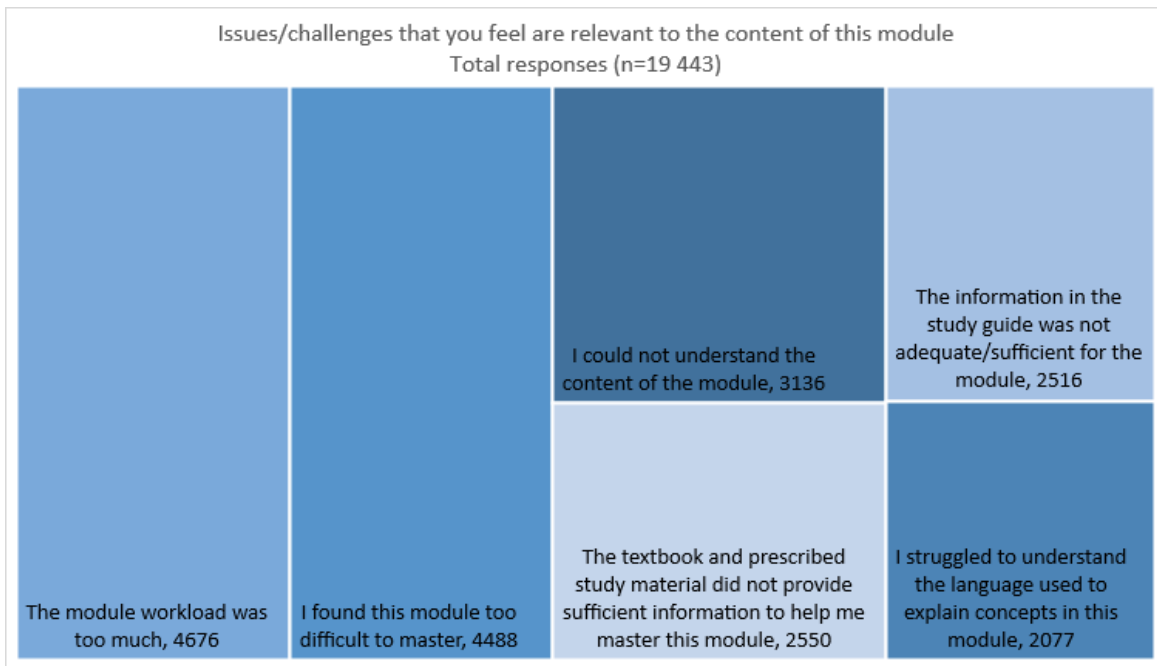


Figure 32: Students' feedback on challenges or issues regarding the module content within modules

Figure 33 indicates the clustered items under study material by code similarities. A total of 10 themes were identified for study material. The code study guides did not have similarities with other codes. Unavailable study material, self-directed learning, data, insufficient study material and lack of information have

We are also proud that NWU is also the recipient of the 2021 Universum Student Experience Certificate of Recognition for “Outstanding Institutional Offering”. This certificate represents the excellent evaluation of North-West University by our students in the area of academic offerings and are only presented to Universum’s official university partners who have met both the minimum respondent and the attribute threshold requirements and serves as a reminder of the NWU achievement in student experience satisfaction. Further external affirmation from the Universum survey situated the NWU among the top SA institutions in terms of student experience of the online modality. The national media is 8.0 (out of a possible score of 10= excellent) and NWU students consistently rating the institution at 8.2. All this were achieved through active marketing and promotion efforts by various departments within the university and through various channels, including social media platforms.

2.9 CONCLUSION

Taken together the internal survey data as well as external rankings data, support the overall impression of work done well. The NWU remains committed to continuously improving the quality of teaching, and of learning support, to ensure that module pass rates and student experience, remain above average. Worthy of reflection by the NWU is the reconceptualisation of the curriculum itself in the (post-) Covid-19 period and the role of digital transformation therein. The Teaching and Learning Strategy (2021–2025) of the NWU gestures towards this shift in three fundamental shifts: firstly, the emphasis on the reformulation of the first year of undergraduate studies to better enable the school-to-university transition, the second shift entails the re-design of generalist degrees and lastly, a more deliberate creation of cohesion in the final year of undergraduate study. An emerging scholarship on student voice is visible nationally and internationally and the NWU acknowledge that initiatives should support the university’s further commitment to the democratisation of learning, and as such it will be useful for university academics, student life, and support leadership to be trained in aspects of engagement with student voice. Enhancing student support towards an inclusive, participatory, and engaged learning experience remains critical. This should enable a seamless linking of Student Life to the formal curriculum through activities that might be designed and adopted for online student life with the possibilities of rich blends (or hybridities) of contact and online student with more possibilities for student workplace or community experience outside of the curriculum.

The importance of the presence and utilisation of the hyflex venues capacity on the three campuses of the NWU needs to be underscored if a commitment to addressing a seamless student experience is to be realised. Academic leadership have affirmed the need for phased planning in this regard, not for all venues and certainly not at the higher end of ed-tech spectrum, but rather for an adequate presence of such facilities across campuses to allow for synchronous team teaching especially where either alignment of the programme offering is required or needed, or capacity concentrations on any one of the three campuses at any one time, makes these facilities critical for common use.

PART B: EXTRA-CURRICULAR INITIATIVES

3. GENDER AWARENESS WEEK



Figure 35: 2022 Gender Awareness Week banner

3.1 INTRODUCTION

[Gender Awareness Week](#) (GAW) has become an integral part of the university's strategy of promoting diversity and inclusivity among students, staff, and other stakeholders at NWU. The activities, sessions and presentations that take place fosters an awareness of and engages with issues concerning gender and identity in diverse contexts. This year GAW was presented on behalf of the University and in consultation with the Office of the DVC Teaching and Learning from 8 - 12 August 2022 highlighting the theme, *Gender as expressed through the Arts*. For several years, transdisciplinary approaches in teaching and learning, and research, have advanced holistic practices and aided in the dissemination of knowledge. Staff and students from all faculties and disciplines were encouraged to think of creative, innovative ways of engaging with gender in their own fields, drawing on inspiration from music, the visual arts, literature, architecture, philosophy and the greater arts community.

3.2 ACTIVITIES

After submissions from various stakeholders were received, the finalised program (presented in its entirety as an appendix to this report) included a performance by the NWU Symphony Orchestra where the Black female composer, Florence Price's (1887-1953) first symphony No. 1 in E minor was performed as the African premiere of this work.



Figure 36: Poster for NWU Symphony Orchestra performance during GAW

Similarly, the NWU PUK University Choir presented recorded renditions showcasing works by two female composers, Sarah Quartel and Andrea Ramsey. Videos of these performances (and other media) are accessible at <https://www.nwu.ac.za/gender-awareness-week>

Other offerings presented during the week included activities by the Faculty of Engineering, Theology, Health Sciences, a lecture on and screening of Spielberg's latest *West Side Story* movie, presentations by student arts societies, and two art exhibitions [Feminism Ya Mang](#) (presented on all 3 campuses) and *Attached to the Soil* coordinated by the NWU Gallery, the latter in collaboration with the VINCO research niche area and visiting Prof. Peter Glendinning from Michigan State University. At these exhibitions, the NWU African Ensemble performed together with the well-known musician, Dumza Maswana. The portfolio of the Potchefstroom SCC, Transformation and Diversity with Current Affairs also presented a well-attended session in the amphitheatre with a variety of guests.

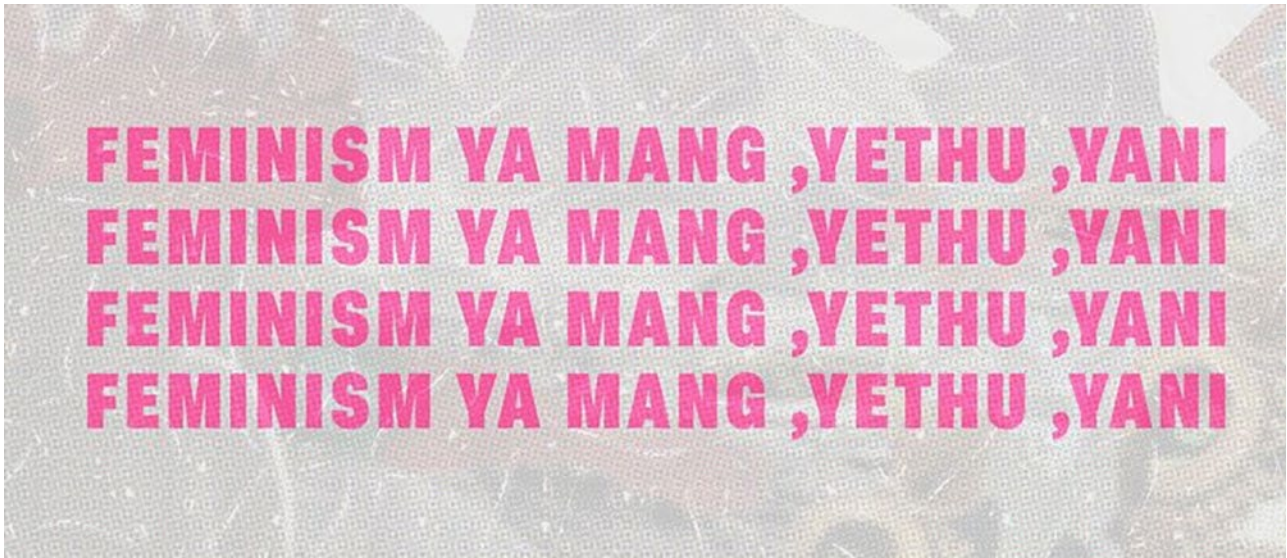


Figure 37: Art exhibition banner: Feminism ya mang

The first NWU BUA! Poetry sessions were held at the Heimat Hall on NWU's Potchefstroom campus on Friday 12 August. Within two days of going live, the event was fully booked. 110 audience members attended the event, most of them NWU students, and some members of the public and staff. 26 of the NWU students were from Mahikeng and Vaal Campuses. 4 invited poets and 12 open mic poets performed on the night, the majority of whom were NWU students. A variety of languages could be heard on stage including Setswana, Sesotho, isiZulu, English, Afrikaans and Quechua. VIP guests included Dr. Herculene Kotze and Profs. Liqhwa Siziba, Paul Nkamta, Aaron Tshidzumba and Franci Greyling.

Throughout the week seminars were presented and the speakers included honours student, [Megan Williams](#), [Dr Louise Postma](#), [Dr Jean du Toit](#), and [Dr. Wemar Strydom](#). NWU was thrilled to welcome Mr Laurie Gaum who presented a seminar entitled "Claiming space for queer bodies in our churches – A journey" on the Potchefstroom and Mahikeng Campuses, and Prof. Zethu Matebeni, SARChI Chair in Sexualities, Genders and Queer Studies, whose presentation at the Vaal Campus was entitled "[Men, masculinity and patriarchal lies: a lecture in memory of Eudy Simelane](#)". Prof Christian Bester, visiting from Northeastern State University in Oklahoma, presented a [lecture recital promoting inclusive LGBT+ repertoire](#) in classical singing curricula.

Recordings of the seminars, lecture recital and video summary of the week can be viewed on the website for this year's GAW: <https://www.nwu.ac.za/gender-awareness-week>

3.3 ORGANISATION

This year's events would not have come to fruition without the help from the organising committee, support from the office of the DVC (Teaching and learning) and various other stakeholders.

Prof. Conroy Cupido (Organiser), assisted by:

- Mx. Hannelie Otto (Potchefstroom Campus coordinator), Dr Allison Geduld, Mr. Robert Uys (Mahikeng coordinator), Mr. Rickus Ströh (Vaal coordinator) Dr. Cara Stacey (African Music), Prof. Anné Verhoef (Philosophy), Mr. Jaco van der Walt (Director, NWU Arts)
- Office of the Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning): Ms. Edwina Fransman, Mr. Irle Matela
- Marketing and Digital Support: Mr. Louis Jacobs (Director: Corporate Communication), Ms. Moira Muller (Corporate Communications), Ms. Maryke Laas, Ms. Tshepiso Mokalake
- Library Services: Dr. Matt Moyo, Ms. Hendra Pretorius, Dr. Tiyani Mabunda
- Student Organisers: MK (Miles) Robinson (Chairperson of Campus Pride), Beàtha Groenewald (Potchefstroom SCC)
- NWU Arts: Mr. Stephen Taljaard, Ms. Amohelang Mohajane, Ms. Boitumelo Makousa, Mr. André

3.4 NWU STUDENT COMPETITION

A call was made to students across all 3 campuses, requesting them to submit videos on gender and gender identity. The purpose of such a competition was to encourage engagement among the student cohort on these issues and to promote an ethic of care and inclusivity among vulnerable students who have expressed their fears and concerns about non-inclusivity and fearmongering on campus. Many students still face discrimination from various entities on campus. Resulting from the call were video submissions that included brave, honest and heartfelt messages from students who expressed their views on gender and gender identity. The following students were selected as the winners of the competition, and they gave their consent for the videos to be shared and their identities to be made public.

1st Prize, [Zainaaz Hansa](#)

2nd Prize, [Khotso Pitso](#)

3rd Prize, [Hanro Taylor](#)

Although the following students did not win prizes, the adjudication panel was impressed by their submissions and their videos are also displayed on the GAW website: [Dian Ferreira](#), [Nozuko Matshidiso](#) and [Musa Zula](#).

3.5 REFLECTION ON THE WEEK AND PLANNING

A call to all faculties across the 3 campuses of NWU was disseminated in March of 2022 where stakeholders could forward Prof Conroy Cupido submissions until the 29th of April. Submissions that were received after the cutoff date were also welcomed. Most submissions received were from staff and students on the Potchefstroom Campus. One submission was received from Vaal Campus and none from Mahikeng. In May, a meeting was convened with the organizing committee to ascertain and finalise the program. As it

was important for the coordinator and the organizing committee to maintain a footprint of GAW on all 3 campuses, speakers were invited to present seminars on Vaal and Mahikeng as well and art exhibitions were presented at the libraries across all campuses.

Some challenges that we faced were the lack of venues on the Vaal and Mahikeng Campuses, although these were overcome with the help Mr Rickus Stroh and Mr. Robert Uys on those campuses respectively. In the future, I would recommend that alternative venues be investigated for Art exhibitions at the Mahikeng Library, as a lack of space will continue to be a pressing problem. Another caveat to consider is the planning and coordinating of venues during the June/July recess for the GAW activities. As many staff are away during this time, booking venues can prove problematic.

Although many of the activities offered were scheduled during lunch time, attendance from staff and students can be improved upon. To mitigate this aspect, video recordings of the seminars and lecture recital were made with the intention that students and staff across all 3 campuses could watch these recordings on the GAW website when their schedules allowed. Feedback received from various students and staff who attended the activities were immensely positive. Students asserted that they felt heard, that they felt that for the first-time extensive issues on gender, gender identity and sexuality were addressed. They described that in the past, there was a strong emphasis on gender-based violence, and rightly so, but that the themes presented in the various offerings could be diversified.

4. FACING RACE WEEK



Figure 38: 2022 Facing Race Week banner

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Race Week 2022 took place between 11 and 14 April as face-to-face events on all three of our campuses with the additional availability of online interactivity for participants needing it. The event, which is hosted annually by different faculties, on behalf of the University and in consultation with the Office of the DVC Teaching and Learning, included a themed exhibition, drawn from the NWU collection, arranged by, and

centred in the NWU Gallery on the Potchefstroom Campus with satellite exhibitions installed in the libraries on the Mahikeng and Vanderbijlpark campuses. The art component was enriched on each campus by performances on each campus by acclaimed South African artist Oupa Sibeko. These performances and his accompanying exhibition titled “Quality Inequality” was afterwards featured on SABC’s Morning Live.

To facilitate broad engagement with the art and the week’s theme, the ViNCO research niche, through the initiative of Dr Annemie Conradie prepared a ‘post card project’ that ran alongside the art exhibitions on each campus. Participants were asked to consider the image or quote on the provided post cards and write on the back a small experiential response or impression. These have been kept and will be analysed to form part of an exhibition and to assist with the identification of enduring concerns by NWU stakeholders.

Against this provocative visual background, the formal programme for the week included twelve formal sessions on each of the campuses during the four-day event. Sessions were arranged in the format of round table events. The decision to follow this format was guided by the pursuit of conversational sessions during which invited speakers would offer short provocations per the session theme to demarcate the terms of the conversation around the theme in terms of several contexts and stake holders. Typically, external speakers were asked to sketch the broader context in terms of their research and experience while NWU staff and student panellists would focus on the contextual particularities from their position and experience. This format led to open, honest, and bold conversations that have succeeded to offer a strong picture of where we have progressed effectively in our transformative agenda as well as where we have much work to do in the years ahead.

This reports focusses on the particularities of organisation, execution dissemination and conclude with a set of potential agenda setting points that emerged from particularly student participants and that should be noted for future transformation projects, particularly in the extracurricular arena of student life.

4.2 PURPOSE AND AIMS OF THE 2022 FRW

The purpose of the 2022 NWU Race Week was to open a reflective space for engaging legacies of racism within the institution. Our purpose was to revisit our racial transformation considering the Covid-19 Pandemic. We identified speakers and themes to invite discussion on how recent responses to ensure continuity of business during the pandemic has affected our transformative agenda either positively, by opening opportunities for redesigning practice, or negatively by introducing new practices that inadvertently reinforce inherited fault lines. This purpose was conceptualised under the following theme.

4.3 THEME OF 2022 RACE WEEK

Overcoming the legacies of racism and white supremacy globally, and in South Africa in particular, remains crucial as an intellectual and social engagement at the NWU in its pursuit of being a leading university known for an ethic of care. As the University strives to nurture tomorrow’s leaders, there is the need for

constant reflection on and engagement with the histories of racism in our institution and how those histories continue to shape the communities in which we participate.

It is by now well-understood how histories and political economies of racist dispossession and devaluation continue to materially and symbolically gate keep economic, epistemic, and linguistic access to the social goods of citizenship, including education and work.

Against this backdrop, and fully acknowledging the loss and devastation that the pandemic has wrought in many lives, Covid-19 has intersected with racist histories and inequalities to differentially impact the lives of ordinary South Africans. In so doing it has brought into stark relief the inherited social fault lines and afforded an opportunity for deep reflection on how to avoid reproducing or deepening these as we collectively work towards a post pandemic “new normal”.

Cultural awareness development is an on-going part of life-long learning, as a student and in the workplace, local or abroad. Cultural awareness and understanding cultural identity enable us to communicate with people more effectively, beyond words and grammar and helping us relate more effectively across cultural lines. Cultural awareness makes us global citizens and helps us break down cultural barriers and build cultural bridges.

4.4 PROCESS FOLLOWED

To effectively realise this theme across all three campuses in a series of sessions the first conceptualisation meeting was held on 14 February. The participants in that meeting constituted a diverse group of colleagues from across the three campuses. The purpose of that meeting was to identify an appropriate format for sessions, to identify themes for sessions and to invite suggestions for external speakers who would be able to speak to the identified themes.

This meeting resolved that the sessions should not be unidirectional presentations by experts in their fields. It was agreed that experts should play an important role, but that the bulk of the sessions should be dedicated to inviting a diversity of staff and student voices into the conversation in pursuit of three outcomes: first, a rich discussion localising broader concerns in the practices and experience of university life on our campuses; second, to enable us to compile a set of dominant concerns that would be able to inform the NWU transformative agenda, and third, to enable us to envision a durable platform for engaging race and racism on a more durable and regular basis than what Race Week affords.

The meeting further resolved that student voices should be prominent in the event. Based on this point and the pursuit of polyvocal and multidirectional sessions, the meeting resolved to structure sessions as round table events, with each round table panel composed of an external speaker with known expertise on the theme, an internal staff speaker to offer local academic context and several students (to be determined by students) who would speak to the theme based on their experience within the NWU context.

The meeting also felt strongly that effort should be made to open conversation on this important theme beyond the formal week of events to enhance follow-through on matters raised and to build trust that the

NWU is durably concerned with the project of racial transformation of the university, its spaces, its activities, and its offerings. It was on this point that the post card project was conceptualised to both build an archive of concerns and to identify areas that would need emphasis in future transformative interventions.

Based on this meeting's decisions, Dr Andre Goodrich compiled a draft programme, a draft list of themes and a draft list of participants, which was circulated for confirmation and expansion by participants in the meeting. The resulting programme, themes and participants are indicated in the sections below.

Once the programme was approved by the visioning committee, it was distributed to student life, marketing, and the academic chapters in the Faculty of Humanities, who in turn communicated it to the campus councils and SRC. It is important to note that there were three blank slots left on the programme for students to formulate session themes independently in order that they would feel a sense of ownership and to reflect their being important participants in the process.

Working through the student chapters a group of students interested in actively participating in the Facing Race Week (or Race Week as it has come to known colloquially) organisation and events was put together and Andre Goodrich met with this group to identify the sessions that the students would like to have included in the programme.

4.5 ORGANISERS AND TEAMS

Visioning Committee		
Andre Goodrich	Germinah Motshegwa	Amohelang Mohajane
Pia Bombardella	Nolukhanyo Metula	Annemi Conradie
Nolwandle Mbete	Naledi Modise	

Table 4: Visioning Committee 2022 FRW

To give effect to the vision and the programme established by the visioning committee, we put together a smaller operational committee to make such arrangements as venues, to approach speakers, to arrange ITC where required and to facilitate the necessary communication and ongoing response to complications that are required to execute so distributed an event.

Operational Team		
Andre Goodrich	Amohelang Mohajane	Claudia Howard
Boitumelo Makousu	Nolwandle Lembete	Anzel van Rensburg
Claudia Howard	Thando Ramaala (student)	Granny Mogotsi
Tshepang Magabe (student)	Mpho Chaka	Thoriso Ntlailane (student)
Mokgadi Molope	Gopolang Segopolo (student)	Jani van der Vyfer
Galaletsang Phongwako		

Table 5: Operational Team 2022 FRW

4.6 FORMAT AND PARTICIPATION

Due to the structuring of programmes across the three campuses such that guest speakers could appear on each of the campuses, this section of the report is not structured according to the programme, the order of which varied from campus to campus, it is rather arranged according to the areas of focus that were reflected in the sessions. For each area of focus below, the purpose, theme and speakers are listed.

FOCUS 1: Technology and the reproduction of colonial histories

Session purpose:	Positioning technology within transformation and decolonial concerns
<p>The Higher Education response to Covid-19 lockdowns and restrictions was to move the teaching and learning, and in many instances the research activities into greater dependence of technologically based learning environments. These ICT platforms are often imagined to be neutral tools for the delivery of content and the creation of opportunities for engagement. This is borne out by the main consideration in the adoption of these platforms being the questions of device and network availability for staff, students, researchers, and research participants.</p> <p>The aim of this session is to bring into the discussion the scholarship on ICT as a role player in social relations across the entire commodity chain for these devices, platforms, and network technologies. The goal is to enable engagement with how these devices, platforms and commodity chains entrench and extend colonial relations while the transformative potential often goes missing when approached as purely neutral and pragmatic tools.</p>	
External Speaker	This session was treated as a keynote, presented by the director of the Institute for Humanities in Africa (UCT) Dr Divine Fuh.

FOCUS 2: Pandemic Impact on Higher Education Transformation

Session purpose:	To engage a conversation about the impact of the pandemic on broad transformation objectives in the Higher Education sector.
<p>In this session the idea is to reflect on where we want Higher Education in SA to be in terms of racial transformation, where it was before the pandemic and what impacts the pandemic has had on those envisioned transformation trajectories. This encompasses questions about decolonisation of the curriculum; about decolonisation of university spaces (particularly to enable the sort of knowledge production we would consider democratic); about how best to ensure all students have a sense of belonging; and about how to engender broad access to and success within universities.</p>	
External Speaker	Prof Crain Soudien (UCT)
Internal Speaker	Prof Robert Balfour
Student panellists	Listed under 4.9

FOCUS 3: Race, Art and Decolonisation in Higher Education

Session purpose:	To bring the art components of the week into the conversation as offering a rich 'language' through which to engage racist legacies and transformational imperatives.
This is a session in which we reflect on the role played by art (or even the absence of art) on our campuses as a force for transformation and for redesigning space and university culture in ways that encourage critical conversations and engagement with the past, and that open new horizons within which to imagine a collective, transformed future. What role should art play in our space from a student perspective? What duty do universities have to the arts, especially considering how many young South Africans from all walks of life, but particularly the marginalised, are busy exercising their voices through creative outlets from Hip-hop, to street art, to fashion design etc.	
External Speaker	Mbali Khosa (Rhodes University)
Student panellists	Listed under 4.9

FOCUS 4: Covid and changing challenges to student lives

Session purpose:	To identify and engage new sets of challenges to access and success that have been posed to students because of the pandemic and resulting interventions
This session aims to discuss how the pandemic has changed what it means to be a student at a university and to make the broader community of lecturers and managers and policy makers aware of the many challenges students face (or have faced during remote teaching) as far as participation, access and identity-production are concerned. For many students being at home meant having to balance household responsibilities with studies; meant having to share resources with working parents or siblings in school; meant having no opportunities to do the important work of defining themselves as young adults and developing visions of the future. It is important that these challenges make it into the discussion about the future of online and remote teaching and learning.	
Internal Speaker	Roxanne Mathobie
Student panellists	Listed under 4.9

FOCUS 5: Transforming student life beyond the curriculum: Race, residences, and student life

Session purpose:	To afford students the opportunity to discuss their experience of university life beyond the classroom.
This session was suggested by students. It is an opportunity to talk in some depth about how students come to feel like they belong (or not) at the NWU and ultimately to take ownership of their campuses, residences etc. It is also about challenges students face in participating in organised student life, whether those are related to finances or to the cultural framework in terms of which events for students are imagined and carried out (old traditions that some students perhaps don't identify with but must participate in). It is also about how notions of culture and language perpetuate racial segregation in student spaces such as residences.	
Student panellists	Listed under 4.9

FOCUS 6: Creating space for race: broadening the conversation beyond FRW

Session purpose:	To initiate the conversation about how to construct a framework and platform to afford more durable and regular engagement with racism and transformation than what the annual race week provides.
<p>This is a session suggested by students. The aim here is to welcome in a breadth of unrestricted student thoughts about race in the present and to enable them to set an agenda for how they would like the conversation to be carried forward more permanently than only in race week. This will link well with the postcard project of anonymous comments that we will take that forward after race week to try and create a platform for these conversations to continue. The content is open, and students are free to name into being an agenda and a set of concerns that they feel should be at the front of our considerations in future discussions.</p>	
Student panellists	Listed under 4.9

FOCUS 7: Covid and changing student agency

Session purpose:	To engage a conversation about the relationship between the technological responses to the pandemic and the future of student agency in universities.
<p>This session is one that asks the question of how, now that we can take classes online on very short notice, are students in future and indeed in the present able to shape university spaces and futures. On the one hand, since 2015 disruptive student politics have been very effective in getting transformation, decolonisation, and economic exclusion onto the very top of university agendas. Now, such disruptive politics seem almost impossible as the university can rapidly go online. On the other hand, the online platforms are products designed for particular types of communication and engagement and these do not necessarily include the sorts of communication and engagement that students may feel they need to both learn effectively, or to bring their own experiences and concerns into formal and informal university spaces. Do students feel like they are participants in shaping the university? Or do they feel like they just log in to get one directional communication? If online and remote technologies are here to stay, what should we be focussing on to ensure that these enable more active and diverse student voices and agency to shape our university?</p>	
External Speaker	Dr Kelly Gillespie (UWC) had agreed to participate but had to pull out due to Covid infection
Internal Speaker	Dr Andre Goodrich; Mr Kwezi Sontange
Student panellists	Listed under 4.9

FOCUS 8: Staff experiences of remote teaching

Session purpose:	To enable a conversation about staff experiences of online teaching during the Covid pandemic
<p>The lens through which we have typically measured our success in responding to covid-19 and the resulting restrictions has focussed attention on technological interventions and student success rates. Experience among staff tells a rather different story, one of having to rapidly, with very little guidance or experience redesign pedagogical approach, module content and</p>	

modes of student engagement and support. One of the elements that has gone missing in the typical discussions is the humanity, sacrifice and care that held modules together and that enabled students to succeed. This is an opportunity for staff to share these stories of how they managed to keep teaching on track, in some cases improve their approach to teaching and to maintain relationships with their students and colleagues while themselves having to respond to numerous challenges in their personal contexts.

Internal Speaker	Boipelo Bahule; Kedumetse Mothlankane; and Nolukanyo Metula
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Student panellists	Listed under 4.9
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4.7 PARTICIPATORY INTERVENTION

These foci were tone setting, but the postcard project run in all libraries during and after the formal events of race week also afforded opportunities for staff and students to comment anonymously on their experiences and thoughts. This project is ongoing at the time of reporting and will be analysed to produce an archive of concerns that will take the form of a later visual display and that will also give some guidance for future themes and foci in a more durable and regular platform than the annual Race Week.

4.8 PUBLIC CULTURE ENGAGEMENT

Oupa Sibeko staged [performance art installations](#) on each of the campuses. These were thoughtful and provocative engagements with a wide constellation of concerns, from environmental inequalities to black consciousness thought and the challenges of creating spaces to effectively tie together difference in the South African context. These performances took art outside of the galleries and libraries and into the university campus spaces in ways that attracted great interest and that actively engaged the audiences that gathered around the artist.

The role art played in the event was furthered by the NWU gallery exhibition titled “Unsettling the Single Society” which bridged the race week themes and events into the internationally funded African Critical Inquiries Programme workshop that followed in the week after Race Week.

This exhibition was drawn from the existing NWU art collection to stimulate engagement with the week’s themes and to embed those themes in a deep and local history of struggle and critical creative work.

4.9 STUDENT SPEAKERS

Thandeka Paballo Khupuza	Metsing Selema	Thato Valentine Makwela
Oratile Mathobela	Chloe Koetaan	Monde Kasana
Xolane Nicholus Masango	Lesedi Maponya	Perseverance Matshoba
Zandre Martin	Tebogo Morotong	Thatohatsi Bambo

Thabiso Tshatsha	Nthabiseng Mabusela	Oduetse Masaseng
Dillan Snyman	Kanayochi Okeke	Nomvula Chasakara
Cabrin Redlinghys	Helaine Duvenhage	Tebogo Selebogo
Nhlanhla Mthombemi	Chantell Rammala	Precious Siyoko
Nkambenhle Zungu	Thato Mosina	Heili Potgieter

Table 6: Student speakers during 2022 FRW

4.10 DISSEMINATION, ATTENDANCE, AND DISCUSSION

All the sessions that took place on the Potchefstroom Campus were live streamed and posted to YouTube to enable remote attendance and asynchronous viewing. At the time of reporting those videos have received over 1 300 views on YouTube.

Participation on the Potchefstroom and Vanderbijlpark campuses was disappointingly low despite the widespread and regular marketing communication and information provided across the NWU Social Media platforms, the website and on eFundi. On these campuses participation from staff was particularly disappointing. On Mahikeng Campus, by contrast, sessions were attended by staff and students with most having more than 30 to 40 people.

Participation, particularly active participation came overwhelmingly from black staff and students and centred on their experiences of both overt and tacit racist discourses that they felt harmed their sense of belonging and their ability to contribute to the growth and future of the NWU. These participants numerously pointed out how unfortunate it is that a platform in which they are raising concerns has become a space where they are 'preaching to the choir' and only raising their concerns to one another.

Despite attendance being lower than what we would like to see for such an important topic that impacts all aspects of our university life, the discussion was lively, insightful, and open. Themes emerging from the discussion were the highly untransformed residences; the inequity in resource provisioning across campuses; the persisting difficulties of financial and epistemic access to the university; the more recent introduction of technological barriers; the disruption of support networks within the remote teaching modality; the reduction of challenges faced by students during the pandemic to simple points of devices and network access; racial consequences of how language, signage and naming frame university campuses and activities. What emerged as a major point on the Potchefstroom Campus was how the residence points system marginalises black students, their concerns, their identities, and their experience of belonging. One student remarked that she realised early on that she would have to give up herself and her values to find a place at the NWU.

A final and important consideration emerging from engagement with the student panellists and organisers was the need to establish a platform for discussing these matters and pursuing their concerns more frequently rather than annually where they feel the same matters are discussed over and over without any meaningful change resulting from those discussions. Dr Goodrich has agreed to work with the student

chapter for the humanities on all three campuses to assist students to put together suggestions for how they would like to see this done.

4.11 CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

Three main challenges and considerations emerged from the organisational work that will remain important considerations for future events of this sort.

First, the challenge of streaming in a manner that is representative of activities on all three campuses. For the sake of pragmatics and cost in the face of a programme in which all events and sessions were repeated on all campuses, we elected to stream proceedings from one site, Potchefstroom, only.

The inadvertent consequence of this is that the online record of the event only reflects the happenings and conversations that occurred on the Potchefstroom Campus. In retrospect, the programme should have been designed in a manner that included considerations about which sessions would have been streamed from which of the campuses to balance the need for a live online streaming presence against the challenge of avoiding repetition of content, possible gaps in online presence and continuity, and cost against the need for a more representative record.

Second, the challenge of moving external speakers between campuses to ensure an aligned experience of concern, consideration, and conversation on each site. The organisers felt it important to ensure that guests of the university visited each site and spoke in person there. This was important to the point of recognising that conversation and engagement would differ from campus to campus and to afford students from each campus to be a part of panels. The travel time was considered in the compilation of the programme to ensure that external speakers would have ample time to travel between campuses, rest and compose themselves before being expected to participate in their session. Despite this, participants did report that the experience was exhausting.

We had approached travel between campuses by providing speakers with rental cars, but retrospectively we would suggest making use of drivers to lessen the impact of travel on guests. This will, however effectively double transport costs.

Third, the challenge of attendance, which has two aspects. First, it seems that despite marketing and communication about the event, which was widespread on social media, the NWU website and eFundi, staff on VC and PC did not attend in anywhere near the numbers we would have liked to see. The same can be said for students, but to a lesser degree. This latter point on student attendance was a marked contrast to the extraordinary level of support from students in organising and shaping the event.

The second aspect of attendance that was troubling on PC and VC was the conspicuous absence of white staff and students in attendance of the event. It is not worth speculating on what may lie behind this phenomenon, but it led to many comments from participants expressing frustration that they are only sharing their experience and comments with the people who least need to hear their voices and that they would very much want to see more white staff and students becoming involved in such conversations.

Attendance is not a matter that can be resolved through marketing as it is difficult to imagine other platforms for such beyond those employed. It may well be necessary to leverage structures within student life to require that student organisations, residences and the like participate either through displays such as have been held for cultural or environmental awareness in the past.

4.12 KEY ISSUES EMERGING FROM THE INTERVENTION

The key issue emerging from the race week event is that while huge gains have been made towards transformation in the academic realm, this is not the case in the realm of student life. Across all campuses the matters of financial and now technological barriers to access remain of concern, along with the difficulties posed by the articulation between NSFAS and the academic calendar, which hampered the start of the semester for many students.

In the case of the Potchefstroom Campus in particular, the persistence of student traditions and the organisation of student life, particularly in residences, is experienced as exclusionary along racial lines. The extent of this is so acute that numerous black student speakers who spoke in panels and from the floor repeatedly spoke of black students on Potchefstroom Campus as being the racial minority, a perception that is empirically false, but which points to a perceived and experienced form of cultural hegemony. The biggest point was then the need to think through what encounters, practices and structural arrangements lie behind this perception and the resulting sense of exclusion. This consideration should form a substantial component of whatever platform we are able to offer students for further engagement about racial transformation at the NWU.

5. LANGUAGE AWARENESS WEEK



Figure 39: 2022 Language Awareness Week banner

5.1 PURPOSE AND THEME

The Language Awareness Week (LAW), viewed and approached through the lens of the NWU Multilingual Language Policy, strived to be a vessel to promote diversity and inclusivity across all three campuses. Using interactive activities and opportunities whereby all stakeholders were engaged, participation and alignment were achieved with success. Identifying the importance of promoting languages and cultures at the NWU was a priority and focus of the week. That aim was achieved with buy-in from all target groups.

With unwavering support from the DVC Teaching and Learning (Prof Robert Balfour), the theme for the week (Multilingualism: A powerful resource for inclusion and academic development) was extrapolated to create a level of awareness of the integral and pivotal part that diversity of languages must play in enhancing teaching and learning at the NWU.

As a world-renowned academic institution at the forefront of offering and promoting multilingualism through innovative and technologically advanced processes, the LAW was tailored as such, maintaining the high standards expected from the NWU.

Link to the LAW 2022: <https://www.nwu.ac.za/language-awareness-week-2022>

5.2 ORGANISATION

With the support, effort and dedication of a formidable team, the planning and execution of the LAW were made possible. All stakeholders and support entities were passionate about their roles and responsibilities, from the DVC Teaching and Learning office to the catering assistants.

Organising committee:	
Dr Keabaka Seshoka	Coordinator
Mrs Mpho Mhonyera	Section Head: Interpreting Services
Mr Joseph Sobuthongo	Administrator
Mr Hänschen van As	Potchefstroom Campus coordinator
Mr Johannes Mahlasela	Vanderbijlpark Campus coordinator
Mr Anele Gobodwana	Mahikeng Campus coordinator
Mr Lebogang Jonas	Mahikeng Campus coordinator
Mrs Marilize van Deventer	Marketing coordinator
Mrs Lynn Cilliers and Mr Basil Rabie	Activity support
Mrs Symone Steyn	Media support
Mr Johan Zerwick and Mr Willem Botha	Activity coordinators

Table 7: 2022 LAW organising committee

Additional support:	
Mrs Reonette Jansen	Residence and Catering Services - catering
Dr Corrie Rheeder	Student Life Potchefstroom – coordinator
Mrs Marlien Labuschagne	SRC Liaison – coordinator
Ms Heilna Potgieter	Residence coordinator
Mr SF van der Westhuizen	MSM Productions - audio-visual support, live streaming
Mr Hendrik Jali	D Media – recordings
Mr Louis Jacobs, Mrs Moira Muller, Mrs Maryke Laas, Mr Musa Zanempi, Mr Gerrie van Deventer	CRM - Marketing and digital support

Table 8: 2022 LAW additional support

5.3 ACTIVITIES

It was vitally important that all three campuses be afforded the same platform to present and execute the planned activities for the week, with particular focus allocated to a day in the week for each campus, but also accessible to all stakeholders and participants via live streaming. The official opening was conducted from the Potchefstroom Campus on Monday 5 September, with Vanderbijlpark Campus' focus on Tuesday 6 September (60 seconds language challenge and Melodi ya Poko) and Mahikeng Campus enjoying their exposure on Thursday 8 September using a Language Colloquium hosted by Dr Seshoka.

Activities were presented throughout the week on all three campuses, including drama plays, language portraits, online language classes, movie nights and food fests: combining heritage Month with multilingualism. The decision was taken to place the focus of a selected day on each of the three campuses. Monday was chosen for the Potchefstroom Campus (PC), Tuesday for the Vanderbijlpark Campus (VC) and Thursday for the Mahikeng Campus (MC). Recordings and video clips of most of the activities, are available at the [special web page](#) created for the week.

The option to live stream the selected events and campuses was highly successful and gave equal exposure to all stakeholders. The respective mascots of the NWU were deployed to high-profile activities to enhance awareness and create hype amongst the participants. The landing page of the LAW was kept up to date on an hourly basis with the support of Corporate Communications, MSM Productions and D-Media, with recordings of videos, not only of the events as they were completed but also with contributions from students and staff of the NWU.

The Director of BAQONDE Boosting the Use of African Languages in Education (Professor Pedro Alvarez Mosquera) also expressed his support for the event through a recorded message. Vanderbijlpark Campus made sure that students frequented the area. The Student Centre – was linked to the main university frame every day between 13:00 and 14:00.

Each of the activities offered, will be evaluated below.

5.3.1 Official Opening

Live streamed from PC, 1050 in-person and 487 online participants

Black Note Ensemble opened the event with a fitting song; after that, Mrs Mhonyera (Section head: Interpreting services) welcomed all participants, those physically present and having joined online through live streaming. Dr Seshoka (Director: Language Directorate) gave the opening speech, followed by Mr Tom, relating his personal experience regarding g multilingualism at the NWU, both as a student and in management. Black Note Ensemble entertained the audience with two more multilingual songs. The attending residences competed with one another through their respective chants, with Patria and Karlien walking away with the honours and a prize of R1000 each. The Mascots also supported the activity, wearing specially designed Language Directorate clothing. The event concluded with the singing of the NWU anthem. MSM Productions was responsible for the audio/visual support, and D-Media recorded the event for posterity's sake.

The event was conducted professionally, recorded, and made available on the LAW landing page, YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram. It was also shared with various Student WhatsApp groups. Staff from the Language Directorate was in total attendance, clothed in the LAW colours.

Fewer than expected students attended due to various student activities simultaneously, especially with the annual Serenades. Feedback from the MC: The opening was live-streamed. The students said it was just okay, but they did not feel they were part of it as the speaker did not often engage with them. However, they appreciated the efforts. The other issue was venue and resources on MC, which would have made the experience a bit livelier.

5.3.2 Spelling Bee - Where is the honey pot?

MC, recorded, 200 in-person and 161 online participants

The spelling bee was exciting, and it was constructive to students. It took longer than expected to build up, which can be improved, but it was MC's first experience with the tools and an exciting challenge. Some students who won the spelling bee competition were issued a certificate for competency.

Equipment challenges and lack of awareness of the event, limited its impact.

5.3.3 Sign language activity

MC, recorded, 150 in-person participants

Ms Naomi Matthys presented a South African Sign Language (SASL) activity with the Mahikeng campus's student and staff community. She taught them basic signs, how to introduce themselves, greet each other, and the SASL alphabets. The students had a great time and did not want the session to end.

The students engaged fully in what was presented and participated. They had a meaningful session, as they could interact with each other afterwards with the basic signs they were taught. Sadly the session had to be cut short, as it commenced later than scheduled.

5.3.4 Online classes in Setswana, Sesotho, South African Sign Language (SASL), IsiXhosa and Afrikaans

44 online participants in total

30-minute classes each were presented online via Zoom for interested parties. This was done on a fundamental level for beginners to create awareness and open a new language world for attendees. Overall, 30 minutes was not enough in language classes to make it worthwhile. At least an hour is needed; combining the languages in future would be better because we will promote multilingualism and mutual understanding.

On the final evening of the SASL class, we recapped everything and learned additional yet important phrases one must know when interacting with the Deaf. We also learned words that are related to Language Awareness week. All the participants took part in the sessions. They could recall the signs done in the previous classes and were able to introduce themselves to each other and have basic conversations. It was lovely to have so many staff members participate as well. We would have loved to cover more content, but the exposure to the language, its structure and some facts about the Deaf community was excellent.

5.3.5 60 Seconds Language Challenge

VC, live streaming and recorded, 350 in-person participants

Tuesday was the highlight for the campus. Gazebos were erected in the area opposite the main entrance to the library. The faculties represented were Law (Natural and Agricultural Sciences), NAS, Humanities, and Economic and Management Science (EMS). 60-sec language challenge was a favourite with students as they flocked the area and took part in the activity.

The challenge exceeded the stipulated time frame as students could not get enough of the activity.

5.3.6 Poetry - Melodi ya Poko

VC, live streaming and recorded, 16 in-person and 363 online participants

The poetry reading session took place concurrently with the 60 sec. The language challenge, however, was staged in a venue inside the library. This session was live on YouTube. We had 9 participants who took part. We had 2 Afrikaans, 2 English and five Sesotho participants.

5.3.7 Poetry - Melodi ya Poko

MC, recorded, combined with the Drama: Society Play, 170 in-person and 50 online participants

The MC Drama group produced a drama specifically for LAW to convey the importance and advantages of multilingualism. The drama also expressed themes of unity amongst different language groups. The drama group, in their storyline, emphasised the significance of communication and connecting with people from different cultures, histories, and languages. They highlighted that education and willingness to learn from each other could produce benefits in many ways. They also stressed that understanding one language promotes a solid relationship that, in the end, we can deal with all types of challenges in our society, like tribalism and that no language is better. The drama group indicated that language is a powerful instrument even to change the way to look at and perceive life.

The play was well-presented and in keeping with the theme. Insufficient sound equipment (microphones) made it difficult to hear the speech of the acting groups due to background noise from the audience.

5.3.8 BUA! Spoken Poetry - The role of the MC

Online via Zoom

The session was well attended, but more time needs to be given to such initiatives. A more collaborative effort needs to be done.

5.3.9 Movie night

PC, 50 participants

Silverton Siege was chosen as the multilingual film (6 languages spoken) due to its popularity and South African setting. MSM Productions facilitated the screening. The screening rights were procured from Netflix because it was intended for non-profit and instructional reasons. Popcorn and fruit juice was made available to the first 100 attendees. Again, the mascots helped promote the event and set a positive mood. An online RSVP form was utilised to ascertain numbers and support planning for the event.

The movie was well suited for the event. The Language Directorate staff supported the activity in full. The movie was well received by the students who attended, and they verbalised afterwards that they needed more activities like this. The attendees appreciated the snacks on offer - the support from the Klipoog cafeteria and the Draak was unsurpassable.

Again, many other student activities took place simultaneously, resulting in a lower turnout than expected. There was a double booking regarding the availability of the lawn in front of the Ferdinand Postma Library. Fortunately, we had made allowance for inclement weather, and the Amfi was at our disposal as a backup.

5.3.10 Movie night – Flicka

MC, 150 participants

An online RSVP form was utilised to ascertain numbers and support planning for the event. The movie had powerful themes of multilingualism and how language functions as a vehicle for identity and culture.

D-Media and the team conducted interviews after the movie about how the movie was received. The staff and students loved and marvelled at the teachings and importance of multilingualism.

Should we have an event of this nature in the future again, let's make it more exciting by editing the red carpet, and pre-interviews with the audience.

5.3.11 Language Portraits

VC, recorded, 150 participants

There was a session for language portraits opposite the main entrance to the library. Since students were familiar with these activities, they voluntarily came to our tables and actively participated.

The students learned a lot about their language repertoires.

5.3.12 60 Seconds Language Challenge

PC, recorded, 75 participants

The 60 seconds language challenge was held in Lover's Lane of the Potchefstroom campus, where many students pass on their way to the student centre. The buzz of activity ensured that students stopped by for a quick basic introduction to another language. The following languages were offered: Afrikaans, Sesotho, Setswana, isiZulu, isiXhosa, South African Sign Language, French, German, Italian, Spanish/Portuguese, and Thai. A 'teacher' presented the basic greetings and practical words for communication to the 'student', who received a printed flyer with these words and a certificate for completion (kindly designed by the Vanderbijlpark Campus colleagues).

The event was a huge success and received positive feedback from all involved. The students enjoyed the activity and posed for a framed LAW photograph with their certificates. A total of 80 certificates were awarded during the hour. Presenters (teachers) were from different backgrounds, students, Language Directorate staff, lecturers, and private persons. The volunteers assisted, and D-media captured the fun. Separate tables per language would have worked better than the shared tables delivered. There was a shortage of about 5 certificates by the end of the hour.

5.3.13 Colloquium - Multilingualism: a powerful resource for inclusion and academic development

MC, live streaming and recorded, available on YouTube, 16 in-person and 213 online participants

The MC team hosted a theoretical discussion on multilingualism which was live streamed across other campuses. Prominent language practitioners and lecturers across universities were invited to do presentations and answer questions. This was a successful event directed by Dr Seshoka. She kept the other two campuses engaged and even took to queries sent from online platforms. The discussions centred on multilingualism, a powerful resource for inclusion and academic development. Prof Langa Khumalo, *Executive Director (SADiLaR)*, Dr Malephole Sefotho *Senior Lecturer (NWU)*, Dr Simbayi Yafela *Senior Lecturer (UJ)* and Mrs Nombulelo Mbolekwa-Sonakile *NW Provincial Language Committee Dept. Chairperson (PanSLAB)* representatives were present to engage practical measures and solutions that equip the university and the working environment with more multilingual tools. Lunch was made available to the attendees using platters.

The event was well attended, and more was learnt from the discussions. More has to be done concerning marketing these events during LAW.

5.3.14 Cultural Food Fest and official closing

PC, VC and MC simultaneously, 200 in-person guests and 153 online participants

An RSVP online form was used to ascertain numbers and to facilitate support for these events on all three campuses. A menu consisting of indigenous foods was drawn up, and attendees could select two dishes. Catering support staff on all three campuses was used to prepare and make available the dishes, each separately packaged in microwaveable containers and branded with LAW branded stickers. Attendees were requested to wear traditional dresses to combine LAW and Heritage Month. Staff from the Language Directorate were asked to contribute their LAW experiences, and Dr Seshoka officially closed the week in

a true multilingual fashion. The event was live-streamed and recorded. At VC, the heritage food event saw about 88 people lining up in the library's foyer to collect their RSVP food packages.

The food was of a very high standard and enjoyed by all. A festive and lively atmosphere was present, and many participants were proudly clad in their traditional attire. All the RSVP participants attended the VC events. More attendees were expected on PC.

5.3.15 Multilingual Challenge

MC, recorded, 15 in-person and 60 online participants

The Multilingual Challenge was a huge success. Students participated in a game of words and meaning to practice their multilingualism. Mishumo and Lebo facilitated the game, and the students were eager and participated. Those who did well were given the excess kit kat chocolates.

Eager participation by students

5.4 SUMMARY

The LAW was a resounding success, with energy and effort surpassing expectations. Participants experienced a wide variety of activities, all tailored to support the theme. Staff participation was exemplary, and support from all stakeholders was commendable.

The MC event was a success; no significant obstacles were experienced. The team achieved its objective. We are confident that students and the staff well received the message. We noticed positive energy, team spirit, and dedicated people who were hands-on in ensuring the event was a success. We wish to improve in the future and create a memorable escape for both staff and students.

Some points to consider:

- i. The LAW scheduling should be carefully considered to eliminate the concurrence with other student activities at the NWU to increase their availability and participation.
- ii. Marketing of the event and activities should be prolonged to achieve a higher degree of awareness and, as a result, higher attendance and allow enough time for events and activities requiring RSVP.
- iii. Faculty representatives and other stakeholders should be identified and roped in earlier as their contributions are valuable and insightful.
- iv. The use of printed and broadcast media can be increased. Posters per activity could raise more awareness.
- v. Social media is a powerful tool utilised successfully, especially in reaching students, as this is their preferred means of communication.
- vi. The audio/visual units of the NWU are acquiring equipment and expertise to offer services that had to be outsourced to external service providers at an expense. This will, in future, alleviate pressure on the budget.
- vii. Recommendation: Singing Flash Mob appearance at the student centres of all three campuses that could include NWU choirs, singing groups or Serenading groups, orchestras, or bands.

- viii. Have a mic and lively audience where people are challenged to talk in other languages. Portraits and 60-seconds and volunteers to introduce themselves in their languages and maybe read other languages out loud would be great fun.
- ix. Specific shortfalls at VC:
 - a. Delivery of the main canvas banner only arrived on Wednesday late afternoon.
 - b. D-Media did not pitch up. This led to the non-recording of certain events.
 - c. Eagi did not pitch up as promised.
 - d. The Radio station people did not arrive at the campus on our days.
 - e. Requested golf shirts did not cover requested numbers.

6. OTHER 2022 T-L TRANSFORMATION AND ALIGNMENT FOCI

6.1 INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

During 2022, the Office and Portfolio of the DVC T-L actively participated in the CHE Institutional Review. The Office assisted in drafting the self-evaluation report, as well as its various revisions. During an audit, progress in achieving goals (including transformation goals) is measured against the existence of clear, measurable and well communicated strategies, plans and projects; and a focused, fundamental, purposeful, resolute, collective and dedicated effort – including structures and systems – by the institution. On 17 August 2022, the Office co-hosted a day-long workshop in preparation for the institutional review panel’s site visit and serve as a measurement of progress. More than 200 staff and students of the NWU participated in persons and online, in plenary sessions and 11 parallel group discussions on two main themes: transformation and student success.

The following guidance was provided to participants, facilitators and panel members:

THEME 1: TRANSFORMATION

The transformation theme encapsulates the uniqueness of the NWU character as a traditional university in the higher education system. The uniqueness of the NWU character is illustrated by maintaining relevance in terms of deliberately transforming its business model and academic model in alignment with the internal quality management system. The NWU’s commitment towards transformation, our capacity for and success with transformation are evident from the NWU strategic drivers and priorities. Furthermore, the NWU’s contribution to the transformative goals of the higher education policy context is evident from NWU governance, management, statute, and guiding documents.

Quality at the NWU is driven through a fitness for purpose, value for money, and transformation, within an overarching fitness of purpose framework approach. These terms are defined below and operationalised in the NWU APP:

Fitness for purpose: How the core business of the university is aligned with its institutional vision and mission (dream and purpose)

Value for money: The value for money the university provides to its students and other stakeholders

Transformation: The university's capacity for and success with transformation

Fitness of purpose: The university's ability to respond to national imperatives - how responsive is the university to the social and economic needs of society

Interview questions for Theme 1: Transformation

1. For the NWU context, how do you define transformation?
 - a. What would the NWU describe as its key initiatives to drive transformation?
 - b. The NWU has 10 transformation goals – why these and how appropriate is it for our (unique) context?
2. What is the NWU's capacity for and success with transformation?
3. Describe NWU institutional efficiency with reference to the relational aspects of governance, Council, management, UMC, employees, stakeholders, and the IQMS.
4. How would you define quality i.r.t the APP at the NWU and how does the university promote a quality culture?
5. How does the NWU respond to social justice and the broader societal and economic needs of our country?
6. What IQM processes are in place at the NWU and how effective are they?

THEME 2: STUDENT SUCCESS

The student success theme captures the essence of our commitment to transformation aimed at improved student experiences and increased academic performance. As part of the NWU's strategic goals, it strives to develop a clearly differentiated student-value proposition with a focus on creating an inclusive environment aimed at developing students holistically through structured and unstructured co-curricular programmes which are relevant, desirable, and meet students' needs. The NWU's commitment to social justice is evident through the provision of equitable learning experiences and resource allocation, alignment of TL across campuses, and offering contextualised student support. The NWU also commits itself to provide staff and students with a responsive teaching and learning experience based on an optimal mix of TLA methods and activities, with the application of appropriate technologies where relevant. The uniqueness of the NWU character is further illustrated by the relevance of the NWU and its graduates to society with the focus on agility and continuity.

Interview questions for Theme 2: Student Success

1. What does student success mean at the NWU and how is it measured, monitored, and reported on?
2. Describe the unique NWU student value proposition and its relation to student success.
3. How relevant are NWU graduates to the needs of society and economy?
4. How does the PQM reflect the type of student we want to produce in relation to our identity as a traditional university?
5. How do subsequent curriculums portray national transformation imperatives of social justice, e.g., decolonisation, Africanisation, and Internationalisation?
6. How do support departments liaise with and integrate with academic departments to ensure/support student success? You can also refer to co-curricular engagements.
7. How does the NWU ensure/support an equitable/comparable learning experience across campuses?

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. What measures did the NWU put in place during COVID-19 to support equitable/comparable learning experiences?b. How did the NWU ensure that the quality of the student learning experience was not negatively influenced by the pandemic? |
|--|

Feedback received after the workshop, was overwhelmingly positive as participants appreciated engaging on these crucial issues, across campuses, business units, seniority levels and roles.

6.2 ART EXHIBITIONS

Although the NWU Gallery does not report to the Office of the DVC Teaching-learning, it is consistently contributing to the NWU's transformation goals. It has been using the arts, in all its forms, as a vehicle for discussion, transformation, development and education. It frequently hosts and presents exhibitions, projects, talks and events on societal issues regarding race, gender, sexual orientation, language, identity and institutional culture. The exhibitions it presents also speak on various other topics, including, recently, environmental issues, human trafficking, stigmas surrounding albinism, sub-cultures, displacement, as well as other, more abstract, themes.

It is the vision of the NWU Gallery make art accessible to a broader audience by means of interactive processes, to ensure that visual arts become an essential part of the experience of all NWU student. The NWU Gallery plays an integral developmental role in its local community in the North West province. Rural communities, as well as areas outside of the traditional metropolitan city areas, don't get the attention necessary to make a social difference by upliftment through education. The Gallery is ideally situated, in this regard, to do meaningful work.

Exhibitions since the previous report, include:

['Not another hair show'](#) - an exhibition derived from the dissertation titled: *Hair Politics: An Examination of the Aesthetics of Black Female Hair in the Work of Select African Artists*, by Tshegofatso Seoka.

['Women's Month at the NWU Gallery'](#) examined the meaning of femininity in the modern South African context, with an exhibition featuring five female artists who use non-traditional media to engage visitors in conversation.

'The Enigmatic Pursuit' was a collaborative project showcasing visual artworks and sculptures collected from 1932 to the present, from the art collections of the former University of Bophuthatswana and PU for CHE.

'Language of my Forefathers' by Malose Pete, an artist who uses painting and sculpture to bring across different societal perspectives with the hope of encouraging people to dig deeper than what can be considered normal.

'Untold stories' featured works by art students from the former University of Bophuthatswana (UNIBO). In

2019, more than 50 artworks were found in a storeroom on the Mahikeng campus, where the paintings and sculptures had been relegated for over three decades. The works date from the 1980s to the early 1990s, when the UNIBO (later renamed the University of the North-West), offered a degree in Fine Art. There is currently very little published information and no scholarship on art education at UNIBO and UNW during these turbulent years of struggle and transition from apartheid to democracy.

'Inganekwane' was a group photography show. Inganekwane is a Nguni word that means storytelling, fable or creation of history through a narrative performance.

"Mike Mzileni, The photographic archival journey' featured works by photographer and jazz lover Mike Mzileni, best known for his iconic portraits and landscape images from the early 1970s- 2000, which depicts South African history through photography.

6.3 CONCLUSION

During the past year, a number of extra-curricular activities and initiatives were presented and undertaken to support the NWU's transformation goals, within and beyond the teaching-learning space. Although participation levels were low for some activities, participants report on the value of the interactions.

The next section of this report, will focus on the efforts by each of the eight faculties, to attain the NWU's transformation and alignment goals.

PART C: FACULTY REPORTS

7. FACULTY OF ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES



7.1 INTRODUCTION

The Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences (F-EMS) consists of five (5) schools:

School of Accountancy	SAS	Footprint on all Campuses
School of Economic Sciences	SES	Footprint on all Campuses
School of Industrial Psychology and Human Resources Management	IPS&HRM	Footprint on all Campuses
School of Management Sciences	SMS	Footprint on all Campuses
School of Tourism Management	STM	Footprint on Mahikeng and Potchefstroom Campuses

All the cross-campus programmes are fully aligned in all aspects of Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA).

During the 2022 academic year, we commenced with a true multimode teaching and learning approach. (a combination of face-to-face (F2F), hybrid, synchronous online (Zoom and Teams), and asynchronous online and hybrid classes).

This report is a testimony to the Faculty's commitment to promoting innovative teaching, learning and assessment and will be discussed under the following headings:

- (i) teaching and learning challenges, interventions, and successes;
- (ii) assessment plans;
- (iii) staff experiences and challenges;
- (iv) multimode (blended/hybrid) teaching, learning and innovation during the pandemic;
- (v) transformation by decolonising the curriculum; and
- (vi) unique achievements during 2022.

7.2 TEACHING AND LEARNING CHALLENGES, INTERVENTIONS, AND SUCCESSES

7.2.1 Challenges

The general challenges experienced in the Faculty, are:

- Not adequate and relevant equipped venues to accommodate students in the face-to-face contact sessions.
- Insufficient technical support to conduct effective HyFlex lectures.
- Diverse ICT literacies of lecturers, particularly with the use of the eFundi tools to create an interactive environment for students to engage in synchronous and asynchronous teaching and learning
- The workload of staff due to resignations and the delay in appointing people due to People and Culture processes.
- The DALRO reporting is a challenge because module lists are wrong.
- Venues for classes. Even now, with the 100% capacity, several venues, especially the ones allocated to the honours groups, were not ready for classes. Some had no furniture. Other venues had no screen for the projector. Moreover, venues for classes – especially PC labs are still problematic since resources are not equally well distributed over campuses.
- Students resist going back to invigilated examinations, particularly in non-professional programmes.
- The first semester was a challenge to motivate students, as this behaviour was perceived through their poor academic performance. As a result, additional opportunities had to be developed to assist them.
- NSFAS bursary challenges made many students register late in the first semester, influencing their progress and assessments. In turn, these late registrations put more pressure on the students to catch up on work, and many felt overwhelmed by all the work.
- Students' attendance and engagement in face-to-face and online classes is a concern and challenge. However, lecturers try their best to keep students motivated.
- Academic integrity is an issue with online assessment.
- Loadshedding is negatively impacting online assessments, making it a challenge to manage.
- Owing to SALA discontinuing its support in printing test papers for sit-down assessments, there is significant additional pressure on staff to ensure the sound execution of the School's assessment plan. Particularly for staff who have large numbers of students in their modules.

7.2.2 Interventions

To mitigate these challenges, Schools have put the following interventions in place:

- A diversity of assessment tasks and opportunities ensured that students had ample opportunities to master the outcomes of the modules.
- Lecturers utilise the Lessons and other interactive tools on eFundi, which many did not use effectively before the start of the COVID pandemic.
- In SAS, all core modules (except for two 2nd year modules in the FA-stream) are year modules, so at-risk students are identified after every assessment series.

- Interventions included compulsory attendance of tutorials and one on one consultations with lecturers and Academic trainees.
- Communication was sent to at-risk students to make them aware of the current situation to try and identify reasons for poor performance and advise on possible solutions. Their names were also sent to CTL to assist with interventions and support.
- Flexible arrangements regarding class attendance were made, and students had outdoor classes in the School of Tourism Management.
- A peer mentoring programme in managing the online T&L process and initiatives to develop advanced assignments were initiated in June 2022.
- Various actions and innovations were implemented to ensure students can successfully complete the semester. These actions include Screencast-O-Matic applications, Prezi's and PPT's with voice notes, and different communication and follow-up strategies with students via WhatsApp, eFundi, and email.
- Students were constantly reminded via eFundi and WhatsApp groups about class dates, times, and other essential information.
- Different schools arranged guest speakers from Industry to do a presentation for students.

7.2.3 Successes

The pandemic allowed the Faculty to find innovative ways to manage the teaching and learning process, communicate with their students, and develop and structure their assessments. Lecturers now engage more frequently with their students using various eFundi tools. Furthermore, lecturers began to structure their eFundi sites to ensure students had a positive teaching and learning interface and experience. As a result, the first-semester undergraduate pass rates were 86.6% (MC), 83.8% (PC), 83.5% (VC), and an overall pass rate was 87.9% for the whole Faculty.

Some of the success stories in the Schools:

- Karen Visser and Prof Diana Viljoen-Bezuidenhout manage the TETA (Transport Education and Training Authority) Research Chair.
- The TETA contracted the NWU to conduct a desktop study about the post-Covid repercussions for the multi-dimensional Transport industry in South Africa. Their findings will inform their SSP (Sector Skills Plan), which should outline the capacity-building priorities for the Industry in the next financial year. By doing this, we have input in training priorities and related funding for the next year and produce actual research and publications.
- During October, a Transport Symposium will be held on the Vanderbijlpark Campus to celebrate Transport month.
- A 100% Pass-rate in the 2022 ITC, with four (4) candidates in the top 10.
- The continued improvement of academic staff's technological and innovation skills.
- The growing database of the year-on-year concept videos in four languages.
- Various modules, such as International Marketing (BMAN615) and Integrated Marketing Communication (BMAR314), were linked to community engagement projects.

- A 2-day Community engagement workshop with various industry partners was held at the Mahikeng Campus in June.
- Dr Clarise Mostert and Dr Carinda Williams facilitated an international student project. The BCom Hons in Business Management students collaborated with students from Canada, Netherlands, and Indonesia to develop an online game on internationalisation.
- Mrs Lerato Mohalajeng and Mr Junior Longweni (PC), offering the module Problem Solving for Managers (BMAN223), have been selected by CTL to participate in an international collaboration project and will be travelling to the Netherlands at the end of the year.
- 100% pass rate for IOP interns at the HPCSA national board exam.
- The first exchange student from Tilburg University arrived at PC.
- In the process of redesigning the BPysch equivalent programme (Honours BA and BCom Industrial Psychology) in collaboration with four (4) other universities.
- SLP developed and approved: An introduction to Workplace Trauma Management.
- In collaboration with Multimedia Designers at CTL, Dr Esmarie Myburgh developed a General Knowledge game that will form part of her TMBP 111 module (Introduction to Tourism Management Module). In the game, students form part of an internship at Amazing Tours, where they must complete four tasks.
- The Mahikeng SCC hosted an SCC Society launch on campus on 1 April 2022. As a result, the Tourism Society won first place in the category: Best stall presentation 2022.
- The IMEX (Meetings Africa) programme has been developed to encourage the best and brightest events students (Best student of TMBP 312 and 322) to develop successful careers in the meetings and events industry. Over the two days (28-29 February), the students were exposed to valuable industry contacts and benefitted from high-quality education through a Master Class.

7.3 FACULTY ASSESSMENT PLANS

Most of the Schools within F-EMS opted for the continuous assessment approach for the 2022 academic year, except SAS and the Human Resource Development (HRD) programme in the School of Industrial Psychology and Human Resources Management.

In addition, students had to submit their assignments online and written tests and quizzes on either eFundi or the Cirrus online assessment platform. As a result, it was easier to ensure that outcomes were assessed at the correct NQF level. It was noticeable that staff and students had become more accustomed to the online teaching, learning, and assessment modality.

The weights of each assessment opportunity were calculated according to the approved assessment plan of the School and published and communicated to students early on in each semester to allow students to manage and plan their time per assessment to maximise their success opportunities. The School audited

all online assessments for modules in the first semester for alignment and quality purposes. Concerns, such as multiple-choice question-pool size, the ratio between higher-order and lower-order questions, and alignment matters, were identified and addressed. **Continuity plans** for the second semester of 2022 were put in place. Staff continued with their modules in the online and face-to-face teaching model. Directors on the campuses revisited the plans with a staff member of that particular Module for guidance.

7.4 STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES

Students are not ready to move back to invigilated assessments as they are used to the online assessments, which to an extent, have their own weaknesses and loopholes. First, there is a significant drop in face-to-face class attendance. The 1.0m social distancing requirement in lecture venues still made it impossible to see every student for F2F contact during the 1st semester for the larger classes. Academic integrity is an issue with online assessment. eFundi is sometimes unstable/unreliable, for example, staff members report that changes made to assessment settings were not reflected when assessments start, and students report that their assessment/assignment submissions are not captured. At-risk students' lack of response and feedback is a concern. Finally, load shedding negatively impacts online assessments making it a challenge to manage. Therefore, we look forward to more face-to-face sessions and sit-down assessments in the second semester.

Despite the above challenges, the overall student evaluation feedback indicated a positive teaching and learning experience for F-EMS students. Figure 1 summarises the student experience: educational approach (84.03%), assessment practices (81.14%), and module evaluation (81.2%) in the Faculty.

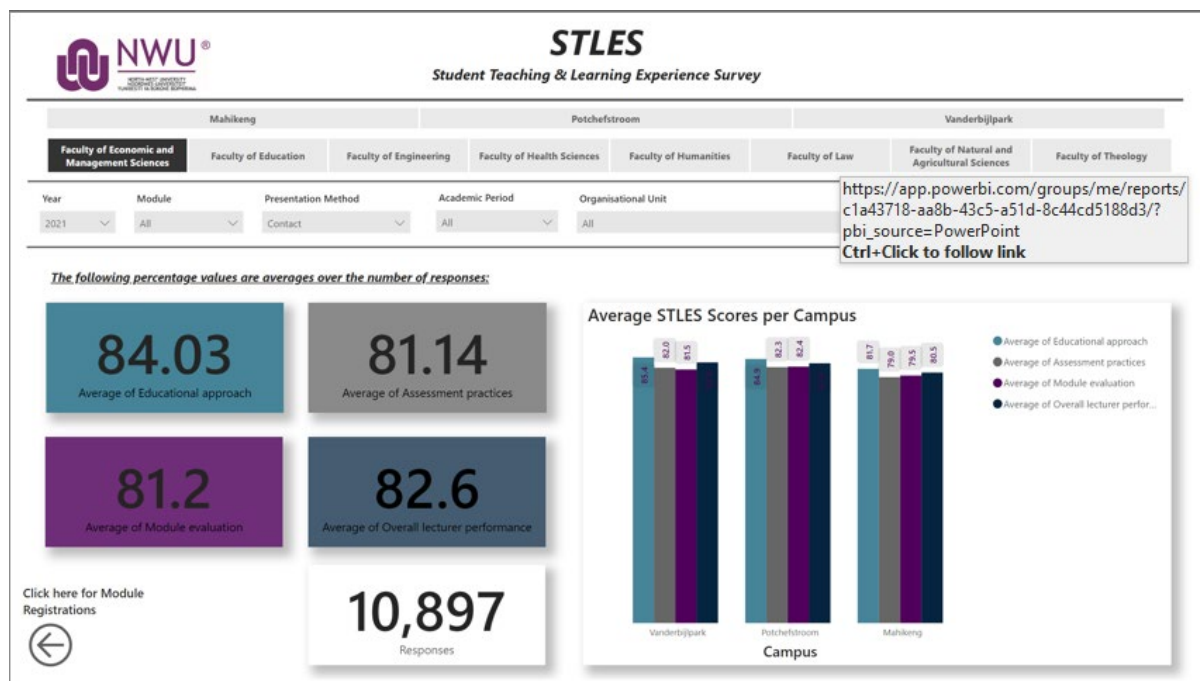


Figure 1: Student teaching and learning experience results

7.5 STAFF EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES

Lecturers are still struggling with device setup, which takes up to 30 minutes (half the class time). There are problems with microphones and computers in lecture venues. Lecturers have problems with the performance of students. Students are complaining about sit-down assessments because they are not used to them. They want online assessments. Booking of venues is still a problem. Most venues do not have whiteboards or double projectors, which poses a challenge to any calculation module. IT support is not responsive; therefore, it takes longer to address all the challenges in venues, and a lot of valuable time is lost just to get started. Some lecturers booked back-to-back lectures to address such issues; Staff cards not allowing lecturers to access the system in the venues. Insufficient technical support in class to conduct effective HyFlex classes.

7.6 CROSS-CAMPUS COLLABORATION

The deanery has virtual coffees and touch-base sessions with staff. In addition, the Faculty Management (Deans and School directors) have regular (six weekly) campus visits to engage with staff physically. The CE, R&I, TLC and FB meetings are rotated, and the primary host is altered for every meeting between the campuses. Overall, there is good interaction between the lecturers, and work is divided evenly to improve efficiency and to share the workload.

SAS introduced a new Business Science module, and they introduced a team teaching approach to lecture the Module. This ensures all lecturers on all campuses are involved in the Module's lecturing.

7.7 BLENDED/HYBRID LEARNING AND INNOVATION DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Covid-19 created the perfect breeding ground to enhance and foster innovation in teaching and learning. Combining synchronous face-to-face and online teaching and learning is the next challenge to be addressed as soon as lockdown levels are dropped. Schools use technology for T&L, such as Zoom, Zoom invigilation, MS Teams, WhatsApp groups, Skype, Game APPs, and new module files App that integrate all information electronically. In addition, free online courses for e.g., MOBI, recorded sessions on eFundu, videos, voice-over slides, and several other learning materials, face-to-face for most of the honours and from semester 2 for most classes, iTLT – Webinars, and general webinars for staff and students.

7.8 TRANSFORMING BY DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM

As part of the CA2025 project, SAS developed a new integrated Business Science module, which started in 2022. This Module combines various skillsets and business-related knowledge needed by Accountants, as proposed by SAICA's competency framework.

To assist us in transforming our current curricula, we have taken an industry approach to help our students understand how accountants operate in various industries. All these modules are presented to a year group.

The same Industry is discussed across the board in class and used in class examples, tests, and exam papers. This assisted students who, for example, have never been to an airport or on an aeroplane in understanding the business dynamics of the Aviation industry.

Our fully online Honours-degree planning in CIMA is progressing well, and implementation is planned for 2023.

The HR programmes are currently undergoing an IPE with one of the objectives to ensure the programmes are fully aligned with the SABPP.

A new diploma in Psychometrists Training is under development as per HPCSA requirements.

7.9 FACULTY-SPECIFIC INITIATIVES

Several webinars were conducted:

- (i) The effect of COVID-19 on investment and wealth in South Africa; (ii)
- (ii) The most significant economic discoveries of all times and how money made it possible; (iii)
- (iii) Graduate employment opportunities, the South African edition; and (iv)
- (iv) Work Readiness Masterclass with the National Treasury and Dananda Global Talent Solutions.
- (v) Conducting research to inform innovative teaching and learning with technology through interdisciplinary collaboration and scholarship.

New teaching and learning projects, namely:

- (i) Digital Assessment,
- (ii) CoP in innovative T-L,
- (iii) Simulations for International Trade,
- (iv) Videos for Accounting, Short concept videos in different languages,
- (v) Games for Tourism, and
- (vi) Mobile Invigilator Apps

to mention a few initiatives in F-EMS.

7.10 CONCLUSION

Through our teaching and learning, community engagement, scholarly research, and engagement with internal and external stakeholders, it is evident from this report that our students and graduates are the mirrors of our success. F-EMS succeeded in equipping students to become lifelong learners who can function effectively under pressure, where innovation, critical thinking, responsibility and teamwork are essential.

Our staff delivered exceptional service to all our stakeholders under challenging circumstances. They adapted exceptionally well to the new and innovative teaching and learning environment, and the Office of the Deputy Dean: Teaching and Learning will continue to establish innovative platforms and create initiatives for staff and students to engage with our modern-day society's transformational opportunities and challenges.

8. FACULTY OF EDUCATION

8.1 INTRODUCTION



Figure 40: Building C6, Potchefstroom Campus

The C6 building in the picture that was inaugurated in 1940 and housed the former College of Education has become a symbol of the Faculty of Education with its firm footprint on each of the three campuses of the NWU and in distance education. This building is timeless and is standing tall and proud because of its excellent architecture and sturdy foundation. Likewise, we are grateful to report that the Faculty of

Education at the NWU continues to build on its reputation as a first-choice provider of teacher education for both full-time and distance students. We managed to successfully steer the boat through the proverbial storms that had a huge impact on staff and students since the global pandemic hit in March 2020. The foundation that we build on is our values and the strong belief that teaching is the mother of all professions and that we are trusted with the responsibility to equip pre- and in-service teachers with high level knowledge and skills needed for affecting positive change in the lives of the children they teach, the communities that they live in and the South African society at large. The beautiful architecture represents the people in the faculty: our staff and students that stand proud and tall, with inner strength and resilience. The year 2020 was exceptionally turbulent and challenged us to adjust to emergency remote teaching and learning, literally overnight. In 2021 it became easier to dance to the new music with both staff and students comfortably falling into the rhythm of remote work and study. With the lifting of some Covid restrictions in 2022 and the implementation of hybrid teaching and learning during the first semester, the faculty experienced some resistance from staff who had become used to working from home where they managed to create comfortable work spaces and from some full-time students who indicated that they could not return to their respective campuses because they had moved back home, had given up their student accommodation, or had taken up full time jobs. The hybrid approach brought its own frustrations with venue bookings, failing technical infrastructure, poor student attendance and the challenge to gain campus access. And then, when staff and students had managed to pick up the beat of hybrid teaching and learning, we could return to full face to face, in-person contact classes for the second semester of 2022. Some staff and students were over the moon. Others were not as excited.

In the following report, detail is provided on the experiences, challenges, interventions, initiatives, and successes that the Faculty of Education experienced during 2022.

8.2 TEACHING AND LEARNING CHALLENGES

The major themes that emerged from the analysis of lecturers' qualitative responses to the question of challenges were *poor class attendance, lack of student engagement, students' poor literacy levels, venues and technical equipment, staff shortages, new lecturers, distance learning, Work Integrated Learning, student protests and late registrations, workload, and time management.*



Figure 41: Word cloud – challenges experienced by lecturers

8.2.1 Poor class attendance

With the move from a purely online mode of delivery from March 2020 to the end of 2021, to hybrid teaching and learning in Semester 1 of 2022, and to the full contact mode in Semester 2 of 2022, one of the biggest challenges that lecturers experienced, was poor student attendance. During Semester 1 of 2022, it became apparent that several students had not returned to their respective campuses since they had given up student accommodation. Some of these students attended the live, synchronous online sessions that had been scheduled in accordance with the NWU timetable. Others indicated that they could not attend these sessions as they had taken up full-time jobs at schools as teachers or teacher assistants, or elsewhere. In some cases, lecturers had to avail additional lesson recordings or offer alternative live sessions, which added immensely to their workload. It was clearly communicated with students in the faculty that all students registered as full-time students were expected to report for in-person, f2f classes scheduled on the official timetable for Semester 2. Class attendance has been made mandatory in most modules and has improved, but it was reported that some students are still not attending sessions.

Another reason for poor class attendance, especially with the implementation of the hybrid approach, was that students did not read lecturers' messages posted on Efundi or other platforms informing them about contact sessions and venues. They would report for sessions at the wrong times and at the wrong venues. First year students appeared confused and are challenged to adjust to class attendance in a university context.

8.2.2 Lack of student engagement

Lecturers in the faculty report on students' disengagement with teaching and learning. In an online environment the challenge is to create engaging learner activities and to manage all these activities effectively. Not all students actively partake in breakaway discussions on online platforms. In a f2f environment, students appear unprepared for class. It has been noted that some students find it difficult to recall content that had been dealt with online. The fact that students might have become used to learning online may be the reason for some being reluctant to engage in a f2f situation. The challenge remains for lecturers to design meaningful and engaging lessons to attain module outcomes, and to do so within the time limit of 60 minutes per lesson. At times the lack of critical student engagement would result in plagiarism, especially with the completion of group assignments or Efundi tests during instances of online assessment.

8.2.3 Students' poor literacy levels

Lecturers expressed concern about students' literacy levels, indicating that students (at different year levels as well as in the PGCE programme) either do not engage with written communication or battle to read for meaning. Furthermore, there are students who find it difficult to write academically or for communication purposes. When students write to staff, their e-mails are often incoherent. Lecturers furthermore noted

students' lack of e-mail etiquette.

8.2.6 Venues and technical equipment

Lack of Covid compliant venues for f2f engagement during Semester 1 and the booking of these venues on the IWMS created frustration. Large student groups had to be split into two or more groups and the same content had to be repeated, particularly in modules with practical components. In some cases where students were requested to attend on a rotational basis, lessons had to be repeated due to the failure of technical equipment to present and/or record sessions. In some cases, the lack of technical infrastructure resulted in lecturers resorting back to online teaching as a practice that they had become used to during 2021 and which they felt would be more effective. Students, on the other hand, saw the online presentations as confirmation that they did not need to be back on campus. The availability of venues that may be filled to full capacity as per the official timetable for Semester 2, assists hugely in the effective presentation of f2f classes. Faculty is happy to report that IT support services swiftly respond when staff log tickets or cases are reported directly.

With the implementation of the **hybrid approach** in Semester 1 of 2022, it became apparent that some of the lecturers in the faculty had never presented synchronous sessions. They had to become familiar with using computer software and managing online classes. It was a challenge to manage big groups online. A colleague from MC reports: 'One of the main challenges was getting used to the technologies at short notice...we had to make things work. We ended up discovering new challenges that had not been anticipated. There were troubleshooting problems that CTL consultants themselves could barely cope with'. Furthermore, lecturers and students from all campuses were frustrated by unstable wi-fi connections and loadshedding.

8.2.7 Staff shortages

Schools across the faculty experience staff shortages. Currently there are 24 permanent academic positions vacant in the faculty, ranging from the level of Full Professor (9) to Junior Lecturer (3). It remains a huge challenge to find suitable candidates for academic positions, especially in terms of seniority and in scarce fields. In some cases, academic positions are advertised up to 6 or 7 times, without success. School Directors have no choice but to repeatedly request temporary appointments to ensure business continuity and are often faced by the challenge of finding candidates, suitable to be appointed in temporary positions. This puts immense pressure on the rest of the colleagues in a faculty in terms of performance in all key areas. It furthermore becomes increasingly difficult to retain staff from the designated group.

8.2.6 New lecturers

Several colleagues started working at the NWU over the past two years. They were challenged by getting

used to the LMS that hosts material for teaching, learning and assessment, then implementing the hybrid approach and incorporate synchronous, online teaching while managing the asynchronous component. The current challenge is to offer f2f classes while in some cases, continuing with synchronous, online teaching and managing the module(s) on the LMS. T&L mentors, subject group leaders, module leaders and colleagues in the subject group across campuses are continuously called on for guidance and assistance.

8.2.7 Distance learning

Late delivery of study material remains a challenge. Lecturers need to ensure alignment of offerings across campuses and with distance education but find it hard to do so when students cannot start working because they have not received material. Furthermore, lecturers are challenged by the fact that many of these students have families and full-time jobs, and they expect to be accommodated in terms of the scheduling of live sessions, the completion and submission of assignments, and in taking online tests.

The management of paper-based programmes remains a challenge. Slow turnaround time results in student to receiving timely feedback.

8.2.8 Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

Academic and support staff face huge challenges with WIL which is an integral part of teacher training. Over the past 2 years, WIL has moved from 4-week focused projects per semester, to semester projects.

Again this year, academics took the responsibility of guiding 3rd and 4th year B.Ed students and PGCE students through simulated teaching during both semesters. In situ assessments of all final year B.Ed Foundation Phase, Intermediate Phase and Senior FET phase students as well as PGCE students also happened over the two semesters. Furthermore, all final year Grade R Diploma students had to be assessed in situ, mostly presenting classes in African languages that many academics as assessors are not familiar with. Students were placed at schools across all 9 provinces of South Africa and in Namibia. The logistics of placements and traveling pose a challenge. Lecturers often had to travel to remote locations to visit schools in areas that could not be found on the GPS. The safety of lecturers and students is regarded as a risk by the faculty. WIL administration is working hard on improving the placement process and routing.

Over the academic year, the following assessments had to be done:

- 8490 student WIL portfolios
- 1400 simulated teaching lessons
- 2200 in situ assessments
- 2400 Professional Orientation Portfolios (POP)

Whereas the marking of portfolios is mostly contracted out, *simulated teaching* and *in situ assessments*

add immensely to the workload of academics who need to balance these responsibilities with the academic programme that proceeds with students in year groups that perform their practical teaching at different times. Unfortunately, some lecturers still misconstrue the purpose of *simulated teaching* and demand full lessons compressed to 5 minutes, or request a 5-minute report on “what would you do in class” instead of a presentation. Others seem not to give simulated teaching their attention and just rush the process. Faculty is working on addressing these issues.

Faculty management is aware of the challenge for academics to sustain contact with all students, to get marking done and to provide feedback on time while being occupied with *simulated teaching* or *in situ* assessments in areas where internet connectivity may be unavailable. Some staff members frustrate the *in situ* placement and assessment process, wasting time trying to ‘get out’ of the responsibility. WIL administration is working hard on improving the placement process and routing, a handful of lecturers experienced very difficult circumstances as we are still learning which areas require which resources. This should improve dramatically with each semester. Most colleagues, however, share positive experiences and are supportive and enthusiastic about visiting schools to assess students around the country and in Namibia.

8.2.9 Student protests and late registrations

Protest action that occurred on two of the three campuses at the start of the academic year meant that the aligned planning for module delivery and assessment had to be adjusted. Students affected by campus unrest were given time to catch up. The same goes for late registrations. Module leaders and lecturers responsible for teaching affected modules across campuses were challenged to manage students who worked on different study units and assessments in the same module at different times.

8.2.10 Workload and time management

For most academic staff, it remains a challenge to teach an average of four modules per semester using different modes of delivery, each with its own programme of continuous assessment, do simulated teaching and in-situ WIL assessments, continue with research projects, and generate research output, and be involved in service learning and community engagement initiatives.

Challenges that were mentioned, includes managing deadlines for student submissions and managing submissions on the correct links across campuses and in distance learning, online marking, the assessment of assignments that need to be downloaded from Efundi, marked, and uploaded again), providing timely feedback, the translation of material, and the recording of lessons in both Afrikaans and English to be made available on Efundi. It creates frustration when assessments must be ‘re-opened’ for students who missed deadlines.

It also adds to workload and time management and creates unnecessary frustration when students do not stick to the Faculty Grievance Procedure but instead lodge complaints with faculty of university management.

One of the lecturers clearly feels overwhelmed: 'It remains difficult to juggle all the requirements during lessons such as multilingual pedagogies, ICT integration, student engagement, cooperative and self-directed learning, the integrated approach and then also modelling the ideal way of teaching while explaining content in an understandable manner'.

8.3 INTERVENTIONS

In dealing with *poor student attendance and low levels of engagement*, lecturers communicated with students, clearly indicating the mandatory attendance of some sessions. Furthermore, they reflected on principles of *effective instructional design*. Among these are meticulous planning of modules, also in terms of the programme for continuous assessment, the latter being shared with students at the beginning of the semester. Lecturers focused on sessions being purpose- and meaningful. Depending on the aim of the lesson, learning activities were designed in such a way that students would be critically and actively engaged to make meaning and learn. In many cases, assessment tasks were re-designed to serve the purpose of continuous assessment. Some lecturers reduced the number of tasks and based on the merit of students' requests for the extension of deadlines for submission (such as late registration), extension would be granted. Furthermore, students were supported by being allowed to submit assignments on multiple platforms e.g., photographs of work via WhatsApp or video recordings. The online submission of assignments assists in record keeping and in countering plagiarism. In addition, learning is promoted by the availability of and in-depth engagement with personalised feedback via Adobe text added to the Turnitin report.

Faculty furthermore requested for modules to be included in the official timetable for the First Examination Opportunity at the end of Semester 2, 2022. Lecturers who teach in the aligned B.Ed and PGCE programmes could indicate whether they preferred their students to write sit-down tests during this period as part of the programme of continuous assessment. In most modules students will *write tests in controlled, invigilated circumstances*. The maximum weighting of any sit-down test is 30%. We see this intervention as necessary for the following reasons: as a means to ensure *academic integrity*, some students have never written a test/examination in controlled circumstances at tertiary level and they need to be prepared for returning to the programme of assessment as stated in the faculty yearbook, lecturers can use this opportunity to adjust to setting examination papers, going through a process of moderation and submitting papers on the system (it is important for new lecturers to be guided through these processes in preparation for 2023 when we might return to the 'normal' way of students working on participation marks and sitting down for examinations).

To ensure *student participation in an online environment*, lecturers assisted students in downloading software such as *Microsoft Teams*, and often worked on *Zoom* which was found to be more user-friendly and fit for the incorporation of language interpretation. These platforms allow for the inclusion of various engaging student activities aligned with the intended outcome(s) of the lesson.

The early identification of 'at-risk' students allows lecturers to monitor student attendance, engagement,

and academic performance. Intervention strategies included consultations with students to determine the exact nature of challenges and the type of support needed, availing pre-recorded lessons to those who were unable to attend sessions due to poor internet connection or loadshedding, scheduling additional sessions for revision, meeting with students to assist them with technical problems such as navigating Efundi or downloading big files, or encouraging them to seek help from the Efundi help desk or the CTL writing laboratory that would assist with academic writing and referencing. Students continually enjoy the support of SI facilitators, tutors, or peers via peer mentoring.

Maintaining *communication* with students was flagged as an important and successful intervention strategy. Lecturers' presence on the LMS is important to assist students. However, WhatsApp remains to be used for quick, in-time communication. QR codes proved to be an effective way to allow students to join academic groups while using a 'Business WhatsApp' allows the lecturer to use their private mobile device but enables them to make use of their office telephone number as alternative to their private number. WhatsApp calls can also be received via the office number. In supporting students, some lecturers post a brief video recording on Efundi at the start of each week in the academic semester where they briefly summarise what has been covered over the previous week and where they give students an overview of content to be dealt with in the new week. All necessary information is shared, and students are reminded of due dates for assignments. If needed, assignments for the week are briefly discussed. Alternatively, communicate via the message tool or chat tab on Efundi, via e-mail, or via WhatsApp. Students are constantly reminded of the value to attend live synchronous or f2f sessions.

As far as *student communication* is concerned, students are constantly reminded of the faculty's approved grievance procedure. Lecturers are requested to include this procedure in their study material. The procedure also addressed e-mail etiquette.

In dealing with *failing technical infrastructure* in venues, lecturers used their laptop computers and faculty provided the cables that they needed to link equipment. If classes could not be presented, teaching sessions were recorded and posted on Efundi for students to watch in their own time.

With the scarcity of *venues* during Semester 1 of 2022, some lecturers resorted to utilising outdoor spaces to meet and engage with students. Large groups of students attended classes on a rotational basis.

In addressing challenges brought about by *WIL*, lecturers adjusted their planning e.g., when they were away from campus, they either continued with teaching asynchronously or presented lessons online, and they managed the submission of assignments according to adjusted timelines (if needed). They arranged with colleagues to stand in for student consultations and planned with colleagues to travel together and assess students in the same area. When students, enrolled for the Grade R programme would present their classes in a language unfamiliar to the lecturer, the student would be requested to complete the lesson plan in English and to submit it to the lecturer before the school visit. During the lesson presentation most lecturers requested the mentor teacher to be present so that useful discussions could take place when feedback was given to the student.

In alignment with the mentoring system for research, faculty adopted a mentoring system for teaching and learning to support *new lecturers*. The Faculty Induction programme for new lecturers were also adapted

to address faculty specific challenges experienced by newly appointed academic staff.

To assist with the *workload* of academic staff, subject groups endeavoured to share responsibilities more equally. Module teams meet regularly to discuss the aligned presentation of modules across campuses and in distance education. They collaborate in preparing material, presenting, and recording lessons, and in planning and generating assessment tasks. In managing their workload, module teams critically reflected on programmes for continuous assessment, considering the purpose of and number of tasks. School budgets allow for marking assistance depending on the number of hours indicated on lecturers' task agreements.

8.4 SUCCESSES

Lecturers acknowledge the *support of colleagues* and highlight *improvements in cross campus collaboration* in ensuring that workload is distributed more equally and in ensuring the quality of teaching and learning. Over the past two years lecturers from all campuses who were initially only working with full-time students, became progressively more involved with distance programmes because of online and hybrid teaching. Teamwork allows for gaining insight and learning about different approaches. One lecturer remarks: "When one works with others one gains insight into different approaches and one can reflect on one's own practice by analysing what works and what not. I might have one specific way of teaching, but listening to my colleague's presentation on his unit, might expose me to a new and better way of teaching specific content". One of the subject groups mentions the appointment of a new, young, and energetic staff member with innovative ideas, as a success factor.

Another success factor was the *effective implementation of the hybrid approach* during Semester 1. This called for meticulous planning and flexibility in executing the planning. In modules with practical components, it became necessary to split student groups and to repeat classes. It gives faculty great pleasure to report that most lecturers and students managed to stay positive, encouraged and motivated during these challenging times.

Academics see *student engagement and their commitment to class attendance* as a token of success. Students who returned to their respective campuses appreciate the privilege of in-person engagement with their lecturers and peers. In particular, final year B.Ed students expressed their appreciation for being able to attend contact classes. In the online environment huge strides have also been made in fostering student collaboration. Group work could be improved with the use of platforms that allow for breakaway rooms. Efficiency was improved by assigning specific student roles and responsibilities.

In terms of *Work Integrated Learning*, faculty is proud to report the full alignment of the programme across all campuses and at UDL. This includes academic and administrative alignment. WIL became the umbrella for all programmes with a WIL component. The internal process involved intensive upskilling of all administrative staff responsible for WIL matters.

Lecturers report on the advantages of *working remotely*. They see it as a success factor that they could engage more regularly with their postgraduate students, and work on research. The latter is reflected by

the increased number of research outputs from the faculty.

Staff furthermore commends the support of their line managers and faculty management at large.

8.5 FACULTY ASSESSMENT PLANS

The plans for Semester 1 and 2 of 2022, have been duly approved and are available upon request. In summary, Faculty of Education continued using continuous assessment during 2022. Sit-down tests, to be written during the First Examination period at the end of Semester 2, were included in the programme of continuous assessment. Detail of this can be found in the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Plan

8.6 STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES

The Student Experience Survey for full-time Undergraduate and Honours students at the Faculty of Education (5183 responses) for Semester 1 indicates an overall experience of Teaching and Learning practices of 83.12%. Students rated the Educational Approach at 84.10; Assessment Practices at 82.74 and Module Evaluation at 82.52%. Overall lecturer performance, across the five school of the faculty, was indicated as 84%.

Students enrolled in distance programmes (4491 responses), scored Teaching and Learning practices in the faculty at 81.50%. Educational Approach: 81.59%; Assessment Practices: 79.97%; Module Evaluation: 82.95%. Overall lecturer performance was indicated as 80.28%.

The somewhat lower score for Assessment Practices in distance education may be indicative of students' dissatisfaction about receiving delayed feedback on assignments. This pertains to paper-based programmes such as the Grade R Diploma and the Advanced Certificate in Education.

8.6.1 Challenges

8.6.1.1 Students unable to attend classes

At the start of semester 1, several students indicated that they would not be able to attend classes, neither in-person nor online as per the official timetable of the NWU. They requested to continue with their studies mainly asynchronously, knowing that lesson recordings would be made available to distance students. Reasons for these requests included lack of transport or housing, medical conditions, pregnancy, financial constraints, the fact that several students had taken up full-time jobs, some students had to repeat modules and experienced timetable clashes or were engaged with Work Integrated Learning. Some students furthermore indicated that they found it difficult to navigate between f2f and live, synchronous sessions on a regular basis in the number of modules that they were registered for. Initially 1st year students seemed lost, not knowing when to attend which classes live or online.

Also, at the start of semester 1, students who awaited funding experienced frustration because of the delay in the registration process that affected access to the LMS

Students furthermore reported on inconsistency during Semester 1 as not all classes, that had been scheduled as contact classes, were presented. Semester 2 seems far better organised; classes are presented consistently.

8.6.1.2 Challenges with online learning

Many students still use outdated computers and find it hard to perform certain actions necessary for effective online learning. Some students need to be repeatedly assisted in connecting to online platforms and in navigating on these platforms – this includes navigation of Efund. Interpretation services were only available on *Zoom* and not on *MSTeams*. Students reported challenges with the quality of the audio when they logged on to lessons broadcast from Hyflex venues. Students furthermore reiterated that they had reached a point of PowerPoint- and video saturation. This challenges lecturers to explore different strategies, such as using multi-media presentations to ensure student engagement.

Students' learning processes are disturbed by unstable internet connections and loadshedding. This affects the submission of assignments. Students who do not enjoy good connectivity away from campus often remain on campus for long hours and then must travel home later at night when it is unsafe to do so. Added to this challenge was the fact that the Computer Labs on the Potchefstroom Campus were not available for students to work from during Semester 1. Students were found sitting on the grass next to buildings trying to link to Wifi to complete work or attend online classes. Access to the Computer Labs could be arranged with the assistance of the Faculty's Chief SALA administrator. Normally students on the Potchefstroom Campus would go to the Education Library to work but due to ongoing construction on the building this has not been an option for most of the academic year.

8.6.1.3 Assessment and Feedback

Several students, especially distance students who keep full-time jobs and full-time students who have taken up employment, find it difficult to submit assignments on time. They appreciate flexibility in terms of due dates. Deserving students who performed poorly in any given assignment expressed appreciation for extended opportunities as part of the programme of continuous assessment.

Feedback to students enrolled for paper-based programmes at UDL, are frustrated by the slow turn around time on assignments and feedback. During the process of continuous assessment, timely feedback is needed to promote learning. Unfortunately, some lecturers do not provide timely feedback, indicating that they carry heavy workloads, which include responsibilities in terms of Work Integrated Learning.

8.6.1.4 Work Integrated Learning

The Student Academic Chapter of the faculty received complaints from students about glitches in the system with school placements. They complained about the system being overloaded at times. Some were

unsure about when and where to submit the prescribed forms that they completed with their information for placement and some placements went wrong. Once practical teaching commenced, there were isolated cases of students who reported on the dysfunctionality of the schools where they had been placed. These students were moved to other schools and the data base used for placements was updated. Complaints were also received from students who were unhappy about their WIL portfolio marks. It became evident that students were challenged to meet expectations as they could not be placed at schools during 2020 and 2021. Academic staff responsible for WIL compiled an additional guiding document providing a more comprehensive explanation of what is expected.

Simulated Teaching: Reports of appreciation for one-to-one feedback on lesson design were received. Some students, however, were unsure of what was expected. It became evident that not all students read and follow instructions.

When it came to school placements, some students felt overburdened by the number of assessment tasks to be submitted before they could leave their campuses. Staff were requested not to expect students to submit tasks when they were at schools because not all students might have access to data or the internet. Unfortunately, there were students who absconded *in situ* assessment without good reason and provided incorrect placement information. Fourth year students complained about being assessed by lecturers who did not lecture in their speciality phase and some reported inconsistencies with how lecturers interpreted the assessment rubric.

Simulated teaching and in situ assessment proved that it remains a challenge to equip full time PGCE students with pedagogical skills and pedagogical content knowledge and skills within one year. In the B.Ed programmes, didactics form an integral part of teacher training, but students often find it hard to merge all components. In assisting all students WIL academic management uploaded additional resources, such as lesson planning videos.

8.6.1.5 Sit-down tests

Faculty requested sit-down tests in most modules in the B.Ed and PGCE programmes as part of the programme of continuous assessment during the First Examination Opportunity at the end of Semester 2. This is aligned across campuses and at UDL. Over the past 2 ½ years students have become unfamiliar to taking tests and examinations in controlled, invigilated circumstances and ought to be prepared for these assessments which are important for quality assurance in some modules. Lecturers have reported poor performance in some class tests, indicating that students might have become unfamiliar with working under pressure and physically writing down answers instead of typing on a computer.

8.6.1.6 Non-availability of resources in African Languages

There is a lack of academic material in African Languages. Students are forced to use English resources which in some cases, becomes a barrier to learning.

8.6.2 Positive experiences

Students feel supported by the fact that, in some instances of continuous assessment, they are given *multiple opportunities* to improve their performance. Assessment, in most cases, is transparent and they know exactly what is expected. Furthermore, they appreciate *continuous and clear communication* from their lecturers and mentioned the benefits of using the communication tools available on the LMS. They feel *safe and supported* when lecturers keep to module planners. Students who attend classes regularly indicate that they find the *sessions informative and the engagement with lecturers and peers valuable*. One of the students stated in student feedback on the lecturer: "I could not wait for my class on Thursday at 08:00".

8.7 ACADEMIC STAFF EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES

Faculty Management is deeply concerned about the outcome of the Wellbeing Project (Assessment period: June/July 2022; participation 72%) that indicates 54% of academics are at risk of burn-out and stress-related ill-health. Main stress factors are emotional load, workload, and work-home interference.

Most experiences and challenges were addressed under Point 2 above. In addition, the following are mentioned:

8.7.1 Hybrid teaching

Staff experienced being challenged and in need of support. The colleague in the faculty that was requested to lend technical support, had not been trained before classes commenced which resulted in academic staff being challenged to make things work. Support was not readily available from IT support services.

8.7.2 Technology

- Unstable wi-fi on campuses. Even LAN connections are problematic at times.
- Printers not working in some buildings.
- Internet devices in some lecturing halls are dysfunctional. Lecturers are frustrated by the fact that they cannot plan for internet activities because they are let down by infrastructure 80% of the time. Adding to the frustration are lost keys, missing remotes, and flat batteries.
- Some staff members cannot use the LMS effectively.
- Some staff members are challenged by poor network connection and loadshedding.
- The move to MSOutlook was problematic for some.

8.7.3 Full return to campus

Some colleagues appreciate the full return to campus to meet f2f with colleagues and to present classes while others prefer to work remotely as often as possible.

8.7.4 Multiple activities

Staff must juggle multiple activities. They struggle to balance all KPAs and meet expectations in each area. Most staff members find themselves attending to to-do lists which include a range of academic and administrative tasks to be completed by certain dates and times.

8.8 SUPPORT STAFF EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES

Results from the Wellbeing project referred to in the previous section, indicates that 44% of support staff are at risk of burn-out and stress-related ill-health.

Colleagues mentioned the following challenges:

8.8.1 Increase in workload related to e-mail and telephonic communication

- During peak times, backlogs are experienced.
- Contact and distance students call for assistance due to shortage of support staff at UDL.
- Where we would normally have walk in students at our office door (still have them though), students are opting to rather send emails instead, this leads to an increase in repetitive emails (although we do have generic responses), of which each students' subject choices are different and this entails having to check every single record before making an informed decision.
- Complaints have been on the increase, especially with regards to applications and admissions, this being telephonically and emailed.
- The biggest challenge in 2022 is the IPE up and above the usual tasks.

8.8.2 Challenges with admissions, registration, and curriculum control

- ¼ of applications are persons that do not qualify for admission, but all 9 000 applications still need to be evaluated.
- Failing registration system: students doing self-registration and not coming to check up on their module choices until it is too late. It remains a major time-consuming task despite curriculum control and commission statements that run to counter this.

- This year's registrations took place very late and thus leaving not enough time for administrative duties to take place. This resulted in the closely packed or back-to-back due dates regarding adds and drops, curriculum controls. It has led to some of the duties or task to be completed but not 100%, for example, not all students have registered before due dates. By the time we start with adds and drops there were some students who were still registering. The curriculum control process was affected by students who registered during that process. The list for curriculum control kept changing daily.
- The other issue is the NFSAS funding which only approved their recipients late, it also had a negative impact of the registration, adds, and drops as well as curriculum control. Also, due dates were extended to accommodate the students awaiting NFSAS.
- All the above also had a negative impact on the teaching part because lecturers must accommodate students who were registered late. Not forgetting the curriculum control that also needed to be attended to, to make sure that these students have registered for the correct modules.

8.8.3 Challenges with data capturing and marks processing

- Marks processing according to due dates remains a huge challenge.
- When all lecturers do not submit marks according to guidelines during the process of continuous assessment, it causes administrative delays or deadlocks. For example, when marks are received simultaneously for five modules with big student numbers and there are multiple activities to be uploaded on the system, it takes a lot of time to capture results. Marks that have been captured must be verified by the lecturers. When lecturers take too long to respond, they are called and requested to verify the marks and return them for finalisation. This process is frustrating and time consuming.
- Another challenge is incorrect calculation of weightings for assessment tasks that make up the programme of continuous assessment. In some cases, weightings do not correspond with the marks that have been captured. Academics often use the decimal and the VSS system does not take decimal, this means the captured marks will either go up or down with a percentage or so. Although lecturers have been notified of this challenge, they still submit marks with decimals.
- Staff requests and additional two days for mark capturing after final mark submission by lecturers.

8.8.4 Technological challenges

- Problems experienced with equipment creates frustration for support staff, especially when due dates are to be met. Apart from the fact that it is difficult to get hold of IT, timely support is not always rendered by IT Support Services.
- Internet connection is problematic due to electricity outages.
- It creates lapses in communication when mail goes to spam or junk mail instead of Outlook inbox.

- Requests to attend to maintenance matters reported on the PLANON platform take a very long time to be resolved.

8.8.5 Communication challenges

- Due to staff turnover, it is not always clear whom to contact to address queries or find information.
- Non responsiveness of staff members when requests for information are made.
- Non-attendance of scheduled virtual meetings after being accepted. This results in meeting starting late and unnecessary phone calls to remind absent staff members to join meetings.
- Lack of communication from SALA (Academic Support – F1).

8.8.6 Motivation

- Some staff members are negative and unmotivated and do not take responsibility.
- Limited career paths demotivate staff.

8.8.7 Absence from work

- It regularly happens that support staff members let their line managers know that they will be absent from work the next day. This is due to various reasons such as illness, family responsibility, or problems with transport and leads to a break in service delivery.
- Some colleagues have requested to work remotely due to the cost of transport or other personal challenges.

8.9 HOW CROSS-CAMPUSES COLLABORATION WAS FOSTERED DURING 2022

8.9.1 Communication

Colleagues met online or f2f before the start of the semester to discuss module planning. Initial meetings that took place in most subject groups were followed up with regular virtual meetings. Most subject groups furthermore created WhatsApp groups for ease of communication. Colleagues report on successful collaboration and a high level of collegiality evident from colleagues checking in regularly on each other's well-being.

8.9.2 Module planning

Cross-campus collaboration was fostered by detailed module planning under the leadership of module

leaders. In most cases, material was developed jointly with individual colleagues taking responsibility for certain study units. Where possible, co-teaching has been implemented. While most subject groups use common assessments, allowances are made for differentiated assessment tasks fit for context. For example, distance student cannot always be subjected to the same tasks as full-time students. Tasks are similar but not always the same while the same outcomes are to be reached. Lecturers often share eFundi sites across campuses and render mutual support. Quality is controlled through moderation of assignments that forms part of the programme of continuous assessment. It was noted, however, that not all staff lecturers are on the same page in terms of moderation practices. Collaboration is further fostered by drafting consolidated reports from subject groups, for example on WIL.

8.9.3 Community project and collaborative research

The Subject Group Educational Psychology collaborated on a CE project in Mahikeng. Colleagues from all campuses are currently collaborating in writing chapters for an AOSIS book publication.

8.10 DRIVING BLENDED/HYBRID LEARNING AND INNOVATION DURING 2022

- Using a flipped classroom approach. Some lecturers availed PowerPoint presentations and podcasts a week in advance so that students could come to sessions with questions to seek clarity on content, discuss case studies and apply what they have learned. Several lecturers used short video recordings to explain content to be covered during the next week.
- Using f2f teaching as well as *LMS, WhatsApp, YouTube, Zoom* and other platforms. MS Teams and *Panopto* allowed for sharing material that students can access in their own time.
- Used Google Meet for open class discussion and to address students' study related questions.
- Blended learning-cooperative projects were used by lecturers to create renewable assessments that are to be published on an OER website.
- Many lectures utilised various digital platforms to inculcate active participation, platforms like global classroom, Kahoot, Zoom, scavenger hunts and others were used for icebreakers. Feedback from a temporary UDL lecturer: *Through the teaching of my module, I have also tried to make use of different platforms (e.g., Google Docs, eFundi, etc.), promoting innovation and hybrid learning that students could use in their own classrooms. Some students do not like this, and prefer one platform, which is understandable.*
- Using different software to engage learners such as *Kahoot*, and *Mentimeter*.
- Collaboration on *padlet* facilitated group work in the hybrid environment.
- Diversifying assessment e.g., developing 21st century skills by developing assessments that require more advanced technological skills.
- In Art for Education, exhibitions were done virtually during semester 1.

8.11 TRANSFORMING AND DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM

Decolonising the curriculum is a process and not a once off event. It involves all aspects of each module: from inter-campus collaboration to module content to T&L strategies, to types of case studies or scenarios applied, resources, assessment, overall module experience.

Aligned with the University's philosophy on Decolonisation that relates to social justice and the transformation of the curriculum, content of the subject Education Law deals with themes such as human rights protection, fairness, freedom from oppression and discrimination within an Education Law context. The module teaches and prepare students how to act in a society based on their knowledge of human rights and other legal concepts. It is believed that student teachers would use their knowledge to act in such a way that it is beneficial for all.

Text selection – in literature studies, lecturers are committed to include prescribe texts that students can relate with. The same goes for the selection of texts to be included in learning material. Input of colleagues are sought across campuses. Material is diversified, using contextual examples in disciplines. Students are invited to share their understanding of content based on Indigenous Knowledge Systems, for example in subjects such as Accounting for Education and History for Education. Colleagues in History for Education report growth in the subject group due to the appointment of colleagues from the designated group. They are excited about fostering 'new historians'.

The faculty embraces multilingualism and promotes the implementation of multilingual pedagogies in ensuring knowledge access and academic success for all students. Several lecturers make use of translanguaging in their lectures, use translations and include vocabulary lists in their material, or use PowerPoints with voice overs in different languages.

Afrikaans as an additional language – students are being prepared to facilitate Afrikaans as an Additional Language (AAL). Guidelines were written that could support staff to include AAL in their modules.

A dedicated Afrocentric section in B.Ed Hons (Ed Psych) course. As we are training counsellors in the B.Ed Hons programme the focus is on a South Africa community context - African perspective/lens.

Alternative pedagogies such as play-based learning encourage equity and inclusivity

Language modules in the B.Ed Foundation Phase used Funda Wandé resources to enhance the delivery of modules. The resources are open-access resources, created by academic staff from a number of universities across the country and they demonstrate teaching practice using different languages (with English subtitles). This was introduced by the Sesotho module team.

Improving learning outcomes for modules by critically scrutinizing Life Orientation (LO) textbooks for 'gender discrimination', 'what it says about the 'other', 'use the same textbook information to construct a different narrative to that of authors', etc. Acknowledge student voices in the presentation of module content without assuming assimilation. Purely SA concepts such as "ubuntu" and the context specific socio-economic situation of SA were brought into lessons to encourage conversations around these issues.

Subject Group LO had a colloquium with other LO lecturers across the country to discuss issues of decolonisation and changing the curriculum. Interest Groups were found for further discussion and action.

Authentic assessments are created. There is room for improvement in terms of variety to ensure that different student voices are heard. Practical performances in some subject groups need to accommodate diverse students e.g., the performance of a gumboot dance in Movement Science.

8.12 HIGHLIGHTS, SUCCESSES AND CURRICULUM INITIATIVES

Faculty takes pride in reporting on highlights, successes, and curriculum initiatives in terms of Work Integrated Learning and across the five schools in the faculty.

8.12.1 Work Integrated Learning

The Faculty of Education leads the field with the initiative it took in terms of *Simulated Teaching*. This was developed and implemented when students could not be placed at schools due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The DHET praised this innovation and suggested that other teacher training institutions follow suit. Furthermore, from an academic perspective, WIL is approached in a holistic manner to address students' personal and professional development. A 16-credit standard applies to WIL modules which include various component such as school-based placements.

8.12.2 6 Bricks Project

The 6 Bricks project for first-year students is unique to the NWU due to an MoU between the LEGO Foundation (Care for Education) and the Faculty of Education. First-year students undergo a unique Professional Orientation Programme (POP) during the first semester of their studies to prepare them for school-based placement in the second semester. Play-based pedagogies, using LEGO, form part of POP. 2nd year students are exposed to Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to promote their professional development and enhance inclusivity and diversity. The entire 2nd year WIL module comprises of cooperative tasks that are performed by groups that collaborate across campuses. The Faculty of Education collaborates with the University of Johannesburg and Stanford University in the USA on a TeachLive project that uses simulation of real classroom experiences.

8.12.3 School for Language Education

Highlights in the *School for Language Education* include the strategic funding that was obtained for starting up the Centre for African Language Teaching (CALT). A workshop was conducted with all stakeholders and a Director for the Centre will soon be appointed. The new Honours programme for Language Education with specialisation in Afrikaans, English, Sesotho, Setswana, Sepedi and isiZulu will have its first student intake in 2023. Afrikaans for Education presented academic writing workshops on the Potchefstroom and Vanderbijlpark campuses. These workshops were broadcast to distance students. 6 Bricks was integrated

into the 3rd year Afrikaans for Education modules with the presentation of workshops on the PC and the VC, and broadcasts to distance students.

8.12.4 School of Commerce and Social Studies in Education

In the *School of Commerce and Social Studies in Education*, colleagues work collaboratively and across campuses on the ECUBED initiative. Based on ECUBED, an example of how assessment is decolonised can be seen in Exhibit A (attached). The school has furthermore started up a project with primary school teachers in the North-West province. Colleagues from SCSSE are also collaborating on a research project from which they will publish in the near future.

8.12.5 School for Psychosocial Education

In the *School for Psychosocial Education* colleagues presented a handwriting workshop to final year students specialising in the Foundation Phase. They successfully hosted an ECD-COMBER Learning Festival. Colleagues are working on compiling a multilingual dictionary for the B.Ed Foundation Phase Home Language modules. Partnership with community stakeholders advanced NWU visibility within the community through community partnership and engagement. The PGDip programme is a new addition that is presented fully online. One of the highlights of this programme is that it provides the platform for experimenting with multimedia.

8.12.6 School for Professional Studies in Education

Colleagues in the *School for Professional Studies in Education* collaborated across campuses in designing and presenting an Amazing Race activity for interactive student engagement. It is seen as a highlight that the first cohort of students will complete the AdvDip in School Leadership at the end of 2022. The team visited schools in the Kuruman district to gain better understanding of the contexts in which students work. These insights assist in adapting learning material for the next intake of students. Regarding fair representation across campuses, leadership appointments for subject groups and module co-ordinators are carefully and fairly distributed in a representative manner. Regarding curriculum, it has been ensured that lecturers from 3 campuses who are offering the same module work together to prepare teaching content and assessment activities. Out of 3 assessments for the semester, each lecturer is given an opportunity to assess their students by means of a tailormade tasks fit for context. Other assessments are similar.

8.12.7 School for Mathematics, Science, and Technology Education

The *School for Mathematics, Science, and Technology Education* reports that all workshops on Potchefstroom campus have been revamped extensively in adherence to Health and Safety regulations.

This initiative is applauded by institutional OHS. Regular practical sessions in the workshops created a more relaxed atmosphere and helped to rebuild trust between lecturers and students.

The Mathematics subject group organised and hosted a 3-hour workshop on research methodology with its honours students.

Lastly, the school hosted a successful National Congress of the Association of Mathematics Education (AMESA) on the Potchefstroom Campus. It was attended to by over 600 delegates from across the country (see addendum for more information on AMESA)



Figure 41: FEDU Students 2022

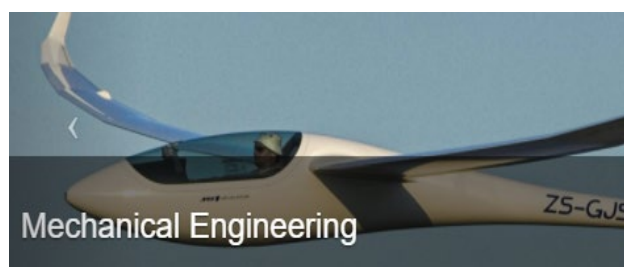
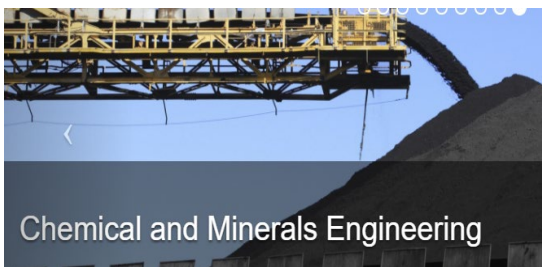
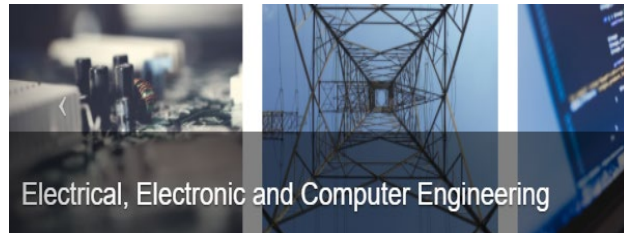
8.13 CONCLUSION

In acknowledging the various challenges that academic and support staff experienced over the past nine months, faculty management can only express its appreciation for the dedication and commitment to ensure quality service delivery. Once again, our staff proved to be flexible and resilient in implementing the hybrid approach to teaching, learning and assessment during Semester 1 and then moving back to presenting full contact classes during Semester 2. Initiatives and successes reflected on in this report confirm that valuable lessons have been learned in terms of online and blended teaching, learning and assessment and in collaborating across campuses and with lecturers in UDL to ensure the quality and alignment of offerings. Continuous assessment will remain to be used in some modules where it can be implemented effectively to promote active student engagement and learning. Colleagues responsible for the more exact disciplines such as Mathematics, Natural Science and Accounting are once again adjusting to the summative assessment mode by drafting papers for the sit-down tests at the end of Semester 2 and following procedure for the timely submission of these papers. In preparation for 2023, students need to be prepared for taking assessments in controlled, invigilated circumstances again.

Again, we can report that our students, in general, managed to stay focused and continue to perform well academically, portraying the necessary soft skills to deal with a variety of challenges. Their feedback on teaching and learning in the faculty is positive, with most students showing appreciation for efforts taken by lecturers to equip them with disciplinary as well as didactic knowledge and skills. It was good that our students could be placed at schools again to gain practical teaching experience.

Finally, the Faculty of Education is extremely proud to be rated as the 4th best provider of teacher training in South Africa, with only the university of Cape Town, University of the Witwatersrand and the University of Johannesburg that were rated higher. Furthermore, Education is the second highest rated subject at the NWU. <https://businesstech.co.za/news/lifestyle/623331/the-13-universities/>

9. FACULTY OF ENGINEERING



9.1 INTRODUCTION

The teaching, learning and assessment project for the Faculty of Engineering started in 2022 with a move towards block teaching, allowing for four-hour blocks per module every second week of the semester. The

restrictions towards classroom capacity at the beginning of the year hindered the ability to allow for more contact time and hence a hybrid teaching and learning model were adapted within the block timetables. This changed for the second semester when the COVID-19 enforced restrictions were lifted by the president. It enabled the faculty and university to make full use of classroom capacities and allow for more contact time. The block timetable was therefore adapted to allow for one three-hour contact block per module on a weekly basis. In addition, practicums were scheduled in the dedicated laboratories of the faculty during the open times in the timetable. This was applied to only the senior academic years (year three and four). The first two years followed the normal NWU timetable.

The verdict is still out on the success of the block timetable. Several attempts on surveys were launched but participation from both the students and the staff were limited. This is ascribed to over surveying during the lockdown period. Individual talks to students and staff showed opinions to be divided. The main problem identified was a lack of training and experience from staff to optimally utilize a time block and still ensure student involvement during that time.

9.2 2022 TEACHING AND LEARNING CHALLENGES, INTERVENTIONS AND SUCCESSES

2022 saw another gradual move towards students returning to full time contact classes. It started off with a bi-weekly four-hour block class during the first semester and progressed towards a weekly three-hour block class for the second semester. The first semester bi-weekly face-to-face classes were offset by online presentation every other week, supplemented by laboratory work. The general feeling from staff and students alike was that the bi-weekly contact was thinly spread and did not present an ideal contact offering. In addition, staff were not trained to optimally engage with students over a four-hour block time, resulting in students leaving midway through the sessions or complaining about poor lecturing. This was addressed during faculty information sessions where best practices were shared by staff and CTL members.

A positive from the increased contact mode was a return of more invigilated assessments. Even though the faculty still had continuous assessment for the first semester of the year, emphasis was placed on invigilated assessments in an attempt to lower the high levels of student academic dishonesty that was experienced during online assessment. From the second semester onwards, the faculty made a uniform decision to revert to a formative/summative assessment plan, allowing for more flexibility in the semester mark to examination mark ratio. This was well received by the staff members who prefer summative assessment, but also enjoy the cumulative progression that can be mapped when using a continuous assessment model.

Most challenges were experienced in the modules presented by service faculties. This statement was supported by a plethora of complaints received by students pertaining towards mathematically inclined modules. In summary it can be said that a lack of tutorial opportunities due to unavailability of classrooms and/or space on the timetable hinders learning in a discipline where it was proven the repetition and guidance are important. To help address this problem, the faculty reached out to one of our alumni, who is currently a mathematics lecturer at the Olympus Academic Centre in Potchefstroom. In collaboration with our colleagues in the School of Mathematical and Statistical Sciences in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences, tutorial opportunities were created for engineering students in two mathematics

modules for the second semester. This initiative forwarded the opportunity for all engineering students registered for these modules to do tutorial work under the guidance of a mathematics expert. Though this was available for all engineering students enrolled for the modules MTHS121 and MTHS223, students who were repeating these modules were expected to attend these sessions to avoid a second failure in these modules, which is often the case. The final success of this intervention will only be seen at the end of the year, but this initial appreciation from the students' side speaks volumes, to the point that it was already included in the budget to employ a similar strategy for the first semester of 2023.

9.3 FACULTY ASSESSMENT PLANS

During the first semester of 2022, the Faculty of Engineering continued with continuous assessment which was implemented during the COVID-19 enforced lockdown period. The onset of the second semester, and the lifting of all restriction relating to classroom occupancy, student campus access etc. allowed the faculty to revert to a formative/summative assessment model for most modules. Within this model, flexibility towards the ratio between the semester mark and the examination mark will be allowed and can be managed within the schools by the director and the programme manager. Lopsided ratios will be brought forward to the Teaching and Learning Committee for consideration.

The pass rates for all modules owned and presented within the Faculty is shown in Figure 1. It resembled similar trends prior to 2020, which is an indication of the adaptability of staff members to continuous assessment. No risk modules were identified, although some modules with lower-than-expected pass rates were highlighted and reported to the school directors for interventions, if deemed necessary.

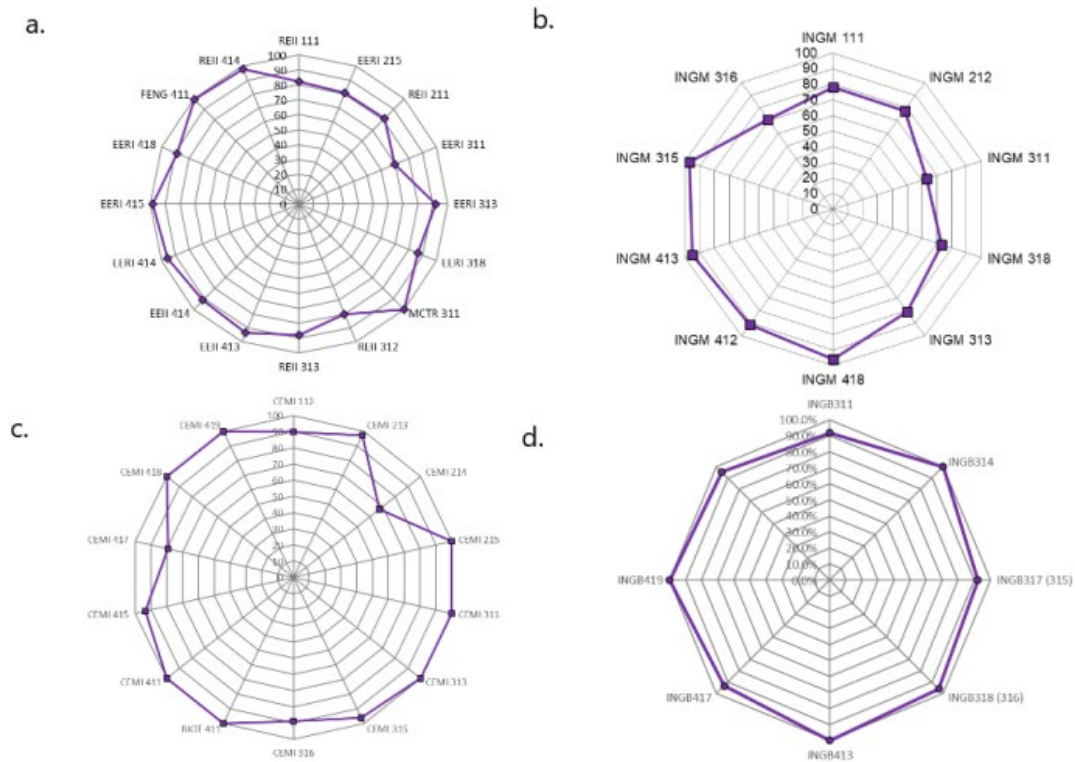


Figure 42: Pass rates of all modules presented in the Faculty; a) School for Electric, Electronic and Computer

Engineering, b) School for Mechanical Engineering, c) School for Chemical and Minerals Engineering and d) School for Industrial Engineering.

From the Examination Committee sitting at the end of the first semester it became evident that several students in the junior years struggle to make the transition from school to tertiary education, which is evident by the number of warning letters issued to students in year one and year two. A summary of the outcomes from this committee is shown in Table 1, where the number of first warnings, mainly for first and/or second year students, are evident.

	Schools in the faculty				
	Electrical, Electronic and Computer Engineering	Chemical and Minerals Engineering	Industrial Engineering	Mechanical Engineering	Totals
FIRST WARNING	56	23	18	72	169
FINAL WARNING	21	23	9	50	103
TERMINATIONS	0	4	0	1	5
CUM LAUDE	0	0	0	0	0
3RD OPPORTUNITY	0	0	0	0	0
GRADUATES	1	3	0	0	4
RISK MODULES	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	78	53	27	123	281

Table 8: Examination Committee outcomes FENG

A deeper analysis of this data showed a disproportionate number of warnings were issued to black first year students. First round discussions already took place to try and understand the reasons and identify the need of these students that may be unique towards their schooling, or lack thereof. Two things that were identified was the lack of peer support and lower IT skills. Interventions for 2023 were formulated and will be implemented within the different schools to help establish peer support groups that can also assist with IT help when the need arise.

9.4 2022 STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES

In general, the students within the faculty had a very positive experience with regards to the teaching and learning project during 2022. Where the faculty was flooded with complaints during 2020 and 2021, this number decreased significantly during 2022, and even then, most was directed towards support faculties, as discussed above. The students were happy to be back on campus and enjoyed contact with lecturers. It addressed their major concerns of 2021 which was mainly directed towards poor communication.

The students are currently split towards their opinion regarding a block class timetable. Several students appreciate the opportunity to focus on only two to three modules per day, which helps them to have time to analyse the content and reach a deeper level of learning. The downside to the block timetable was the time spent during contact. Students experienced this to be cumbersome in some cases and were not able to sit through a four-hour session when a lecturer stood in front and simply tried to talk about the work. This was

alleviated to some extent by the reduction of block time to three hours for the second semester, and to aid those lecturers who found it difficult to make use of the time.

Outside of the classroom, the student body did experience a very good year. Several initiatives were launched to welcome students back onto campus and reignite the student life. Their involvement in faculty activities took off again and all this culminated in the Engineering Student Academic Chapter being named the best chapter for the year 2022.

9.5 2022 STAFF EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES (ACADEMIC AND SUPPORT STAFF)

Like the students, staff were happy to be back on campus, embracing the challenge of a block timetable. Apart from Chemical Engineering, this was a first exposure for academic staff to extended block teaching and several staff members had to come to terms with this unique challenge. The faculty assisted during information session by sharing best practices to equip staff to deal with it.

Other challenges experienced by staff included:

- Poor teaching spaces and lack of facilities, especially for the implementation of hybrid teaching and learning. Meetings were conducted with IT and Facilities and an action plan was put in place to address the upgrading of facilities in the G15 building, the installation of ceilings in some of the N-complex lecture rooms and subsequent upgrading of video and audio facilities.
- Creation of a block timetable that fit into the central timetable. This was a difficult process because of the amount of service modules taken by the first and second year engineering students. Late changes to the central timetable also made this process difficult and resulted in a snowball effect towards the engineering block timetable. However, during the second semester of 2022, the faculty and the SALA timetable office got together and resolved this problem for the 2023 academic year.
- Students demanding online teaching, learning and assessment. Several students still demanded to continue with online classes and assessments even though they were invited back on campus. This was dealt with when the official value proposition memo was released which stated the importance of contact for the NWU and the classification of the NWU as being a contact institution.
- Some ad hoc staff problems which were dealt with by the line managers.

9.6 TOWARDS BLENDED LEARNING IN THE FACULTY OF ENGINEERING

Even before the onset of the pandemic which resulted in reverting to the online modality, the Faculty of Engineering has set itself a target to progressively move towards blended learning. In a way COVID has speeded up the process to the point where all modules presented within the Faculty now has some presence on the eFundi LMS. However, not all lecturers still fully grasp the concept of blended learning and what is required to make it a success. Lecturers have all created a series of concept videos for modules

during the lockdown period, and many are now reluctant to share these again due to poor class attendance by students. A shift in thinking about how and where learning happens still need to happen for several staff. The following initiatives were put into place to aid in blended learning:

- It was decided to present some modules in the faculty completely online. These modules were limited to large classes where the outcome of the modules can be reach by using concept videos and material made available by the lecturer. The two modules that were presented online was the first Understanding the world module (FENG211) and a module in Engineering Communication (INGF221).
- A new module overview document (MOD) was approved at Faculty Board level. The document was developed in consultation with CTL and include the basic requirements for such a document as set by the NWU as well as the information needed by the Engineering Council of South Africa. In order to use the much-abbreviated MOD, the module must have an eFundi site that has predetermined features active. To assist with the site, and ensure the look, feel and content adhere to the prescribed minimum, a template was developed by CTL to use. This template was also approved at faculty level and will come into existence in 2023.
- The second semester block timetable (weekly three-hour blocks) have opened up substantial amount of time on the timetable by reducing scheduled contact time in relation to the previous versions used. It now allows for a more focussed presentation of the module during contact where lecturers can demonstrate the applicability of the work to industrial problems. Students are expected to use the open blocks in the timetable to work through the concept videos prior to contact sessions to allow the lecturer to discuss the more challenging section and go straight into industry applications.

9.7 TRANSFORMING BY DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM (WITH GOOD EXAMPLES)

Under the guidance of Dr Willem van Niekerk, the Faculty has formulated a position paper stating its understanding of decolonisation and how it is applied in the engineering curriculum. This paper is currently under scrutiny within the Faculty, and a second version will follow in due course. One of the recommendations in the paper is to focus on the community and determine the needs of the community in when developing engineering knowledge. This was done by including community engagement as part of the module outcome for one of the newly developed models in Understanding the World. The Faculty has established ties with Engineers without Borders to take part in the yearly design challenge. Students of the Faculty participated in this challenge for the first time in 2020. This was informal and a late decision at the start of the semester but allowed students to be placed inside the top five design for the South African chapter. This participation was formally written into the module during the first semester of 2021. Both these modules were successfully presented for the second time during 2022.

9.8 FACULTY-SPECIFIC CURRICULUM INITIATIVES

The eight undergraduate programmes are currently in a stable phase with regards to transformation and development, with the exception of the two programmes at Chemical Engineering. The following are examples transformation and renewal that happened during this period:

- The School of Chemical and Minerals Engineering completed a long term project in redesigning the two programmes that is offered, namely B.Eng Chemical and B.Eng Chemical with Minerals Processing, to be a singular presentation from 2023 onwards, adhering to all requirements from the professional body and industry. The 2023 changes were accepted at the SCAS meeting in June and the 2024 changes will be brought to the meeting in November.
- The PGDip in Nuclear Engineering went through an external programme evaluation (EPE) in 2020. Several recommendations resulted from that evaluation to be implemented in the programme. These recommendations were rolled out during the first semester of 2021. The final implementation of the action plan was done in the beginning of 2022 and closure on the process was reported at SCTL.
- The PGDip in Industrial Engineering received its final SCAS approval, after obtaining a SAQA ID. The first student intake occurred in 2022 and applications for the 2023 academic year has already exceeded the planned intake number.
- The market analysis and development for a B.Eng.Sci programme was approved during the June SCAS meeting. The final development of the programme is currently underway with the aim to do the external application early in 2023. This programme will serve as an additional entry route towards engineering.
- Some smaller changes were made to programme to allow for better scaffolding of programme outcomes and graduate attribute development.

9.9 CONCLUSION

After the turmoil of the COVID-19 enforced lockdowns and changing of the academic offering, 2022 signalled a return to a more familiar approach of contact teaching, learning and assessment. The faculty has also moved back to the formative/summative assessment model, with exceptions being managed through the Faculty Assessment Plan. The block timetable adapted by the faculty is still in a testing phase with both staff and students having a split view towards its success. Curriculum transformation and renewal was mainly done in chemical engineering, with limited changes in other programmes, apart from the development of a new programme geared to increase the student intake in the faculty. This academic year has had its challenges but as a faculty we were able to overcome these and present a teaching, learning and assessment project to the benefit of the students, faculty and NWU.

10. FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES



10.1 INTRODUCTION

The Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) consists of five (5) schools, which includes the following: School of Pharmacy, School of Human Movement Sciences (footprint on Mahikeng and Potchefstroom Campus), School of Psychosocial Health (footprint on Potchefstroom, Mahikeng and Vanderbijlpark Campuses), School of Physiology, Nutrition and Consumer Science (one lecturer for Physiology on the Mahikeng Campus), and Nursing Science (footprint on Mahikeng and Potchefstroom Campuses). All the schools are made up of several subject groups. All the cross-campus programmes are fully aligned (since 2019) in all aspects of Teaching and learning outcomes, assessments, practical classes, and timetables (from 2022).

10.2 TEACHING AND LEARNING CHALLENGES, INTERVENTIONS AND SUCCESSES

10.2.1 Teaching and learning challenges

With the F2F classes as the major mode used for teaching and learning this year in the faculty, we believe we had less challenges than we had in 2021. During the Covid-19 period where lecturers had to do full online teaching as well as assessment, they have mastered and learned a lot of new T&L methods on how to make teaching and learning work for the best in their various modules. They can now follow a true blended approach to T&L.

In the beginning of the year, students were encouraged to return to campus to a more stable internet environment. To ensure that the purposes and outcomes of the modules are reached in the modules that have a practical component, where possible the lecturers used of case studies, datasets, videos, and reports to provide a real-life experience.

Online registration of returning students at the beginning of 2022 was rather slow and continued until really

late into the first semester. Online registration remains a challenge, especially for senior students, as students choose the modules that they want without following the curriculum. Students choose to register for third year level modules without completing first- and second-year modules while some of these modules were phasing out and not offered anymore. The system allows this, and this is only discovered when the examination records are scrutinised at the of the semester. The system also allows students to register for higher level modules even if they did not pass the pre-required modules. It then becomes a manual process to deregister these modules. If any module is outstanding, students should not be allowed to register online and should rather follow the curriculum control process.

At Nursing, there are currently still students who failed first- and second-year modules on the phasing out “old” programme (phasing out started in 2019-2022), which create challenges in terms of teaching and assessment as they have registered fourth year level. Challenges of Nursing students who had to be accommodated in campus residences during recess were also experienced as campus residences had to make special arrangements to accommodate Nursing students that had to complete work integrated learning.

Registration of returning students (especially Nursing students) at the start of both semesters created huge challenges as prerequisites were violated whereby students (who received dean’s warnings for poor performance) registered online for higher level modules as well as lower-level modules they were not eligible for. The registration system was not adequately blocked for these students. The assistance of SALA was required to investigate the possibility of blocking the registration system for students who received letters of poor performance, so that the departments can assist them with their applicable registrations and allowed module choices.

The School of Nursing (MC) still experiences challenges regarding transport of students to and from the clinical platform which is also aggravated by social distancing for Covid19 in the vehicles. It impacts on the clinical training programme as they arrive late at clinical services and struggle to accrue sufficient practical hours at a specific placement. All the additional transport trips depleted the school’s budget and ended with overspending. For many years it was a requirement that social work students need to have a driver’s license before they commence with field placement. The changing profile of students arriving on campuses with public transport and coming from environments where driving a vehicle is only an option for a few, the subject group social work need to reconsider the matter of a driver’s licence and start looking at innovative and alternative ways to ensure that students can travel to and from field placement settings. A planning meeting on this matter is scheduled for early October 2022 and the directorate plans to consult with faculty about possibilities similar to the clinical training grants for other professional groups in the faculty. Like nursing, psychology, social work, the dietetics program is also starting to experience challenges regarding transport when students must participate in WIL (statutory requirements). Students are responsible for their own transport during their internship at various clinical platforms in the 4th year of studies. The number of students with financial constraints who cannot afford the transport costs are increasing as more and more first-generation students enrol in the faculty, without own transport and limited funds. Another element that should not be overlooked in all arrangements is civil protest actions that disturb arrangements leaving staff and students stranded and not able to execute their WIL outcomes. Transport of students for WIL

activities is more challenging than before.

The add and drop system is unreliable and challenging, students have complained that they could not access it, or could not complete the request, whereafter they had to complete the manual document again. Secondly, with the add and drop system, some requests are approved automatically without the programme leader or subject chair ever seeing the request.

Meeting enrolment targets in most of the programmes in the faculty was rather challenging and follow-up with prospective students was done on large scale and much effort went into accommodating students who registered late. Lecturers and students in the schools were equally excited about a gradual return to more familiar teaching and learning activities after the previous two years' unpredictable environment during the most intense parts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The faculty planned and communicated as well as possible to receive all our students back on campuses in 2022. We prepared for aligned face-to-face (f2f) contact for all modules (dependent on national and NWU COVID protocols). As some of the programmes have relatively small numbers in each year group, reinstating f2f classes proceeded without too many challenges. Contact sessions in all programmes were planned as compulsory f2f classes with the option of using a second scheduled class each week for self-directed learning (in some programmes) or to complete a class activity, while most of the 4th year students' classes were presented as block classes.

The work integrated learning activities of social work students returned to a more stable process, following challenges to find field placement settings during the severe COVID-19 periods in 2020/21. The WISL system is already used with great success to manage the WIL activities of students in various schools in the FHS and social work started with pilot testing the system for one of the second year modules in the second semester. The SPSH is excited about the system and look forward to phase it in from 2023 onwards to manage all WIL activities of social work undergraduate and psychology post graduate students.

- Two of the biggest challenges during this year (especially the first semester) were the timetable and the IWMS. The booking of venues during the first semester was very tedious and caused a lot of double bookings. It was expected of academic personnel to manually book all their venues for each session individually, and this is not sustainable. To present fully aligned undergraduate modules across all three campuses, making use of a hybrid model, the same assessments, the same MOD, module plan and the same eFundi contents, is basically impossible without an aligned timetable. After much negotiations, the schools management teams scheduled meetings with all stakeholders and an aligned timetable was created and maintained. This was considered one of the biggest successes for the schools this year. The IWMS created some logistical chaos in the first semester, putting unnecessary strain on academic and support staff in the school, but we are happy to report that it is managed much better in the second semester. Even with these IWMS challenges, there were some positive outcomes to dividing students in to smaller groups: *In relevant modules classes had to be divided into small groups, thereby placing a large lecturing strain on lecturers, the availability and booking of venues also added a great administrative strain for the lecturers. However, discussion in the small groups provide a great opportunity for learning as the students are much more engaged and they cannot "disappear" in the class or virtual space.*

- There are still challenges with T&L equipment in the venues. The computer software isn't updated regularly. It is not clear who the building representative is for each building/venue, and therefore it is difficult to arrange access to venues. The Wi-Fi is unreliable and drains the device battery when it is continuously searching for signal.
- For those students (especially in modules with large groups) that returned to f2f classes, limited classroom capacity was a big stumbling block. The eFundi sign up tool was used, but some students saw the "first-come-first-served" custom as an unfair approach. Repetition of classes due to large student groups is not always a feasible option, due to staff shortages and the challenge of a continuous increase in administrative tasks for academic personnel. This places pressure on academic staff and takes time away from lecturing, student assistance, engaging in scholarship of T&L, SoTL projects, and more. Some modules also have a large volume of content to cover which requires as many class sessions as possible.

Challenging during the pandemic also, is the communication from the NWU management directly to students without including or informing staff members of the content to be published beforehand, which caused confusion and even more demands from students. Staff members were left at a disadvantage and the Faculty of Health Sciences Deputy Deans, and the Executive Dean had to regularly respond to staff members on matters even they were not included in. Staff members had to read the same notices as students on the NWU news publications, usually after the fact and after students and parents started phoning for explanations.

With regards to communication and f2f interaction, the following deductions were made:

- One of the biggest challenges of the current teaching and learning environment that emerged during the year, was the attitude of a relatively large group of students across modules and schools, who became very demanding and even disrespectful in their communication and engagement with lecturers. It was experienced in 2021 that the attitude and communication style of students are not reflecting respect. Unfortunately, there has not been any improvement in 2022. Students started to use WhatsApp as the main communication channel with lecturers and do not respect after work hours, although faculty guidelines on communication is available for all students on the eFundi sites. The way students communicate with lecturers are also a concern as basic language use, specifically spelling and grammar, and email ethics are very poor and rude. Lecturers perceived it as a constant demand of attention without regards for the privacy of the lecturer. This experience necessitated the drafting of specific faculty guidelines for staff and students on ethics, complaints procedures, ethics of care, communication guidelines, professionalism, to name but a few.
- As the Covid-19 pandemic is part of recent history, students are still unsure of themselves and lack the skills in f2f interaction. They do not use available reading material, specifically textbooks. NSFAS students (especially) tend to not purchase prescribed handbooks and rely on electronic platforms such as Goole, as their main source of academic information. Due to this, students lack the basic foundational knowledge, sourced from peer reviewed handbooks, often discussed during contact sessions. Not reading instructions on the e Fundi platform remains a challenge (since 2021 ongoing).

- In some programmes/modules, lecturers experienced very poor class attendance. Even though students receive a detailed module and class plan at the start of the semester, they also receive a weekly reminder of the activities planned for that week *via* eFundi announcements. Students were still able to contact their lecturer *via* the usual communication channels, e.g. email, eFundi messages, and scheduled f2f appointments.
- For some modules, lecture halls were not large enough to accommodate all the students during the active lock-down period, which meant that some lecturers had to repeat each class with 2 back-to-back sessions for different groups, ending up only using half of the allocated time per class (half a period for each group). It is impossible to identify students who do not grasp a difficult concept as lecturers have to rely on the student to participate in a f2f discussion session. This was somewhat better in the first semester when venue capacity was increased, and much better in the second semester with full venue capacity.

In the Nursing programme absenteeism of the first-year nursing students (MC) both in theory and practical platforms were a challenge, as it impacts on teaching and learning effort that the academics put in place. The nursing students' uniform is still a problem and the school get complaints from the clinical platform on poor dress code and including students' behaviours and attitudes. The school used CTG funds to assist the students with uniforms as an intervention to remedy the situation, but the new guidelines are still not accepted by them.

Another consequence of the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the remote mode of teaching and learning was that students in general came over as unsure of themselves, a tendency observed especially in the practical sessions. The provision of clear and simple instructions and communication with students that do not always want to read instructions or look for it on their eFundi platform, was especially challenging. The fact that students were allowed to return to campus for the second semester was very important to manage the technical issues of poor connectivity, the lack of proper devices and difficult family environments which are not beneficial for studying.

10.2.2 Assessment challenges

Some challenges in 2022 with the Hybrid approach are students who are not in the "class", missing assessments, because they did not have stable internet connection during the first semester when lock-down was still in place. Dishonesty of students during online assessments are also still a problem as in the past. During staff meetings in the schools, staff members share their experiences and the "plans" they make to do good quality assessment. A great deal regarding online assessment have changed and improved, but staff are glad that sit-down tests/assessments is the major mode of assessment again, to sustain a better academic integrity of papers, which also will result in more realistic exam results in 2022, and less academic dishonesty.

It is true that online assessment methodology improved greatly since 2020 and through 2021, but the challenges also increased. Specifically with reference to academic dishonesty as it became evident that students sometimes write online assessments on behalf of each other. Some modules only started using

sit-down assessments again in 2022. Student performance declined after the mid-semester assessment period using sit-down assessments, especially in the third- and fourth year groups who were only exposed to online assessments up to now. The skills to write a sit-down exam or test needs to be developed.

Continuous assessment was used in both Psychology and Social Work undergraduate modules during the first semester, but from the second semester, all social work and psychology honours modules will return to formative and summative assessments with a participation and exam mark and sit-down exams. Psychology undergraduate modules continued with continuous assessment during the second semester and remained online due to logistical challenges. All assessment plans were submitted to Faculty and measures were put in place to ensure that provision was made for different types of assessments with fair weightings.

With the return to sit-down exams for the mid-semester assessment period, some challenges pertaining to the venues and exam Paper Manager system were experienced, but we trust that these issues will be resolved for the second semester papers. One example of this chaos is the following: *The students and lecturer waited at the venues as indicated on the official timetable, with no invigilators or assessment papers. After phoning the examination department, staff were informed that the venue had been changed without notifying the lecturer or students. The students and lecturer had to walk to the new venue and could fortunately continue with the assessment. It was indicated to the lecturer that the venue was changed on the timetable, but this was not the case.*

The return of students in the 1st semester of 2022 was closely linked to Covid-19 regulations and the semester being shorter than a “normal” semester and starting later for the 1st semester were found to be problematic.

Staff welcomed the availability of sit-down tests/assessments as of major importance to sustain a better academic integrity of papers, which also resulted in more realistic results than in 2021, when module marks in general were 10-20% higher than usual. Besides new methods of assessment being applied, there were still some serious challenges. The biggest challenge was students missing assessments, because they did not have stable internet connections and academic dishonesty during assessments. Regarding on-line assessment, staff members have learned from each other, and would share their experiences and alternative "*plans*" they made to do good quality assessment during staff meetings. Randomised eFundi tests and individual assignments or projects are used regularly to test students' individual level of performance. Online assessment had improved greatly since 2020. Students were encouraged to return to campus to a more stable internet environment conducive to learning. Students who missed assignments due to connectivity problems, poor health or load-shedding were offered alternative assessments to make up for missed opportunities, in the period before returning to campus. Some students missed first semester due to ill health (mental problems) and some due to substance abuse and failed to attend the classes and complete assessments as required. Students with social and medical problems were identified and referred to the students counselling centre and psychiatrist for mental assessment and proper treatment adherence. The 3rd and 4th year levels Nursing students are challenging the practice of sit-down assessments as evidenced by the letter that they wrote to FUNDISA and SANC complaining and registering their dissatisfactions.

Many staff members attended CTL webinars to maintain their remote teaching acumen as well as improve their creativity on their module sites. Ms Tiisetso Tshehle (SPSH) participated in two meetings with the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP) to ensure that statutory requirements for the clinical training of final year social work students was adhered to despite the continued changing clinical environment. Overall, across campus collaboration, especially within module teams, was improved and regular contact meetings were held. The NWU timetable was used to set up an assessments schedule in the school to minimize students having more than one assessment on one day and to enhance the promotion of fair assessment across campuses and lessening the burden on students.

In the School of Physiology, Nutrition, and Consumer Science (including Occupational Hygiene) the continued assessment plan format developed in 2020/2021 was used. Assignments and tests were compiled or constructed to be suitable for an online format. Bloom's taxonomy was followed to ensure that assessments were kept according to the requirements for the different year levels. Assessments are only available for a certain period on a specific day, to increase academic integrity and to reduce academic dishonesty by students. A time limit was implemented, and students only have one opportunity to complete the test. Academic timetables were used to determine due dates for submission of assignments. Practical modules were presented in either block format, once a week repetitively till all students completed it adhering to covid regulations regarding numbers and in Covid compliant labs. Videos of practical's were recorded and uploaded on the LMS eFundi to assist with either preparation or where practical classes were assessed through theoretical online assessments. Suitable for a particular outcome and groups of students, assessments were individual and/or group assessments. Most assessments took place online, apart from practical sessions where students are assessed in class during practical classes. The number of practical sessions were decreased but more sessions were scheduled for skill development. Students' feedbacks were used to change assessment and make it more user friendly or understandable. Students had the opportunity to give input in due dates of assessments before the schedule was finalised.

10.2.3 Workload challenges

Staff in all schools experienced a workload overload as f2f sessions in some programmes with large student numbers which had to be repeated 4 or more times (due to Covid restrictions on classroom capacity) and practical/simulation lab sessions up to 6 times (per practical per year group) during lock-down. The lab-time could not be scaled down, as this is the place students learn skills before being placed in clinical training platforms. Challenges during the second semester are less as more f2f contact sessions can be presented and blended approach to learning and self-directed learning had to be emphasized. Students are not prepared for self-directed learning and attend the f2f sessions without having prepared for the sessions and tests. The repetition of the practical sessions is still a problem.

Additionally, students' state of mind also had an impact on lecturers workload. With various additional challenges that lecturers had to deal with, they also now had to ensure that students' well-being is attended to – much more than in the past. This also put additional pressure on the academic staff members as work became more complicated. The number of sick notes is high (and several refer to students being treated

by psychiatrists).

The bilingualism of students on the PC campus, but not of all the lecturers, is becoming a challenge. Students are allowed to answer assessments in either English or Afrikaans. However, since not all lecturers are able to set up and mark assessments in both languages, other staff end up marking those assessments on that lecturer's behalf, increasing their workload unnecessarily, which is unfair. Many questions are set on a high Bloom's Revised taxonomy level and need a lecturer's insight. Because some are open for interpretation, these questions should also be marked by the same person to allow for fairness/reliability between students. This task can therefore not be performed by a class assistant and must be done by a trained lecturer who knows that specific module well.

10.2.4 Interventions and successes

Due to the very large numbers of students (> 1000 per module) in the Psychology undergraduate modules (School of Psychosocial Health: SPSH), for example, we continued in mostly online format making use of synchronous/asynchronous methodologies in a hybrid/hyflex model. In this way equal access and alignment of the student experience across campuses and year groups could be assured. We have learnt many lessons in the previous 2 years and appreciated some of the benefits the online environment had for teaching and learning of really large groups. Alignment was strengthened and students had a similar student experience across campuses. Students could work in groups across campuses, while resources and expertise were distributed across campuses. In a student survey, the majority indicated that they prefer the online environment as it provided them with more autonomy in their studies and the opportunity to revisit material, especially during the uncertain times and possible new waves of COVID-19 infections in 2022.

The SPSH included the following supplementary measures to increase interaction with students and to support quality T&L in undergraduate psychology groups:

- All learning materials were made available online for students on the LMS eFundi.
- Weekly, synchronous face-to-face Zoom sessions were arranged. These sessions were planned as purposeful contact sessions (not traditional lecture style) during which interaction between lecturers and students, as well as among peers was enhanced and stimulated through opportunities to discuss complex learning contents and the practical application of knowledge. Recordings of these sessions were made available on eFundi. The SPSH secured 5 x Zoom licences which made it possible to accommodate up to a 1000 students in a webinar format without time restrictions (currently MS Teams can't support large numbers of participants).
- All module plans included weekly scheduled consultation sessions with lecturers (both f2f and online).
- A sufficient number of SI's, tutors and peer mentors were recruited and appointed to assist students.
- Master sites on eFundi were developed in all modules to make sure all students have access to the same information. From the master site, module teams could create a campus eFundi site for each

module. The following functionalities on eFundi were included: Lessons, Quizzes, Assignments and Structured gradebooks. Functionalities such as Forums, Messages and Chat could be included as optional.

- Monitoring of student progress enjoyed a high priority in the SPSH. This was done *via* a monitoring tool developed by the module team of PSYC111, in collaboration with Dr Christmals from the Centre for Health Professions Education. This tool was found really helpful in the monitoring of student progress in the larger psychology groups. In social work, curriculum advisors played a lead role in identifying students with unsatisfactory academic progress and/or high risk. One-on-one sessions were scheduled to discuss concerns with identified students. In some cases students were advised to make use of the option of an extended programme, while others were referred to SCDS and the NWU Career Centre.
- The inclusion of SI's and tutors were considered useful in the attempts to support students. Regular follow-ups with these students were scheduled and communication with students were recorded. One of the communication tools used, was the issuing of a letter of concern about academic progress as per the letter template received from the office of the DVC T&L. The SPSH perceived the timing of this process as problematic – literally towards the end of the first semester. We understand that it was a process to be developed at the time, but found the contents of the letter meaningful and will follow a similar process in the second semester – just much earlier.
- Interventions made during 2022 was the move to a blended learning approach. All study material was posted on eFundi in both Afrikaans and English. PowerPoint slideshows with voice overs and short explanatory videos were also posted to eFundi. F2f lecture sessions were used for clarification of abstract concepts and complex study matter. The f2f sessions were also used as question-and-answer sessions to determine which study material students find problematic. Some lecturers also included a short “lecture” session into their practical sessions.
- Success was reported by most lecturers presenting modules to “senior” students who appreciated the blended learning approach and participate actively during f2f sessions. Student competence was also reported to have improved.

With online classes still being the major method used for teaching and learning in 2021, staff experienced less challenges than in 2020. Lecturers have mastered and learned new T&L methods best suited to their various modules. Face-to-face (f2f) contact sessions presented to smaller groups of students, according to the Covid Compliance policy for use of classrooms, at the beginning of each semester where general information and house rules pertaining to modules in different programmes were shared, contributed to a better understanding from the students of what was expected from them and was a valuable intervention in 2021. The initial suspension of f2f contact classes forced academics to explore technology to deliver academic content and lecturers are in general more confident with using technology and the functionalities of eFundi. Some lecturers also preferred the booking of weekly f2f contact sessions in the second semester to explain difficult concepts. These f2f sessions were compliant with Covid-19 protocols, and repeated at least 3 to 4 times per lecture, with bookings by the students for a slot *via* Google forms.

The delivery of all programmes in the FHS relies heavily on the integration of theory and practice in all modules. Work-integrated learning and workplace-based learning components are an integral component

of programme delivery and in most cases incorporated in selected modules and as compulsory hours during dedicated periods throughout the year. The different programmes in the faculty have different requirements, for example, in Pharmacy the students need to complete 400 hours of work-based learning during the 4 years of study with the third-year students working one day per week in a Sub-district pharmacy and one day in a Primary Health Care Clinic. All the other hours were completed in the community pharmacies. Formal and informal engagement to simulate the classroom situation was achieved through forums and Chatrooms on eFundi. Regular Zoom, MS Teams and Skype sessions were used to either facilitate learning in the form of questions and answers/ discussion of important principles or in some modules as an in-time lecture, where appropriate.

Formal and informal engagement to simulate the classroom situation was achieved through Forums and Chatrooms on eFundi. Regular Zoom, MS Teams and Skype sessions were used to either facilitate learning in the form of questions and answers/discussions of important principles. The unlimited Zoom licences obtained by the University with simultaneous translation were of great benefit both for lecturers and students alike. In some modules in-time (synchronous teaching) lectures, were appropriate. The online teaching modality required the lecturers to extensively use the eFundi LMS platform as a means of online teaching and learning. To ensure that the purpose and outcomes of modules were reached, lecturers used other resources such as videos to explain the necessary concepts. The preferred mode of delivery was the provision of PowerPoint slides with basic elements of the work for the day presented in the slide, accompanied by audio narratives. This was presented as PowerPoint slides shows with voice overs or the conversion of these presentations to videos and compacting the video with the “Handbrake” application. Online learning requires a greater degree of remote follow-up, input and checking, since no hands-on knowledge can easily be gained as per the usual contact interaction. It is also difficult to get the necessary feedback from the students and it is easy for them to disappear in the virtual environment.

The introduction of hands-on practical sessions in almost all the modules in the faculty were of great benefit and contact laboratory sessions could be conducted by reducing the group sizes. It however placed an enormous burden on staff members since the sessions had to be repeated 6-20 times depending on the size of the available venues, the number of enrolled students in a specific module, but staff agreed that these sessions were an absolute necessity in the adequate training of students in practical applications of theory. These modules may also, where applicable, use factually correct case studies, datasets, and reports to provide a real-life experience.

The fact that Nursing students are all back on the campus on weekly f2f classes in the simulation laboratory for clinical teaching and learning and practical assessment attributed to a more successful year so far when compared to 2021. Students already had one on one sessions with the lectures with scheduled appointment to discuss teaching, learning and assessments challenges. Improved teaching and learning opportunities for both students and lecturers were noticed during this semester. In most of the cases where sit-down assessments were done, it was well appreciated as this at least provided evidence to the school regarding the actual students' performance as compared to online assessment. The school of Nursing managed to complete the first semester with good pass rates, and students were issued with letters of support rather than warnings for poor academic performance.

10.3 2022 FACULTY ASSESSMENT PLANS

All lecturers had to compile their assessment plans for the modules using the standardised assessment plan template of the FHS. Learning lessons from 2021, all assessment plans were first internally moderated by allocated lecturers in schools, as part of quality control, updated and evaluated further by the Centre for Health Professions Education (CHPE), and recommendations and concerns were shared with the lecturers where necessary before final assessment plans were approved and placed on <https://efundi.nwu.ac.za/portal/site/fca1fbc3-374b-4bef-b501-a3889c2b41ec/tool/a1734851-5499-4faa-bacb-f254415b7a2e?panel=Main#/group/fca1fbc3-374b-4bef-b501-a3889c2b41ec/Operating%20model/In%20progress/>

Almost all the staff returned to full f2f teaching and practical sessions, and all students were required to be back on campus fulltime for assessments/practical/assignments/lab work.

A faculty rule was implemented from the second semester of 2021, for all modules using a continuous assessment modality, to ensure ongoing student engagement with all the material of a module as follows:

For a student to acquire a participation mark and consequent pass mark for the module, they should have participated in 80% or more of the planned assessments. If they lost some opportunities to participate in an assessment due to proven absences, they will be granted another opportunity to accrue the missing marks. This practice assisted in the continuous engagement with the work during the semester, and student participation increased exponentially.

Staff members from SPSH were well versed in remote teaching and learning assessment plans. Module teams collaborated and built on existing teaching and learning assessment plans from 2020 continuing to apply a continuous assessment model using the eFundi platform and tools. All assessment plans were aligned across PC, MC and VC on both undergraduate and postgraduate levels using shared eFundi project sites. Programme managers, respective module teams and representative campus directors met with module teams to assist in finalising the assessment plans for both semesters of 2021. Concerns regarding academic integrity among students was raised and a task team from the senior management committee of the school was set up to establish an SOP for dealing with these transgressions in collaboration with CTL.

The 1st, 2nd and 3rd years Bachelor of Nursing Science students' program and assessments were aligned for both Mahikeng and Potchefstroom campus, teaching and learning takes place at the same time and practical assessment are the same as part of transformation goals. Assessment plans for all modules in SONS were uploaded at the start of the semester. Assessment plans included online tests, quizzes, MCQ, case studies, patient's scenarios, individual assignments, projects. Group assignments were changed to individual format to accommodate each student due to physical distancing. Assessment plans were revised in terms of number of assessments per module considering lower-order short, higher-order longer questions, short essays and MCQs. Weighting of assessments were readjusted to accommodate short and long questions. Online teaching included uploaded power point presentations with voice recorder and small video clips. F2F contact sessions in small groups improved teaching, learning and assessment in 2021 which resulted in less problems and complaint from students.

10.4 2022 STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES

Since the start of the semester the faculty followed up very closely on student participation. It was noticeable that several 1st year students across programmes went missing. The support system from each school did their utmost to communicate and reach these students. Some could be found and were assisted with adapted programs and timetables, but a few could not be reached at all. Some of these missing students were NSFAS bursary holders, and their studies were terminated after the 1st semester examination committee meeting, when they had no participation in any modules and according to the academic rules. Letters of support and information they could use to contact several of the NWU support divisions were supplied to all students after the first quarter and will be repeated after the 3rd quarter of 2021. Dr Christmals from the CHPE, developed a unique student progress monitoring system in MS Excel which greatly contributed towards early identification of and support to at-risk students. Telephone calls were also monitored and recorded for information purposes and the staff followed up on these reports. Additionally, students from all year groups (including Honours) were invited back to campuses, but especially those that failed modules during the first semester, even though blended and hybrid learning, and classes remains. All staff were readily available on email, cell phone, WhatsApp, eFundi, Telegram or other media platforms to assist with student queries. Students mainly communicated *via* email, cell phone calls or via WhatsApp groups.

In the School of Human Movement Science, the Hybrid environment still have challenges like unstable internet connection and suitable devices to conduct online learning for the groups not attending the f2f classes. Students were advised and encouraged to return to campus since the second semester of 2021 to be in a more stable online (on campus) environment to conduct their studies. The students with challenges are a very high priority in our school and the faculty, and we do everything in our power to assist them and to make sure that they have success regarding their modules.

Students with challenges complained about the workload and having no clue what self-directed learning entails, could not apply it in learning. It was much more challenging for students with limited resources. Some complained about lack of connectivity, no electricity, and smart phones, even those who possessed such devices and received data from the NWU. Students also did not always follow the normal channels to report their challenges and problems, and some went missing through the cracks. A formal faculty specific procedure for reporting of complaints were drawn up for students because these faculty processes differ from those that the SRC uses. The SRC processes are painstakingly slow and takes too long to route back to the applicable faculty, schools, and staff members, which leads to problems being reported long after it should have been addressed and solved, leaving the student worse off. Many students also started working while staying at home to assist their family financially, and now only study part-time, although this is not recommended at all.

There is an increase in the number of students struggling with mental health problems. They are referred to the applicable department/entity for assistance and advice with regard to their studies and personal challenges. We found that students are not keen to use the opportunities to receive assistance, and

sometimes turn to using unhealthy coping mechanisms. It seems as if the pandemic's effect on mental health may still be with us for some time (both for staff and for students). It also means that staff members have to be sensitive towards the anxiety that students are struggling with. Development of other soft skills such as communication is important to be aware of challenges early on.

The site, *Reatsotella* (denoting "we care") was launched in October 2020 as an interactive and supportive eFundi site for all students in the SPSH. The purpose of this site is to support students in life skills and mental health challenges during remote learning and the world of COVID-19. This site was developed by Miss Shanae Theunissen and the VC School in collaboration with School students. The site has been well assessed and has received positive feedback. It is regularly updated by the contributors as well as Miss Kgomotso Kibi, the Senior Administrative Assistant in Psychology on VC.

Most students enjoyed being called back to campus and having more f2f contact time. Lecturers reported good class attendance throughout. The roll-over effect of the COVID-19 pandemic cannot be denied, and we would like to make use of this opportunity to report on some of our team's observations, challenges, and concerns:

- During the selection process for the Psychology Honours programme for the 2022 intake (all campuses) it became evident that deep learning and application of knowledge on the 3rd year level were compromised during periods of emergency online T&L. Applicants particularly struggled with the application of research methodology. The module teams took note of this and implemented a brief 'refresher course' on this at the beginning of the year with all students in the Hons programme
- In Social Work some students had to revert to the extended programme because of unsatisfactory academic progress and/or prerequisites of modules in a next year level. Although less than 10% students were affected by this, on a practical level it caused challenges such as timetable clashes and delayed completion of WIL activities. The subject group continued to support students to the best of their ability without jeopardizing academic integrity or statutory requirements
- A third-year social work student on the Potchefstroom campus, Mr Lebohang Khumalo, participated in the colloquium of the CTL and Faculties of Health and Theology in June 2022. He shared his narrative of surviving and thriving as student during the COVID-19 pandemic in a presentation titled, *Adaptions for T&L in Covid times: a social work student experience*⁷. Mr Khumalo lost several loved ones during the pandemic, was hospitalized himself with severe COVID-19 infection and had to overcome numerous challenges in his home environment to make ends meet, while trying his best to uphold his academic performance. Although this was an individual narrative, we have reason to believe that this student's experience was like many other students' experiences. It opened our eyes for the hardships and the resilience of our students and greatly influenced initiatives and plans to monitor and support students at risk
- An increase in the number of pregnancies among students was reported and it is a concern that we don't always have clear guidelines on handling requests and situations such as these. There are several requests from students for "maternity leave" and online classes because they can't (according

⁷ A recording of the student's presentation is available upon request

to themselves) attend f2f classes, due to them being pregnant.

The process of reverting back to sit-down tests and exams was challenging in the first semester, but we envision that both lecturers and students are better prepared for this in the second semester. Supplementary Instructors (SIs) and tutors played a lead role in supporting students across campuses and we are grateful that sufficient SIs and tutors were made available. However, because tutors first need to receive training, they end up starting too late in the semester with assistance, after some of the 1st class tests were already written. Positive feedback was received from students that attended SI sessions and SI support was requested for the second semester. Students with challenges, however, mostly do not use the SIs or tutors to their benefit.

Students are still not completing the online *student learning experience survey* as it is repetitive for multiple modules, and it takes time without any reward to them. The students are struggling to adapt to the fulltime f2f lecturing structure after the online learning methods followed during 2020 and 2021. The students don't know how to manage their time, and they are struggling with sit-down assessments where they must retain information. They became used to the 'easier' online assessment and need time to adapt to the more 'challenging' retention of information assessment methods. It is evident in 2022, from investigation of some module (first year) that were still presented online in 2021, that the students are not engaging with the online material, and they are not utilising the online interactive sessions and missing out on learning opportunities.

Subject chairs, programme leaders and support staff from each school do their utmost to communicate and reach students with challenges. Some NSFAS students experienced difficulties due to funds not being available in time at the beginning of semester one. Staff members attended to student problems and requests *via* email, eFundi, and cell phone. As in previous years the class representatives do bring academic matters to the attention of the lecturer.

Even though the newly created Student Chapters can and should be beneficial to optimise student feedback and communication with lecturers, the exact role of these student representatives is not so clear. Some subject groups still have their own student forums where students provide feedback regarding their experiences and activities are organised. The dissolving of the previous student associations is being felt on several platforms in the faculty, but especially as a communication platform between students and staff in a specific academic environment of profession. In the current Chapter format communication is slow, if at all, and the faculty can't rely on them to supply timely information. All communication we had during 2022 with the faculty chapter was for a dedicated office which could seat 12 people, laptops, furniture, chairs and dates for breakfast or lunch meetings. We did however call on the SRC guardian of the group and were informed that the chapter do have sufficient funds to address all their needs.

Initially students experienced the on-campus learning after the online teaching as being very challenging. They indicated that they struggled to study for tests. Students struggle with problem solving skills and to apply knowledge. The sit-down tests were a major challenge for the students and many of them admit that they are not used to study for an invigilated sit-down test. The low averages across several modules for the sit-down assessments confirmed this. Students almost "disappeared" during the semester and only started asking for more opportunities closer to the end of semester one. But with consistent support and

guidance, students said that they were becoming more used to the fact that they are “back to normal” with the classes and sit-down tests.

Challenges reported by first year students were:

- keeping to deadlines,
- learning new concepts,
- memorising large quantities of study material,
- translating the textbook content to Afrikaans,
- lack of technology gadgets to open all eFundi content, and
- struggling to speak when in a group.

Zoom sessions facilitated communication especially regarding study content. Students preferred less group work because it was challenging for groups to gather (on any platform) to work on a project, many students complained about the number of activities in a module, while others felt that these activities assisted a lot in knowing what was expected from them regarding the outcomes of the modules. Most students enjoyed online teaching and learning as the classes and work were structured and they knew exactly what was expected from them. Although some students indicated that eLearning will never replace f2f interaction, students commended their lecturers for hard work and willingness to make the learning experience a success.

The online environment with demands such as data, stable internet connection and suitable devices to conduct online learning are still challenges for several students, that have a great impact on student learning. Students were advised and encouraged to return to campus to be in a more stable online environment to conduct their studies in, but those who could not return to campus still experienced these challenges, especially in the second semester of 2021. The students with challenges are a very high priority in the FHS and we do everything in our power to assist them and to make sure that they have success regarding their modules.

Time management is/was a big challenge for students, and they got behind schedule quickly. On the negative side, students were extremely demanding regarding more opportunities to improve grades towards the end of the semester, and it was also noted that students started “*abusing*” self-isolation.

One student representative from the chapters on all campuses were invited to attend meetings of the FHS Teaching and Learning group (Deans and school directors). These forums offered student reps an opportunity to contribute and highlight the collective student voice in the planning and execution of teaching and learning activities in the FHS. However, none of the invited chapter members took up the invitations.

Some more general complaints by a small number of students included the following:

- Excuses (not viable or proven) from the students especially when they were expected to write a test or submit the assignment, asking for extensions.
- Complained about increased learning activities, lots of tests and assignment to be completed. Postponement of online tests and submission of assignments was at the order of the day.

- Some claimed they had no books and learning materials to prepare for test and assignments, although they received NSFAS bursaries to buy resources with.
- Even senior students in their final study year, wanted short quizzes and tests after every learning activity, which was on NQF level 5 or 6 and not up to par. Some senior students struggled to complete assessments and assignments on the higher levels of Blooms revised taxonomy, showing a lack of integration and other skills.

10.5 2022 STAFF EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES

10.5.1 Academic staff

Academic staff members reported workload overload which created difficulty to balance with their personal life. They are however pleased to be back on campus and being able to present f2f contact sessions in a venue which can be filled to full capacity.

Of great concern is the 1st and 2nd year students, which are mostly clueless about what to expect in the higher education environment, self-directed learning, time-management, taking responsibility for own learning, actions and consequences, and a lot more. It took many additional hours for staff members to teach them, orientate them and show them the way with regards to Teaching and Learning and especially assessment practices. This process of adaptation by 1st years are usually addressed during the R&O period at the start of the 1st semester where they should have been on campus for 2-3 weeks to receive a proper orientation to the world of higher education. First years were not ready for the very short first semester, the volume of work to be assimilated, the tempo of university life and learning, even those that did follow the online R&O period. All the 1st years who were not on campus, did take some time to settle in this new learning environment.

Academic staff in the faculty really impressed with their resilience and flexibility to embrace blended/hybrid T&L practices. The Hyflex system did not always work out as well as originally planned, but this challenge, as well as problems with booking venues on the IWMS and the initial timetable not being aligned, were handled through consultations and negotiations until problems could be smoothed out. Lecturers are happy to be back on campus and were well equipped to manage the demands of hybrid teaching and assessment during 2022. More than half of the academic staff in the faculty attended information and training sessions on the CIRBUS online assessment system. All new staff members attended the FHS and NWU induction programmes. Fourteen members of staff are participating in the Faculty Teaching Awards during 2022 and several staff members are enrolled for the CHPE T&L mentorship programme. Several school directors are participating in the *Coaching for School Directors* programme.

In SPSH, a relatively high staff turnover among academic staff (particularly on the Vanderbijlpark and Mahikeng campuses) was experienced in 2022 with a total of 7 vacancies. Several academic staff members also went on maternity leave during the year. The school had to appoint several temporary staff members to make provision for stable teaching-learning activities/environment. In the faculty, there were

several staff members pregnant, and they also were requested to continue to work from home. Staff with small school-aged children were especially challenged regarding returning to campus, as few day-cares or child-care were available, and some experienced financial challenges due to a spouse that lost his/her job during Covid 19 pandemic.

The late publishing of the academic programme and changes at short notice to the programme proves daunting for planning the presentation of modules.

Staff were well equipped to again manage the demands of remote teaching and assessment through the first semester since most staff up-skilled during 2020/21 by attending various CTL training opportunities and that aligned blended-learning eFundi sites were already available from 2020. However, the workload was very high as presentations needed to be adapted extensively to compensate for the absence of f2f contact sessions. Adding narration to the presentations were time consuming. The introduction of practical sessions was a great benefit even though the workload was so high.

Working hours were not limited to office hours and staff worked long hours and over weekends to get work done and answering students' queries. Students expected an immediate response on their emails, but the faculty insist that sending and answering of emails must be limited to office hours only. Staff also feel that the absence of f2f contact made lecturing very impersonal. There is a sense that the emotional burden and frustration levels of staff members are on the increase. Although there are still staff members who did not return following the last higher lockdown level during the third wave of the pandemic, most staff members are back on campus. Working within aligned module teams (identified as a challenge during 2020) was experienced as more positive with regular engagement in weekly or bi-monthly module team meetings. Staff were encouraged to make use of the Staff Wellness Programme, to attend webinars presented to aid in mental health and demands during COVID-19 and to take leave where possible to prevent burnout.

The academic programme is set-up without considering the staff. During June/July (2022) there is only week of recess before the second opportunity exams starts. This severely limits the academic personnel to take their leave. During December the second opportunity exams only end 15 December, whereafter the papers must be marked, moderated and the marks calculated. Only after this process is concluded can the examination committee process start. This will probably occur early in January, which again limits the time that academic personnel can take leave. The academic calendar must be revised to take all the process into consideration and provide adequate time for academic personnel to take leave. Many staff members are losing leave days every year because there are no suitable times, as in the past, to take them. Meetings are scheduled on a continuous basis during official leave periods on the timetable, which needs to be attended by staff.

The student through-put rates in almost all modules in the FHS in 2020 were higher than 2019. There are also more distinctions achieved the first semester in comparison with 2019. Learning from mistakes from 2020 and bending over backwards to accommodate students to succeed in difficult circumstances during 2019, the faculty was more successful with adapting assessment with academic integrity and in a format that tested individual student's abilities.

The workload was drastically increased for WIL and SL module owners, specifically for 3rd and 4th years,

who had to:

- (1) adapt their programs and create real live case studies in a short time,
- (2) develop COVID compliance protocols and communication strategies with students, parents, and training facilities and
- (3) try to better prepare students for their internship after online learning environment of 2020 – 2021 where most of the students missed out on mastering key concepts (knowledge based).

Staff experienced a high prevalence of academic dishonesty amongst students during online assessments, with students forming groups to assist each other.

10.5.2 Support staff

No big changes or challenges to report on among **support staff** in the faculty in 2022. There is a low staff turnover pattern. The large number of temporary appointments in the faculty during 2022 brought along quite a lot of additional administration for support staff – especially for the Senior Administrative Assistants (SAA) in the offices of the school directors who is responsible for initiating all appointments and claims on the Temporary Appointment System. Specific SAA encountered serious personal challenges during the year, including the death of her mother and an injury on duty, resulting in delays in processes pertaining to temporary appointments. Most of the SAAs attended the blueprint sessions of the Student Information System (SIS) currently under development. Some SAAs in the faculty is part of the WISL project and nominated as WISL administrators across campuses. Pilot testing of the WISL system commenced in the second semester and it is envisioned that all WIL activities will be managed on this system from 2023 onwards.

Staff in general had to attend to many queries and concerns from students, parents and training facilities regarding COVID-19 protocols before the 1st semester started. Personnel are struggling to keep up with the fast-paced environment that keeps changing (online performance management DIY, Outlook change, PQM etc.) and still meet the expectations. Staff are still working extended hours to meet the deadlines, and this is not sustainable. The staff are not always experiencing 'the ethic of care' that is publicised by the NWU.

Students are also unfamiliar with the yearbook and academic rules, this places a large additional burden on staff members as students do not take ownership of managing their own studies.

Support staff are experiencing an increased workload, they must support academic staff members and students with additional enquiries, venues, and refer concerned parents to relevant sections. Various new systems are implemented during 2022 – 2023, with training and adaptation that will take some time to get use too.

Both academic staff members and support staff members had trouble in getting services from support departments (both at the NWU and from external suppliers), since in some environments people are still working from home and not being managed effectively when they do so.

Staff experienced problems with internet connectivity, other technical problems, digital fatigue, and mental

exhaustion, as well as a feeling of isolation when working from home. They were also challenged by an environment where frequent change and uncertainty became the norm. Another challenge was the difficulties with communication between them and the rest of the personnel and with students. There were also very positive responses from support staff members finding the remote working without problems and easy to manage. Some staff had difficulties in balancing their work and family time.

10.6 FOSTERING CROSS-CAMPUS COLLABORATION

10.6.1 Human Movement Science

Aligned modules on PC and MC were managed by the relevant lecturers of each campus. The compiling of assessments and presentation of study units was done on a rotation basis by the lecturers of PC and MC. To ensure that students from both campuses have access to the same resources and assessments, a combined eFundi site for each module was created for both campuses. The collaboration between lecturers from PC and MC is very positive and they work well together as a unit. This whole online learning experience has strengthened collaboration between campuses. All the cross-campus programmes are fully aligned in all aspects of Teaching and learning outcomes, assessments, practical classes, and timetables.

10.6.2 School of Psychosocial Health

Subject groups and module teams in the school are used to cross-campus collaboration for many years as most undergraduate offerings is fully aligned. The previous 2 years of online learning has strengthened collaboration between campuses. The following leadership and/or committee structures in the school contribute towards continuous cross campus collaboration:

- School Executive Committee (school and deputy directors, research director and financial planner) – bi-weekly meetings
- School Management Committee (school ExCo and all subject group and programme leaders) – monthly meetings
- Social Work Executive Committee (school deputy director, subject group leaders and programme leaders) – quarterly meetings
- Psychology Executive Committee (school deputy director, subject group leaders and programme leaders) – quarterly meetings
- Campus specific school meetings, chaired by the relevant deputy school director – quarterly meetings
- General school meetings (all staff of the school), chaired by the school director – once per semester
- Most module teams have frequent meetings – anything between weekly and monthly
- Intercampus social work meetings, chaired by the deputy director overseeing social work in collaboration with the programme leader – once per semester

- Intercampus psychology meetings, chaired by the deputy director overseeing psychology, in collaboration with the programme leader – once per semester

10.6.3 School of Physiology, Nutrition and Consumer Sciences

In the school, the collaboration between lecturers from Potchefstroom and the one Physiology lecturer in Mahikeng are positive and they work well together. Visits to the two campuses assisted in strengthening relationships.

10.6.4 School of Pharmacy

The BPharm-programme is only presented on the Potchefstroom Campus.

10.6.5 School of Nursing

Aligned modules on PC and MC were managed by the relevant lecturers of each campus. The compiling of assessments and presentation of study units was done on a rotation basis by the lecturers across campuses. To ensure that students from both campuses have access to the same resources and assessments, a combined eFundi site for each module was created across campuses. The collaboration between lecturers across campuses are very positive and they work well together as a unit. This whole online learning experience has strengthened collaboration between campuses. Physiology appointed a Senior lecturer at Mahikeng campus for nursing students' Physiology modules. As the staff member only joined the university in June, she is being mentored by staff members from the Potchefstroom campus. She is also in the process of completing her Induction portfolio. Face to face and online meeting were held across the campuses to ensure that aligned modules challenges are discussed as part of task allocation among the lecturers.

10.7 DRIVING HYBRID / BLENDED LEARNING AND INNOVATION IN 2022

In 2020 the CHPE presented virtual lunch & learn sessions during the year, and this year (2022) they continue doing so. Lecturers were encouraged to attend these sessions to learn more about online learning. Lecturers made use of graphic designers appointed in the CHPE to provide individual support to improve their eFundi sites for better teaching and learning. In the school of HMS, three of their lecturers are this year part of the Faculties' Teaching and Learning Mentorship Programme which should have a positive impact on blended/hybrid learning and innovation.

Psychology undergraduate modules continued in mostly online format making use of synchronous/asynchronous methodologies in a hybrid/hyflex model. The Psychology group is also in consultation with CTL to discuss options in learning design within the undergraduate presentations.

In SPNCS Blended learning is used, by utilising the online content created in 2020 and 2021 together with the in-person class sessions. This allows a lecturer to provide content online and expect students to interact with it before the f2f session where the content is discussed as scenarios or case studies.

In the School of Pharmacy, the module FMS322 serves as a good example of driving blended/hybrid learning. Students had to prepare beforehand for the following contact session. They are monitored in this aspect by means of a participation assessment they need to write prior to attending the contact session. This assessment can be written as many times as they wish and therefore, they are able to obtain a 100% mark. They furthermore receive all notes and videos on the different study sections via eFundi from which they can study from. When they attend a contact session a flipped classroom approach is followed where they can ask questions and discuss relevant subjects pertaining to the main topic of the contact session. Following, problem-solving practical applications are demonstrated, and the students are encouraged to participate by involving themselves in solving certain problems and asking questions while busy. They are additionally encouraged to research their own practical examples and come discuss it during the contact sessions. The Hyflex system was however not used by lecturers in the School of Pharmacy as additional assistance is required to use the system optimally.

Videos and recordings were made for certain practical steps that can be watched at any time by students when continuing with preparing for practical sessions. This assisted especially 1st years who have never been to the laboratories where they were going to practically do their experiments.

The school of nursing is busy with Postgraduate Diploma curriculum and situational analysis in different hospitals and clinics. Collaboration is mainly online meetings regarding development of aligned study guides and driving blended/hybrid learning and innovation during COVID-19 pandemic. Both online and f2f methods are used for teaching and learning in the school of nursing. The innovations of lectures to reach students in teaching and learning were commendable. The lecturers uploaded the learning material on WhatsApp and eFundi during the lock-down stage 4, to afford the students equal opportunity to begin learning.

10.8 FACULTY-SPECIFIC INITIATIVES

10.8.1 General

The School of Human Movement Science are in the process of developing three new programmes. They developed a new honours qualification, namely BHSc Honours in Human Movement Sciences and this qualification has already been approved CHE and SAQA and will be presented in 2023 on the Potchefstroom Campus, and hopefully in 2024 on the Mahikeng Campus (pending additional staff appointments). They are in the last stages for approval of a new 4-year degree, BHSc in Sport Science, and the enrolment plan for this qualification is for 2025 (if possible). The final addition is planned as a 4-year BHSc in Kinderkinetics degree. The first enrolments for this qualification are planned for 2026. With the development of all three new qualifications, they consulted with CTL and Q&APP to guide them in the

processes. They were fortunate to have such an excellent team to support them all the way. Dr Adèle Broodryk from HMS was the 3rd runner up in the recent Comrades marathon.

Staff in the SPSH not only excel in the teaching-learning environment, but also manage to balance work-life integration and wellbeing. The faculty is also proud of Ms Olebogeng Tladi, subject group social work on the MC who recently completed her first Comrades marathon.

Management cook-off event celebrating values: The staff members from Consumer Sciences and Nutrition in the SPNCS assisted P&C in the planning and judging of the event in March 2022 at The Roots, Potchefstroom. <https://news.nwu.ac.za/values-are-driving-force-nwu>

10.8.2 The Gender Awareness Week 2022 took place from 8 - 12 August 2022

FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES: "In Harmony for Health"		
Programme		
Date	Activity	Theme for the day:
8 Aug 10:00 – 13:00 Inter campus sports day	Painting of zebra crossings in front of G16 (PC). (MC and VC Library areas) "We walk the rainbow talk" Exhibiting photo comic pics (visual art) in print in foyer area G20 (P) (MC and VC Library areas)	We walk the rainbow talk
9 Aug 09:00 – 15:00	Exhibiting photo comic pics in print in foyer area G20 (PC) (MC and VC Library areas)	In harmony for Health
10 Aug Footprints 13:00 – 14:00 09:00 – 15:00	Dean, deputy-Deans, Directors, Student chapter, staff, students Footprint on white cloth G 20 (PC) Exhibiting photo comic pics in print in foyer area G20 (MC and VC Library areas)	In harmony for Health
11 Aug 09:00 – 15:00	Exhibiting photo comic pics in print in foyer area G20 (PC) (MC and VC Library areas)	In harmony for Health
12 Aug 09:00 – 15:00 13:00 – 14:00	Exhibiting photo comic pics in print in foyer area G20 (PC) (MC and VC Library areas) Closing of exhibition: We all stand together. Releasing balloons outside G16, G20 with messages (PC)	We all stand together

Table 9: GAW participation by FHS

10.8.3 The Language Awareness Week September 2022: Multilingualism

The Faculty of Health Sciences are offering professional programmes where our students/graduates will

serve various communities. The contribution from the Faculty of Health Sciences for Language Awareness Week: Multilingualism 2022 will be a pocket guide (cards) of basic terminology used in Health Sciences with a lanyard to keep it handy and together.

Example:

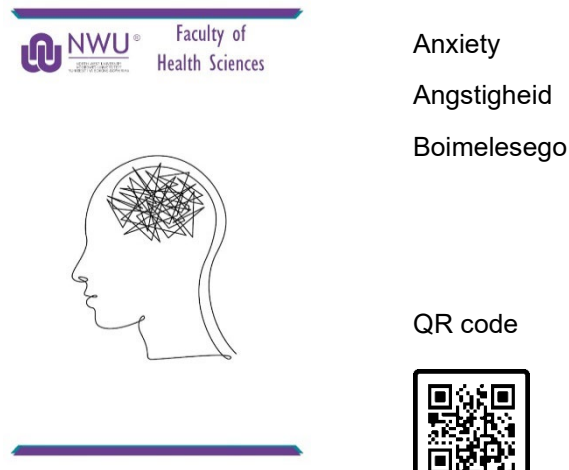


Figure 43: Consumer Sciences initiative LAW

10.8.4 School for Physiology, Nutrition and Consumer Sciences



Figure 44: School for Physiology, Nutrition and Consumer Sciences to assist young people in preparing them for the world of work

10.8.5 School of Pharmacy

MyDispense, a software product supplied free of cost to School of Pharmacy across the globe was implemented. <https://info.mydispense.monash.edu/>

Feedback from students and postgraduate students clearly indicated that they want to learn through using

MyDispense. They feel that *MyDispense* will help them practice their dispensing skills as sufficient feedback was provided after each activity. They feel *MyDispense* is a user-friendly platform, and it helps them to build confidence as new pharmacy students. *MyDispense* was piloted in the module FPKG113.

10.9 TRANSFORMING BY DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM

10.9.1 Introduction

The following two curriculum development processes in the SPSH are nearing completion and the applications for new programmes (form 3) will serve at SCAS in November 2022:

- Bachelor of Social Work
- Master of Social Work in School Social Work

Participation in the NWU's PQM project was received positively by staff in the school as an opportunity to integrate the mentioned curriculum development projects, as well as revisiting existing programmes in psychology. The future of psychology project is led by the ExCo of psychology and aims to utilize the PQM project to investigate the development of a new programme within the BHSc qualification. With community psychology as a focus, they further hope to better position programmes within the subject group to render services to the community. The development of a new module on community and indigenous psychology is one such an example.

10.9.2 School of Physiology, Nutrition and Consumer Sciences

Staff members from each entity of the SPNCS as well as the Physiology lecturer on the Mahikeng campus attended the decolonisation workshops presented by CHPE. As the curriculum and programmes are continuously reflected on, to adhere to changes in the world and be relevant, it forms part of discussions *re* PQM and IPE.

10.9.3 School of Pharmacy

In the School of Pharmacy, the module FMSG412 is a relevant example of decolonising the curriculum. The lecturer not only focused on the decolonisation of study materials but also to the pedagogical approach applied in the lecture hall.

The following actions were implemented:

- Diversified the reference materials used to develop the module content, by not only focusing on historically stringent medicines regulatory authority requirements such as the Us Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) and Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) but introduced internationally recognised- and harmonized guidelines produced by multi-cultural

organisations such as the World Health Organization & International Council for Harmonization of Technical Requirements for Pharmaceuticals for Human use.

- The learning outcomes of the module with regards to Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) were structured and presented in such a way that illustrated to students the responsibility of a pharmacist to ensure that the manufacturing and distribution of medicine are to be controlled and executed in such a way that it addresses power and social justice for all.
- Students were actively involved in the creation of module knowledge in collaborative group activities by providing them the opportunity to share their understanding on the biopharmaceutical considerations in the manufacturing of medicines.
- With regards to pedagogical changes, there was a move away from the traditional lecture style course delivery to a classroom design that encourages dialogue. Students had access to all learning materials and lectures prior to contact sessions. Dialogic teaching by means of in-class case study / application discussions and group-brainstorming-problem solving activities were then applied.
- To support epistemological diversity, the lecturer presented and discussed the differences in opinions and preferences of different groups with regards to the selection and use of different dosage forms, illustrating to students the need to have a diversified slant in the selection and manufacturing of the most suitable drug delivery systems for a diversified patient population.
- During the practical component of this module students were granted the opportunity to establish and manage their own fictitious Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Company (PMC). During this process students were exposed to the importance of mutual knowledge creation, multidisciplinary collaboration and on the larger scale, international harmonization in the pharmaceutical setting.

10.9.4 School of Psychosocial Health (SPSH)

The B Social Work curriculum process is in its final stages of development. The design process was managed by a core curriculum committee over a combined period of two years, although the major components of the curriculum were designed over the past year. The management structure of the committee was supported by Proff E Ryke and Ms V Lalla. To date the module designs have been completed as well as the outcomes and assessment criteria are almost finalized. The core team recruited and utilized the assistance of an expanded team for developing the module outcomes and assessment criteria. It is envisioned to have the design finalized for input by all staff from the three campuses by end of August 2022 and to start with the formal approval cycle at QEASC, Faculty Board and SCAS in September 2022.

Staff members in the SPSH participating in the CHPE's Teaching and Learning Mentorship Programme are Dr Hanelie Malan (mentor) and Drr Fatima Mmusi and Ingrid Opperman (mentees).

10.9.5 School Social Work curriculum

The proposed Master of Social Work in School Social Work is to be housed on the VC. This curriculum is

being planned to be presented online as to allow national and international students to apply. Colleagues have been meeting to discuss the conceptualizing and rationale behind the curriculum development of Master of Social Work. The most recent discussions which took place over the last two months were focused on completing Form 1 with the aim of presenting this at QEASC, Faculty Board and SCAS as soon as possible. The team consisted of Proff AG Herbst, E Deacon, H Walker-Williams; Drr IF Jacobs, El Smit; Mr A Bechuke, Mr C Gertse, Ms V Olivier, Ms R Serfontein and an external consultant with special interest and experience in school social work - Dr M Vergottini.

10.9.5.1 Bachelor of Health in Public Health Degree

The SPSH is actively involved in the consultation on and planning of the Bachelor of Health in Public Health degree (a name change is investigated). Proff Herbst and Deacon and Mr Flemming are members of the task team coordinated by Prof Petra Bester.

10.9.5.2 Alignment flagship

The module team of Psychology 111 can be highlighted as example of exceptional attempts to improve alignment. As mentioned, study guides, eFundi sites etc. were developed by the cross-campus module team, but they also implemented MindTap (a digital resource from Cengage Learning based on the prescribed textbook) as a form of blended learning / technology supported learning. It was unfortunate that the module team could not manage to find a budget to continue with the utilization of Mindtap this year (2022).

10.9.5.3 Master in Clinical Psychology programme

The team involved in the Master's in Clinical Psychology programme on the PC and MC make use of team-teaching where students on both campuses have shared lectures either in contact (face-to-face) or distance (via Vidy) mode. Students from the MC usually come to the PC for highly specialized blocks such psychopharmacology, presented by a psychiatrist from Klerksdorp, while students from the PC visit the MC for a workshop on African perceptions of mental health, presented by a physician, in collaboration with a traditional healer, from Mafikeng. The latter is an initiative towards Africanisation of parts of the curriculum. Excellent progress was made on alignment in the M programmes. The VC has received site of delivery to present the master's in clinical psychology and the next step is to receive accreditation from the HPCSA once the Faculty of Health Sciences new building is completed on the VC in 2023.

10.9.6 School of Nursing

The school of Nursing is still behind in terms of transformation and decolonising the curriculum and much energy is directed to phasing out the legacy programme and phasing in the new BNursing programme. The school of nursing have submitted "Midwifery terminology" for translation to Setswana to assist the nursing students correlate theory to practice during clinical placement. The circumstances of our students are very

diverse. This means that methods of delivering academic content also needed to show flexibility to accommodate the diverse circumstances of our students. Students were able to draw from their personal experiences and backgrounds in their explanations of concepts like stigma, stress, non-adherence, and the social environments that influence a patient's illness experience and medicine taking behaviour. Students were expected to apply the theory covered in the current Covid-19 pandemic.

10.10 CONCLUSION

An engaged process to address the changing and dynamic health care context and practice, to address current and espoused student needs and TL approaches, and to equip graduates to address the challenges of the 21st century society are ongoing.

The FHS is committed to and supports curriculum transformation through an engaged and systematic process, while ensuring that the transformed qualifications and/or programmes are coherently designed, intellectually credible and relevant.

The FHS perceives curriculum transformation to be much more than meeting general "transformation targets", but a changed mind-set and the ability to be critical of traditional, westernised world views as knowledge base of choice in the South African context.

Curriculum transformation is encouraged in the FHS through structured discussions, participation in local and national discourse, and focussed, project based strategic processes. One such process is the UCDG funded Decolonising the Health Science Curriculum. The three-year project (2021-2023) aims to create a common understanding of what decolonisation is, to design a curriculum renewal framework for health sciences, and to implement this framework in transforming current curricula in the faculty.

Health Science curricula are constantly revised and adapted to address the fluid health context of our country, with an additional focus on sub-Saharan Africa and the global context. These changes are not only informed by the Professional and Statutory bodies but are also a direct reaction to the changes happening in the world around us. Health Science Curricula focus to develop leadership attributes in our students so that they can become change agents in the world. In this instance the current PQM project is of great value and support the faculty processes.

The Health Science Curricula have transformed from a focus on memorisation in the early years, to a dedicated drive of enabling students to search, analyse and synthesise information on which decision making is based.

A competency-based model that supported professionalism, teamwork and scholarship further contributed to curriculum transformation, as these core competencies had to be developed from the first year onwards. In addition, students and academics had to integrate a fast-changing higher education environment with the increasing demands placed on health care (and preparing students to function successfully in this demanding health care environment). Professional practice (through work-integrated learning and service learning) enabled students to be immersed in different contexts to what they grew up in and what they may experience in the classroom. "Pedagogy of place" acknowledges the role of context in learning, and students' world views are challenged through exposure to different health care settings (for example, primary health care in rural areas, interprofessional education). As students enter the health care settings (whether

it is a hospital, rural clinic, or social work offices), they are confronted with unfamiliar and sometime eye-opening experiences. These experiences are potentially transformative as students explore issues beyond the formal curriculum, for example social justice. In some modules, teaching strategies, such as case studies, are included that “disrupt” students’ thinking to enable critical self-reflection, resulting in both cognitive and emotional responses.

The Covid-19 pandemic created a situation where academics were also forced to reflect on their own practices. They had to “think out-of-the-box” where curriculum was concerned, as many outcomes and pedagogical practices were focussed on face-to-face teaching, learning and assessment, especially where clinical skills were concerned. Many traditional approaches to teaching and assessment had to be transformed to the online environment, while still adhering to the requirements of the Statutory Bodies. Work-integrated-learning was drastically impacted with lock-down, as many WIL sites could not accommodate the students for their practical experiences. The use of Skills-labs, virtual learning experiences and alternative placement sites were all methods to keep the curriculum going.

The faculty is proud to announce the participation in the Faculty Teaching Awards in 2021 of 13 staff members (11 received certificates), and 14 staff currently busy with the drafting of their portfolios for 2022.

It is evident from the report above that most of the academic and administrative staff members have succeeded in adapting well to the new teaching and learning and service environment. We have succeeded in delivering an excellent service to our customers. As a faculty, we will have to do more in terms of listening to our student voices and engage in serious discussions about ongoing needs for the future. The groundbreaking work that the current cadre of staff has done these past two years, need to go down in history as evidence of our ability to adapt to life changing challenges. We need to educate our future leaders of the country to learn from this opportunity to be able to adapt to any challenge and embrace the future with open arms.

We also want to give special thanks to CTL and Q&APP in the unwavering support to all staff members in the FHS, whatever the need may be. I think this platforms we have at the NWU can be compared with any other in the country, if not the world. Our deepest appreciation.

11. FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

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11.1 INTRODUCTION

The 2022 academic year has seen a welcome return to campus for both staff and students. It has also seen a return to the proactive mode after 2 years of reacting to COVID-19. As a Faculty, we have seized these opportunities to revitalise faculty life, to pick up where we left off regarding our 2019 strategic plan and our initiatives to grow the six academic Schools in the faculty. The pandemic was, however, not merely a disruption. We have taken stock of measures introduced during the pandemic, identified where these added value to the Schools and integrated these into our post-pandemic planning for the faculty. This report details the work of the Faculty's Schools towards furthering these transformation and alignment goals in their own environments. The section below offers introductory comments particular to activities within these Schools. The report includes the work done in the Schools indicating that teaching, transformation and alignment continued during the pandemic. This report further outlines this 'return to normal', focusing on challenges, successes and interventions installed to ensure we exit the pandemic a better faculty than we were when it began.

In terms of alignment, the School of Philosophy (SoP) has a footprint on all three NWU campuses viz. Mahikeng (MC), Potchefstroom (PC) and Vanderbijlpark (VC). Depending on areas of specialisation, different undergraduate offerings are available on different campuses. There is also an aligned programme and aligned modules/courses offered across the three campuses. The SoP also offers a short course in Philosophy and all the 'Understanding the World modules'. The undergraduate offering, namely; BA in Humanities, is available on all three campuses since the beginning of 2022. The BPhil PPE (Politics, Philosophy and Economics) is only offered at the Potchefstroom campus, and the same applies to the postgraduate programmes. The School of Philosophy also has, aligned 'Understanding the World' modules on offer across the three campuses.

School of Languages (SoL) has managed to transform its offering to be fully aligned with modules that have a footprint on all 3 campuses. The school also focused on first year experience, acculturation as foundation modules which contribute towards enhancing student success at NWU.

The School of Communication (SoC) consists of 3 subject groups: Communication, History of Art and Graphic Design. Communication is aligned across all campuses. This document captures Communication's aligned input as well as input from Graphic Design and History of Art as separate entities in the School. This document includes a summary of the curriculum transformation and alignment of student experiences in the School of Communication. The SoC consists of 3 subject groups: Communication, History of Art (PC) and Graphic Design (PC). Communication is aligned across all three delivery sites. The information captured in this document relates to the subject group Communication's aligned input as well as input from Graphic Design and History of Art as entities in the school. As such below are the experiences that both

staff and students experienced so far.

The School of Social Sciences (SoSS) has three subject groups offering modules on two or more campuses. Social Anthropology is offered on Potchefstroom Campus (PC) and Vanderbijlpark Campus (VC). Sociology and History are offered on Mahikeng Campus (MC), PC and VC. Development Studies and Population Studies are currently only offered on MC. Modules offered on more than one campus have all used team teaching to expose students to colleagues from across the campuses. The sizes of modules in the School of Social Sciences have in recent years grown such that they have outstripped available venue capacity on all campuses. This was dealt with in the first semester using the rotational system to ensure all students have access to face to face classes.

The School of Music (SoM) is situated only on the Potchefstroom campus, and it is a relatively small school in comparison to other schools in the Faculty of Humanities. This is due to the one-to-one instruction and the performance component that the curriculum requires. The performance component is in addition to the more traditional university teaching and learning environment and is, in essence, what makes the School of Music very different from other schools. It is evident that the performance aspects unquestionably necessitate a more involved relationship with every student.

11.2 2022 TEACHING AND LEARNING CHALLENGES, INTERVENTIONS AND SUCCESSES

11.2.1 Challenges

There were several challenges in terms of teaching and learning that have been highlighted and needed to be addressed. These include some of the following:

- late registrations where students joined classes after four weeks. This meant the student lost a considerable amount of time and needed to be considered by lecturers specifically in terms of additional lectures and assessments.
- Connectivity issues during the earlier part of the year before COVID-19 restrictions were lifted. This was a period which required a hybrid modality.
- In some cases such as ODL, some students struggled to access the prescribed text books as part of their learning materials on time. This situation contributed to delays and changes in schedules to ensure that most of the learners accessed their prescribed materials.
- There is a clear recurring matter of students experiencing and struggling with personal problems which had a bearing on their academics. These cases were mostly referred to Wellness for assistance.

11.2.1.1 School of Social Sciences

As we continue to use the “Semester Readiness Process”. This includes two components, the first is a readiness template that must be completed for each module. Once completed, these templates will include all learning resources (books, articles, videos etc), that students must work through per study unit; all

learning objectives for each study unit; all learning activities per study unit (learning activities are preparation work students must complete and usually include a learning portfolio) in order to guide students.

The second component is a full (aligned) subject group readiness meeting in which each readiness template must be presented to the subject group for comment and input. This is part of the school strategy to shift the organisational culture towards collaborative module design (in the past lecturers have largely planned modules on their own). This has made alignment difficult as it becomes a conversation between individuals, each with their own priorities and emphases, and has also undermined coherence between modules with missed opportunities to scaffold skills and knowledge across multiple modules. In 2022 we are reaping the benefits of this with fewer difficulties in the alignment space and with an increased understanding that modules belong to subject groups as a whole and not individual lecturers.

Due to the drop in throughput mentioned above, the School decided that an upgrade to our monitoring structure was required. We now extend our monitoring beyond simply ensuring feedback reaches students within the 10 working day limit and trusting lecturers to attend to throughput in an ongoing fashion. The School director designed a spreadsheet to be used in conjunction with the capturing of marks into VSS. Our workflow in the school regarding assessment and feedback is as follows. Admin staff use the readiness documents submitted in advance of the semester to identify the assessment due dates for each module and construct a calendar to send out reminders to lecturers in advance of the 10 working day feedback limit. Once they capture marks they will now add those marks to the spreadsheet and return the output of that spreadsheet to the lecturer. This will allow the lecturer to immediately see the distribution of grades (the curve for each assignment) along with the throughput figure and the number of first class students. Where the throughput on any single assessment is below 70% the relevant campus director will be included in the feedback sent to the lecturer so that they can ensure a suitable plan is in place to improve the situation in subsequent assessments. We are taking data off VSS from 2021 and 2022 first semester and from the readiness documents to further use this instrument to understand how different assessment modalities affect throughput and will feed this back into our planned development of an assessment framework for the school in 2023.

11.2.1.2 School of Languages

During the 1st semester Teaching and Learning progressed well as face-to-face interaction and some classes were offered online (particularly as catch up and extra lessons) for students who are struggling with certain concepts. Innovation in Teaching and Learning include the introduction of spoken word poetry in the Creative writing modules, including a class on performance techniques for the first- and second-year modules. The use of virtual reality headsets in these modules is an example of digital literature.

In the area of **teaching and learning**, Academic Literacy faced several **challenges** during the first semester of 2022. One of the most difficult was following a hybrid approach to teaching and learning. Lectures were tasked with presenting face-to-face and online classes simultaneously and this resulted in many issues. These included (but are not limited to) students opting to attend online instead of face-to-face sessions which resulted in lecturers delivering a lecture to an empty lecture room. Furthermore, attendance in both online and face-to-face lectures was low because students knew that the recorded versions of the

lessons would be made available on eFundi. Other challenges included:

- *double bookings*; ALDE111 and another module were scheduled in the same venue and timeslot - on the Potchefstroom campus (PC) venues for the contact classes were not available (double bookings, resulting in AL not being accommodated), which resulted in these lecturers teaching online, while making various plans to ensure some contact time with their students.
- *broken equipment*; lecturers could not teach to the best of their abilities since the equipment did not work, was not set up properly, or was outdated.
- *loadshedding* during lectures; when the back-up generator switches on, the whole system would have to restart which is time-consuming.
- *no WIFI/network* in the lecture rooms; students who are attending online would be automatically excluded from participating in the lecture.
- *a high student/lecturer ratio* continues to be a major challenge for AL staff – including administrative personnel who deal with admin related student queries.

The challenges mentioned above also influenced the student learning experience, but students were mostly satisfied with the offering and the effort from lecturers to support them in their academic literacy acculturation process. It should however be noted that the **continued issue with the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences** is resulting in dire repercussions for students. Since FEMS continues to advise their students NOT to complete ALDE/A 111 these students cannot complete ALDE/A 122 (ALDE/A 111 is a prerequisite of ALDE/A 122) and subsequently these students cannot graduate. The **registration** of first-year students for ALDE/A 111, and ALDE/A 122, remains a major challenge and frustration for the subject group. The registration process, and subsequent late admissions and registrations has an influence on the TAG/TALL which, in turn, influences the offering of ALDE/A.

In first semester the **teaching and learning programme** was interrupted by protest action on MC (and later VC). To counter the loss of teaching and learning time, a contingency plan to teach fully online (only for the duration of the protest action) was put in place. This plan was also interfered with by protesting students who joined the online classes and displayed unruly behaviour such as speaking over the lecturer, muting the lecturer, or playing loud music so that other students could not hear the lecture. The subject group resorted to uploading pre-recorded lectures/videos for students. The teaching programme resumed without any problems when protest action ended. Despite the various challenges AL managed to offer a service of high quality to all students. Alignment strategies, such as aligned eFundi sites and shared resources – handouts and PowerPoints made available to all lecturers – resulted in a shared student experience (especially with regards to the equity of access) across the campuses.

Interventions and successes, included a different intervention strategy to help senior students' to complete ALDE/A 111/122 to avoid this module(s) becoming a problem when students need to graduate. An eFundi site was created to which all senior students identified as having ALDE/A 111 and/or 122 outstanding were added. Lectures/workshops were presented to all students added to the site on a weekly basis by lecturers from MC, PC, and VC. This intervention strategy yielded good results. The only challenge faced was that some students on MC reported that they were not registered for ALDE 111 even though they participated through the Senior site. This poses a challenge in that this group of students cannot

proceed to ALDE122 in the second semester. In addition, AL continues to think of various innovative additions (projects such as the development of eMarking programs, and projects in conjunction with BMI Master students - *DATA-DRIVEN DECISIONS: UTILISING ACADEMIC LITERACY STUDENT DATA*) to improve their offering and to ensure that students receive the best possible service.

The subject group Afrikaans and Dutch continued with a hybrid team teaching model as was the case in 2021. Subject group Afrikaans and Dutch, as a rule, communicates assessment and lesson plans with their students on the commencement day of the new semester, and we therefore plan ahead in the previous semester to ensure effective implementation. This semester, student attendance has not been satisfactory, but it is apparently increasing with each contact session. To motivate students to attend classes, the lecturers of our subject group keep attendance registers, and also make use of class assignments.

In French subject group it should be noted that students cannot afford to / choose not to buy prescribed books. In most cases, French books are imported from Europe. With most students' financial situations, it is difficult to improve students' successes. In that case, lecturers must make their own learning material to help.

While in the German subject group the primary success was that they offered the students the opportunity to acquire the basic skills of communicating in a foreign language. As the subject has **internationalising value**, the investment is the broadening of the horizons. Challenges consisted of practical factors, mainly because of the way education took place because of measures taken due to the pandemic. Attendance was and still is a problem. Although some students do realise the importance of coming to classes, several students find it inconvenient and tend to favour online teaching. Students were used to online teaching and now had to learn to work in groups again. It was and still is necessary to orientate students regarding class attendance and class etiquette.

Some students do not buy the prescribed textbooks although the textbooks are available in the bookshops and online. To address this problem, the textbook has also been reserved for library use, but this should be considered additional support and not a solution. Every student should have the book prescribed for each module. Despite these challenges, the first semester was successful with good pass rates. The Language Practice subject group started with a hybrid teaching model which was a welcomed change from the purely online mode of 2021. The contact was limited however due to the availability of covid compliant venues across the campuses. The students and lecturers welcomed the opportunity to meet face to face in class and in consultations.

The student attendance was not satisfactory though, perhaps due to uncertainties that come with every change. For the second semester the lecturers will be strict in keeping attendance registers and have included class assessments as ways of encouraging students to attend classes. One challenge that the students have presented was the request not to come to class as they got employment during the online T&L mode. We also have a challenge of students who have conflicting timetables as they are repeating modules. Lecturers and students made arrangements to ensure that the students can keep up, but it has been emphasised to the students that they have the responsibility to inform their lecturers of any clashes so arrangements can be made.

The subject group Setswana taught all modules a face to face in the first semester of 2022. Weekly work programs are supplied per module in the first week of the semester. These include information on all assessments for the semester. Academic work is disseminated on the eFundi platform.

11.2.1.3 School of Communication

In the first semester of 2022 the restricted venue capacity posed challenges to lecturers on the different campuses and to alignment as well. We divided the number of students by the venue capacity to determine group sizes and then repeated purposeful contact session for the different groups. The disparity in the availability of venues across campuses created problems with alignment: for example, in the same module, on one campus lecturers could accommodate all the students in face-to-face contact sessions in one week (by dividing the class in two), while on another campus students could only attend class in that module every 4 weeks due to the restricted venue capacity and the scarcity of venues. Lecturers tried to address this through hybrid learning, and on campuses where there the venue capacity was more problematic, more classes were presented online than on the campuses where the venues were less problematic.

Another challenge that lecturers faced was that after various requests, the timetables across campuses are not synchronised. This hindered team teaching and streaming of classes across campuses which could have contributed to a more similar student experience. The full venue capacity in the second semester is making T&L, alignment, and a more similar student experience across campuses easier. A synchronised timetable will assist with a similar student experience since it would create more options for classes across campus etc.

One of the challenges in both semesters are students who are no longer residing near campus and want to continue their studies online. Some students had to start working due to the influence of COVID-19 on their families and are finding it difficult to keep up with their academic work. As a School we also came to realise that some students at the VC did not study in 2021 as they took a gap year. This had an influence on T&L because many students struggled to concentrate and made the process of learning difficult. Many students have also been struggling with computer skills which had an impact on their T&L experiences.

11.2.2 Successes

Our successes for 2022 include improved blended learning. During the time of remote emergency T&L and online T&L lecturers sourced more online sources like videos and created, for example, concept videos for their students. In some modules lecturers are now using those videos as part of blended learning where the students prepare for class by reading prescribed work as well as watching the concept videos, before they come to class for purposeful contact sessions where they apply the knowledge, they acquired beforehand in case studies, group discussions etc. Exam statements revealed that the majority of module in the school achieved the desired throughput, showing that students grasped the learning outcomes.

11.3 2022 FACULTY ASSESSMENT PLANS

The Faculty of Humanities opted to make use of continuous assessment approach in 2022. However, some Schools planned for few shorter in class quizzes while others opted for longer type of written assessments, each contributing no more than 40% to the final mark. According to the T&L strategy 2021-2025, the University needs to capitalise on its substantial experience in delivering academic programmes via the distance mode of provision, and increasingly via e-Learning capabilities where appropriate. The nature of the teaching and learning design, teaching methodologies, use of appropriate technologies and student support mechanisms and opportunities, remain important irrespective of the mode of provision, in order to ensure a quality learning experience for NWU students. In this respect, the NWU remains committed to equivalent academic standards irrespective of the mode or site of provision of a qualification, and parity of esteem for qualifications, academic programmes and learning opportunities and experiences.

The Senate approved rules for TLA highlight that assessment is integrated into teaching and learning and serves a variety of specific assessment purposes, including baseline, formative, summative, diagnostic, informal and formal purposes. Assessment also serves the purpose of being part of the university's quality assurance processes and provides both quantitative and qualitative information to faculties regarding student progress and performance.

For 2022, it was emphasised that assessment plans should include an appropriate mix of smaller online and larger and possibly in-person sit-down assessments opportunities towards the composition of the module mark. It was required that internal programme consistency across campuses prevailed in terms of the mix of assessments and assessment types as per the Senate approved Faculty Assessment Plans. It should be noted that coming out of the COVID-19 lockdown, the University encouraged continues assessments for the first semester of 2022. It was intended in the second semester of 2022 for contact students to return to the respective campuses and that sit down tests and examinations be instituted, returning to 'business as usual'.

For the second semester in 2022, two norms were pertinent to the School of Government Studies within the Faculty of Humanities. These two norms were online and sit-down. Online included the use of eFundi and UODL as vehicles to reach contact and distance-learning students respectively. In the School of Government Studies one full qualification (BA in Public Governance and Policing Practice) and UNIVPREP modules are presented via distance-learning. For the second semester 2022, distance-learning included a combination of tests on eFundi, assignments, and e-activity (no sit-down exams).

Online assessment methods, mainly via eFundi were included in all modules within the School of Government Studies. The most popular methods included eFundi tests (quizzes, assessments, multi-choice) in 79% of the modules; and essay/ written assignments in 69% of the modules. The high use of online assessment methods may be attributed to the transition from continuous assessment in the first semester to a return to normalcy during the second semester. Other assessment tools included reflective essays, Zoom/Teams sessions, class participation, take-home tests, case study assignments, reflective journals, Notably, traditional exams were only prevalent in 31% of the modules given in the second semester. It is unclear how many classes for contact students were conducted via eFundi or how many

actually attended classes in person.

All lecturers responsible for aligned modules worked with lecturers on the sister campuses to draw up aligned assessment plans in order to ensure the same student experience for all levels of study in the School. The assessments were also decided upon prior to the semester beginning to ensure teaching and learning was on track from the beginning. Complete assessment plans of the SoC were submitted to the Dep Dean of T&L. In 2021 70% of undergraduate assessments had to be aligned, which has in the meantime been increased to 80% aligned assessments and 20% campus specific assessments. In many modules assessment plans are aligned more than the required 80%.

11.4 2022 STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES

11.4.1 School of Music

At the School of Music, staff members have become increasingly aware that many students lack the required reading and writing skills for university-level work, which is a considerable cause of concern. The situation poses a threat to academic standards and the quality of graduates. It is a challenge for music lecturers to address these deficiencies in addition to teaching subject-specific content. The Introduction to Music Research is a very valuable module in terms of aiming to address the gaps, especially in terms of the 2nd outcome, *the ability to read and write English in order to interpret and produce academic texts based on research in music, implementing an appropriate style of writing*. However, the gap among some students is too big to apply these learnings in modules such as musicology effectively.

Some students' lack of commitment and discipline hamper their progress and the effectiveness of teaching and learning. This ranges from poor class attendance and regular late or no submission of assignments to the refusal to pay attention to feedback for improvement. In some cases, social and emotional challenges contribute toward these. Some challenges in the learning process are difficult to detect and respond to in the educational environment. At the School of Music, the focus is however on personal feedback and support to help students to overcome these difficulties. The individual one-to-one practical teaching setting makes individual support to students easier than in the traditional university academic setting. The school director, programme leaders, and lecturers respond to these challenges individually and promptly. Only in a select few cases the personal follow-up, advice, and guidance doesn't seem to make much of a difference and are, in some cases, actively resisted. For the more significant part, the School of Music's nurturing environment reaps the fruits.

The recent poor design and implementation of teaching technology in the lecture rooms are hampering effective teaching and learning instead of supporting and improving it. The functionality of the audio-visual equipment has, on balance, been reduced and not improved, and lecturers must spend additional time circumventing the limitations and creating solutions. The situation has been reported on an ongoing basis. The latest feedback from Electronic Services is that they have concluded that the physical installation does not cause the issues but is most probably related to the power dips that are experienced. Implementations

done and suggestions made to try and solve the issue are, amongst others:

- UPS's installed in posing to solve the issue of power dips
- Some alterations to the programming of the Joye to try and solve timing issues
- Diodes installed to prevent possible feedback

Electronic Services monitor the system where the UPS's were installed to determine the outcome. Lecturers continue to report the same problems. Power issues are registered on the Planon system driving the request for a thorough investigation in this regard.

The student learning experiences at the School of Music are mostly highly positive.

Some specific examples from students concerning their experience are listed below:

"Studying music is very nice. I enjoy almost every instant of my studies and the studies are interesting. There are sometimes moments like when we have to analyze a music video which tend to put me outside my comfort zone. I learn a lot about music education. The classes I have with my practical lecturer are filled with constructive conversations that teach me how to teach. I can feel how my teaching methods are improving when I teach my own students."

"There are also other opportunities which my studies present where I can practice teaching, for instance conducting a primary school choir. I am inspired through the work that I need to do. Even if there are challenges that require me to go beyond my world view, for example in my WVCS module which tries to teach me that gender is only a construct. I can't agree with this. "

Students are motivated when studying with their peers, and this positively contributes to having a fantastic learning experience at the School of Music:

"As a student of the conserve, I feel right at home. I could not ask for a better band of teammates. We get along very well and instead of being in constant competition with one another, we regularly build each other up. We engage in the assignments together and accompany each other through the words. We are a dream team."

"The peer group is very supportive and influence each other very positively. We are always there for each other and work well together. We help each other when it is necessary to do so."

"The education at the conserve is really quality. We get individual attention, and we are challenged to do practical tasks. The community of musicians here is very nice. My peer group is very unique and I learn a lot from each and everyone of them. It is nice to study together and they motivate me a lot."

Some students appreciate continuous assessment and say this effectuates more informal reading and discussions. Since the pandemic, some students got used to online classes as well as continuous assessment- moving back to full-time contact sessions has also provided new challenges for the students, especially in terms of time management. For example, ensemble studies and other performances take up a lot of hours, although it is crucial for their development as musicians. The students reported that they struggle to find the correct balance between theoretical and practical modules (and performance

opportunities that these modules effectuate.)

Most challenges the music students experience are not within the academic environment but affect their academics. Students reported on financial challenges: They stressed finding the balance between obtaining funding and focusing on schoolwork. The School of Music leaves no stone unturned in obtaining funding for students. However, the current economic climate is hampering efforts, although there has been quite a bit of success with funding applications. The School of Music also invited TUSO to the student meeting. The students appreciated the presentation and are more open to using the incredible support TUSO is presenting.

School of Music students are appreciative of their lecturers, calling them "masters in their fields who do a fantastic job at communicating their knowledge." The smaller classes make it easy for individual attention, which also contributes to efficient communication.

"Generally, my experience of the learning process has been wonderful during my studies at the NWU conserve. The lecturers make a lot of effort to communicate information in an effective manner. They also make an effort to make classes interesting and to ensure we have an exciting learning experience."

"I love the lecturers and everyone at the conserve who helps and participates. I am looking forward to seeing what happens to me in my future."

"The lecturers at the conserve are really top notch. They are always friendly and willing to help at reasonable times. When lecturers make a module fun, everyone is willing to attend. Lecturers allow us to explore our critical thinking skills one can only imagine the value. Class is always a warm and welcome place."

11.4.2 School of Communication

Some students reported having trouble coming back to campus to attend classes and to use campus resources due to financial difficulty in their families and the high cost of accommodation. These students are trying to continue their studies mainly online although they are aware that they are losing marks for in-class assessments. The first and biggest challenge for the Mahikeng Campus in the first quarter of 2022 was the issue of large classes, particularly in the 1st year cohort. The issue of large classes hampered the marking timeframe for lecturers on the campus. The very small pool of markers also made it difficult when it came to marking the assignments. To mitigate this challenge, it was highlighted that we needed an Administrative officer in the SoC at MC to ensure that marks are captured timeously and students receive their marks on time as well.

11.5 2022 STAFF EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES (ACADEMIC AND SUPPORT STAFF)

2022 saw the return to in-person teaching and learning in all modules at the School of Music. Lecturers

continue to work hard to manage inevitable challenges in the academic programmes resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic. After two years of remote learning and later blended learning in most modules, lecturers are faced with the need to cultivate an approach to teaching and learning conducive to a practice-based discipline amongst students who had not been exposed to it during the first two years of their tertiary studies. Senior students were deprived of interactive, in-person, and face-to-face teaching and learning experiences for a substantial part of their studies on which the development of technical and musical proficiency of music students relies. They still have to get used to being actively involved in an interactive teaching and learning environment in all modules at all times. Lecturers have to rethink didactic strategies used during the Covid-19 pandemic for remote learning and blended learning to facilitate student engagement during in-person contact sessions. The results of the continuous assessment, as recorded in June 2022, are a testament to the lecturers' achievements in this regard.

The lifting of travel restrictions has allowed for the reignition of staff and student international mobility. Staff and students can once again participate in academic exchange programmes. The success achieved with using technological alternatives in presenting and attending international conferences during the Covid-19 pandemic has also given staff the confidence to utilise more opportunities. Another positive aspect is the renewed sense of relatedness that the staff's return to campus has brought. The fact that we can now not only meet in person to plan and discuss work-related issues but also to socialise with like-minded peers, brings a sense of cohesion which is very conducive to the teaching and learning environment.

In the first semester many lecturers had problems with venue allocation and venue capacity. Academic and support staff spent a lot of time on trying to find suitable venues. The system where schools had to book their own venues created a lot of challenges and was not user-friendly at all. Lecturers indicated that, in many modules, not all students are attending classes which is problematic since most of the T&L activities are happening in class. So students are therefore missing in-class assessments which contribute to their module marks which impacts on student final results.

One of the challenges colleagues had was the moderation of final module assignments in the modules (in conjunction with marking timeframes). Due to many students on campus, moderation was delayed due to marking. The issue of the academic dishonesty policy in the School was also clarified as a result of our experiences of plagiarism and originality in the student assignments submitted via Turnitin (on eFundi). In order to address this the school has a risk management protocol in place in which students receive warning letters addressed from the context of the school and in some cases mentors have been assigned. Also, eFundi functionality is monitored on a weekly basis.

In general, the experiences of the administrative staff have been positive. However, the work which has been devolved from Support Departments is a considerable concern as it takes priority and limits time available for administrative duties in the Teaching, Learning environment and the core function of their appointments. These include:

- Capturing honorarium claims and salaries into the TAS system, which was previously a service duty within the P&C Department by officers who have acquired the necessary training and experience.
- Compiling maintenance and OHS reports as well as planning schedules are time-consuming and a function that should be made available to management through the IWMS/Plannon system. The level

of responsibility for building maintenance and OHS belongs to the Technical Services and OHS Officers who have acquired the necessary training and qualifications.

- Venue booking is time-consuming in the IWMS/Plannon system, which has inadequate booking/calendar options. A secondary system is needed to function optimally.
- Constant audio visual and lecture capturing issues in the lecture rooms is being addressed. The compiling of reports however should have been available to management through the IT request system.

Deadlines and/or immediate action of the duties mentioned above follow directly and/or overlap with Teaching and Learning deadlines, leaving the current support staff under tremendous pressure, negatively impacting their health and wellbeing. Due to these aspects, administrative support in the School of Music at 100% capacity.

11.6 HOW CROSS-CAMPUS COLLABORATION WAS FOSTERED DURING 2022

The School of Social Sciences, has long been operating in a fully aligned fashion in the subject groups with footprints on multiple campuses. As a result of the readiness planning and staff having learned about the challenges of alignment across multiple years, the level of cooperation and collaboration in aligned modules is high.

In the School of Communication, the alignment process has led to extremely good collaboration across all three campuses. In a large number of undergraduate modules lecturers from different campuses worked on creating one eFundi site, which was then duplicated to all the campuses. In many modules lecturers divided the task of making concept videos. These videos have been shared across campuses and as a result students in aligned modules had a very similar student experience. In some modules hyflex learning was used in such a way that students from different campuses slotted in the same lecture online, which contributed to a shared experience. Students were also exposed to teaching from different lecturers across the university which was an important step in breaking down the campus “silos”.

Cross-campus collaboration was well coordinated during the 1st semester of 2022. All staff ensured that they were on the same page as far as teaching and learning was concerned, and everyone agreed that a good student experience be maintained in teaching and learning and the learning management system (eFundi). For example, in COMS 214, regular meetings were held to ensure that everyone was on board and a common WhatsApp group for the COMS 214 team was set up for regular updates and scheduling of dates and task agreements.

In most of the modules the lecturers are dividing the task of developing assessments which also fosters collaboration. Challenges occur when all colleagues do not contribute equally to the module. In such instances the situation will be addressed by the executive director and the deputy directors in collaboration with the module presenters.

In the School of Philosophy, lecturers collaborate very well and currently, they also co-teach across campuses as well as set assessments in the module. This ensures that students across campuses receive

exactly the same study material from the same lecturer and are tested equally. Lecturers from the different campuses also communicate the same messages – often from only one eFundi site for all students. Students from all three different campuses had the benefit of receiving exactly the same online presentation of classes and/or other learning activities and work with the same time frame and assessment plan on all campuses. During the 2nd semester we moved back to more campus specific arrangements and lecturers to accommodate the specific needs of each campus.

In the School of Languages, the annual Academic Literacy Strategic Assessment Preparation meeting, a three-day inter-campus meeting during which all formal assessments for ALDE/A 111 and 122 are created. This is one of our best cross-campus ventures in the Faculty. Teams (in which each campus is represented by at least one staff member) are tasked with developing a specific assessment, while other inter-campus teams are responsible for moderation. For 2022 the AL Strategic Assessment Preparation meeting was only held at the end of January, which led to late finalisation of assessments which subsequently, in some cases for the ALDE/A 111 module, meant that there was not always enough time to check test settings across sites and some issues were encountered, but efforts are being made to ensure enough time for test editing and translation in the future.

Academic Literacy has also created a shared Google Drive Folder to which assessments, PowerPoints, Handouts, videos, and other resources have been uploaded. The idea of this shared folder is to share all resources, create awareness of what has been done/created as student resources across the campuses, and to better foster an environment of shared knowledge and expertise and resources, hopefully resulting in an even better cross-campus collaboration. Although, this venture has not yet been optimally used by AL personnel – Dr Nel is currently working on restructuring this shared folder and creating a test databank which should improve cross-campus collaboration and the sharing of expertise

In French modules, some members of the subject group travelled to the other campuses to meet with colleagues, attend open days, to teach students and to offer interactive workshops to students. While the subject group German has been aligned across Potchefstroom and Vanderbijlpark for almost ten years in terms of subject content. Since 2020, we have also been aligned in terms of assessment. Therefore, cross-campus collaboration has always been easy for the subject group. During the first semester, Dr Van der Merwe (on the Potchefstroom campus) was responsible for the Literature component of GERM211 on both PC and VC) and Mrs Barrow was responsible for the Language component of GERM211 on both PC and VC). In GERM111, Dr Van der Merwe and Mrs Barrow rotated as assessment examiners – students on both PC and VC had to write the same test. Language Practice is offered on the three campuses. For modules which are aligned, the lecturers utilised the team-teaching approach. The lecturers worked together on the finalising of the eFundi sites and the setting of the assessments. The English subject group module convenors make use of WhatsApp and email for planning and logistics. Two posts at MC still have not been filled (temporary staff employed in first and second semester) and this is still placing a burden on other staff members on all campuses.

There is a very good working relationship between staff on Potchefstroom and Mahikeng for the aligned Setswana modules. Matters arising are treated speedily and in person. The subject group Afrikaans and Dutch utilised team teaching, to present students across different campuses with a fully aligned offering.

By doing this, they are ensuring that all students are receiving the same opportunity to get the same expert knowledge transfer, and also to create a feeling of unity among the students from the two campuses.

11.7 DRIVING BLENDED/ HYBRID LEARNING AND INNOVATION DURING 2022

The School of Social Sciences has developed a blended learning strategy to cope with the challenges of extremely large modules with multiple timetable groups. Here they are using the blended approach of recording a lectures and flipping the classroom such that contact time with lecturers is more about engagement than content delivery, which is done via a recorded video. Not all such modules are making use of our devised approach. Once this passes through the School Management Committee it will be formally installed as the approach to such modules from 2023.

Initiatives by the School of Languages are discussed under the respective language groups.

Sesotho

Zoom and Microsoft Teams are platforms used to assist with blended learning. Recorded lessons with attendance registers assist with tracing students participation and thus simplifying follow up interventions for enhancement of the teaching & learning process.

Creative Writing

Creative Writing has offered various zoom guest lectures throughout 2022, a more cost-effective option than having to accommodate and transport guest lecturers, which increases the exposure students get to writers and publishing professionals.

For *Academic Literacy*, Vanderbijlpark and Mahikeng campuses, followed a hybrid approach to teaching and learning. This model presented challenges for lecturers in terms of the dexterity required when presenting a hybrid lecture. On the one hand, a lecturer must manage the online platform, while on the other hand presenting to the students who are present in the lecture room. This entails, for example, admitting students into the online class, checking if there are any messages on the chat or raised hands/questions to attend to, while trying to be fully present in the face-to-face environment. Since PC had to revert to online teaching (live MS Teams classes presented during the scheduled timeslots for ALDE/A 111 and 112) challenges included ensuring that, despite not being able to follow a true hybrid approach, students have similar opportunities to meet/consult with lecturers as on MC and VC.

During the second semester of 2022 we have adopted, as instructed, a contact (face-to-face) teaching approach. Returning to the “normal” teaching model was much anticipated. Having the carefully designed and fully functional eFundi sites, designed with the remote teaching and learning environment in mind, now allows for a more workshop-like teaching approach in classes, which adds to the development of the academic literacy skillsets of students. It is however important to mention that there are various students who did not return to campus and are therefore not attending classes.

The hybrid blended (HyFlex) approach adds value to the AL offering and is an approach that needs to be further investigated to see how we can benefit from what we have learnt in the past three years.

French

Platforms like *Padlet*, *Framapad* and *Kahoot!* are frequently used in some classes. The *Padcaster* system has been used with varying success.

German

Since reliability is such an important principle when teaching a foreign language, the lecturers prioritise letting the students feel safe and secure. Classes in which students do practical skills work (speaking, reading, writing, and listening) together with the tutorial letters on eFundi form the basis of teaching and learning. For the first-year students the tutorial letters have 'satellites' on eFundi, In the second and third year there are supporting materials for language learning based on the textbook as well as literature tutorial letters that complement the teaching and learning that take place in the classes.

Language Practice

Lecturers implemented blended learning in presenting online and face-to-face lectures.

English

With the transition to contact classes, there is less reliance on eFundi in comparison to covid times. We continue to use eFundi for essential resources, announcements and tests. Lessons are used to give students material to prepare for class, such as selected readings and theoretical concepts. In class, concepts are elaborated on and practical analysis of texts is done in contact. This follows the flipped classroom model where students are expected to grapple with concepts on their own first, but have the necessary support from the lecturer when they arrive in class. The positive impact of lecturers applying what they learnt at courses on this is evident.

Setswana

Zoom and MS Teams are used as needed.

Afrikaans and Dutch

The subject group Afrikaans and Dutch continued with a hybrid team teaching model as was the case in 2021. The implication is that the students receive both synchronous online and synchronous face-to-face lectures, depending on the campus where the lecturer of the particular module component is situated.

11.8 TRANSFORMING BY DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM IN 2022

11.8.1 Introduction

The Faculty has for some time, accepted principles that programme and curricula content in all subject groups must provide students with an orientation to various paradigms of thought and knowledges in all undergraduate and postgraduate academic programmes. Given the changing educational landscape and the needs of students and industry in the 21st century, the Faculty continues to advocate for the renewal of the curricula and for academic Schools to carefully reconsider what they teach, how they teach and

assess, and who they teach. Schools are urged to constantly rethink themes, perspectives and approaches, in order to incorporate insights and experiences into modules and programmes.

11.8.2 School of Government Studies

The School of Government Studies continues to make progress in the matter of decolonising the curriculum. Although the uptake of decolonial content and pedagogies in teaching have not been universal, there are various highlights to report on.

Specific examples used are outlined below.

11.8.2.1 POLI 223: African Politics

The central focus of the module is, how the state, civil society and external forces influence the politics of diverse African contexts. The module also overtly focuses on the famous Adwa Victory where Ethiopia resisted Italian attempts at colonisation. All the above thus explains how Africa is not without agency and that dictatorship is neither purely ascribed to greedy leaders, nor is it the only form of agency found on the continent.

11.8.2.2 POLI 314: Theories of International Relations

International Relations, like others has recently suffered increased criticism of being a Western, especially, North American discipline. The 2022 module places the conventional history of IR next to a decolonial history of this field in study unit one. Students then had to complete an assignment on the contested history of the field. Furthermore, decolonial thought was included as a perspective on IR alongside other theoretical perspectives. Without taking up too much space here, it must be stated that the 2023 module will present a more fundamental decolonial pedagogy. It will start off by debunking entrenched concepts in IR. It then includes units on the colonial matrix of power and feminism and intersectionality in IR (now understood as diverse and dynamic global flows and networks) across scales. The module will then conclude by re-evaluating the traditionally canonical theories of field.

11.8.2.3 POLS 624: Politics in the Developing World (currently with a focus on security)

This module chronologically deals with different schools of thought in Security Studies, including a unit on decolonial perspectives, such as the so-called Beirut School. However, the transformative value in this module most significantly lies in a set of questions students are forced to reflect on with each perspective. These questions pertain to context, form of (in)security in diverse developing world contexts and conceptual fit. Thus, the module conceives of decolonisation as a more open-ended ontology and a broadened and contingent epistemology.

It could be argued that part of a decolonial curriculum is access, also in terms of multilingualism. In this regard the PADM121 lecturer, who has a command of multiple (seven) South African languages allows students to articulate questions and comments in the language of their choice, which the lecturer then translates into English for the benefit of the entire class.

11.8.3 School of Music

In 2020, the **African Music** modules were radically revamped by the School of Music's then new appointee, Dr Cara Stacey, to include cutting-edge scholarship from across the continent and internationally. She has continued to modify the modules so that the students have working knowledge of playing different African musics (now collectively, in the African Music ensemble). Therefore, music students have performance and arrangement experience as well. Beyond the content changes that have been made, Dr Stacey has now begun to modify the assessment opportunities for the African music modules, encouraging students to arrange and compose their own music for the African Music, other School of Music ensembles and players for external performances. Drawing on ideas around composing as critical technical practice and composing as a teaching tool, students are now encouraged to be creative with the indigenous instruments and musical forms they study so they can direct and develop not only their own learning but also their own musical voice beyond their degrees.

Specific examples of this kind of work can also be seen in MUSY327 where the students are required to make arrangements of one of the following iconic African compositions: Fela Kuti's 'Water no get enemy', Toumani Diabaté's 'Jarabi', Aster Aweke's 'Tizita' and Mantombi Matotiyana's 'Wen 'useGoli'. For the Honour's level MUSH679, students spend the year composing and arranging music for their own 'EP', a recorded mini-album of 10-15 minutes inspired by the musics we have studied throughout the module, which we record at the School of Music together. This is submitted with an album cover and artist statement explaining their compositional choices.

There is not a lot of literature on using composing as a way of learning and especially none from the African continent and Dr Stacey is hoping to reflect on this student-led process in a published form in the future. In terms of changes to the music theory curriculum offered at the School of Music, a task team has met a few times to discuss literature to support this process. In preparation for this, more theoretical research were integrated into the higher level modules, such as Charles Lwanga's study of the Ugandan composer Justinian Tamusuza's compositions and Marie Agatha Ozah's work on Joshua Uzoigwe.

The School of Music is continually on the lookout for new writing especially from women of colour to integrate into the students' learning. As part of the Music Theory in the BMus program, students were afforded the opportunity to orchestrate a work for the Wind Ensemble of the School of Music. This formed part of their final assessment in the first semester. These arrangements will be used by the NWU Symphony Orchestra and the School of Music's Wind Ensemble as part of their repertoire. The idea is to drastically expand the repertoire of traditional African music, as very few arrangements of traditional songs exist to use for performances. A worldwide need exists to expand the performable repertoire in many professional and amateur orchestras. This project is supported by a bigger group of lecturers from different subject

groups in the NWU School of Music. We are confident that the project will be a huge success in making African music more accessible to the world. It would be a fantastic opportunity for the world to join us in experiencing our rich culture in music.

In MZME219, the Diploma second-year music education students had the opportunity to teach indigenous music games to their peers in their own mother tongue. These indigenous music games can be used in their Intermediate Phase music teaching, in the future. They also shared their ethnocultural dance repertoire during free improvisation and Dalcroze-inspired activities. They furthermore took folk songs from other cultures and added their own style and interpretation.

In MUSJ313 (Community Music) students were challenged to engage with a critical theoretical perspectives taken from the global north and South Africa. Students in this module decided to engage further with writings on Ubuntu and to find ways in which this discourse could inform practice in community music settings.

The emphasis on nonformal and informal learning through a negotiated curriculum continues to provide opportunities for transformation within community music. Students often choose the theoretical perspectives they wish to engage with further. This results in a discussion around power in academic discourses and has in 2022 included projects exploring decoloniality and post coloniality in informal music learning in South Africa.

Community music also privileges aural pedagogies, thereby providing students with opportunities to critically reflect on the prevalence of music literacies informed by Western art musics. MUSJ 323 students are currently involved in a project to consider the practical implications for relational ethics in community music. This project also includes a critique of dominant pedagogies in music education and the creation of practical alternatives by students.

11.8.4 School of Languages

Specific examples used by the School of Languages are outlined below.

11.8.4.1 ICAT

The critical and analytical thinking modules are very far removed from a traditional colonial approach. The modules were conceptualised and developed keeping in mind (i) skills students could develop in order to become more critical thinkers; (ii) applying all theory to current affairs: economic or law issues.

This year, we introduced a stronger practical component in the second semester (group essays and presentations) that are specifically designed to let the students (i) work as a team; (ii) consider different point of view; (iii) reach consensus as a group; (iv) argue different point of view with supporting evidence.

Furthermore, to **“make room for the student voice”**, the students are presented with broad topics only. As a group, **they formulate and determine their own problem** that they will analyse and present within the context of their discipline.

11.8.4.2 Sesotho

Sesotho is offered as a First language subject supporting the Language Practice subject group. The first semester focuses on Language (Grammar) while the 2nd semester focuses on Literature. The Teaching & Learning provides for transformation and decolonization of the curriculum as the prescribed texts and learning material use contemporary authors who have been writing about decolonisation project.

11.8.4.3 Creative writing

Creative writing, by its nature, privileges individual students' experiences and worlds by cultivating the tools necessary for students to express their experiences and worlds.

This year, we received the first student assignments that were submitted in African languages, i.e. Sepedi and isiZulu. We are encouraging first year students to submit creative assignments in the language of their choice with the proviso that we can find external markers for these languages. A core assignment in SKRK121 focuses on oral storytelling where students are encouraged to observe storytelling in their environments and to use this as material for their own creative writing.

The poetry studied in SKRK111 and SKRK211 has been completely overhauled, with a focus on local and international poets from diverse backgrounds to expose students to poets that they can identify with. Poetry in Afrikaans, English and isiCamtho was studied. Specific focus was also given to spoken word and oral poetry in SKRK211 for the first time, and students were introduced to poetry performance techniques through a practical class in the Heimat Hall in the first semester.

Dr. Odendaal has compiled a new short story anthology for the SKRK121 students which includes Afrikaans and English short stories, mostly by South African writers. This diversification of texts helps to ensure that students get a good idea of the variety and breadth of creative work published in South Africa. Strategic planning for 2022-2024 includes submitting creative assignments in African languages, with a gradual roll out (1st years – 2022, 2nd years – 2023, 3rd years – 2024). We are also compiling a list of key Setswana terminology related to creative writing to be included in the study guides from 2023 onwards. We aim to invite at least one guest lecturer in Setswana per semester from 2023 onwards and we have secured an NWU interpreter to enable this.

11.8.4.4 Academic Literacy

AL at NWU provides learning material and opportunities that cater for the diversity of student culture and the variety of learning needs. Local material in the form of texts, videos, discussion topics etc. are provided using both print and electronic media. We furthermore encourage groupwork where students share their own reality and thoughts – giving them a platform to voice and discuss their opinions. Furthermore, owing to the variety of language backgrounds NWU students hail from, AL strives to provide learning experiences that are realistic and meaningful to students by encouraging translanguaging in class discussions. In practice, it allows students to use languages other than the medium of instruction to discuss in groups and reach consensus before reporting to the larger class in the language of teaching and learning (LOTL). This

ensures that students take ownership the learning experience, and their voices are heard. This inclusive approach encourages students to use their mother-tongue (mostly African languages) to discuss with fellow students to facilitate easy understanding.

In addition to the awareness, and incorporation of translanguaging, we follow an outward-spreading model – one in which learning takes place using local knowledge, incorporating knowledge from the rest of Africa first, and from a wider context as and when necessary to facilitate decolonisation. We also make use of new and relevant topics and texts within the subject group that speak to the students' direct situation and context. Finally, a series of videos, which provide brief explanations of AL principles, were made available in English/Afrikaans and Setswana on all the eFundi sites to promote access and multilingualism.

11.8.4.5 French

In most cases, French names are replaced by African names. The African experience is added to the program. The process helps African students to see French as an African language, a language that is spoken in many African countries.

In second- and third-year literature classes, African novels, graphic novels and poetry is included in the curriculum.

11.8.4.6 German

Both the language and the literature sections of all the modules aim to be inclusive. In the language sections, apart from the focus on the target language, the nature of teaching is to acknowledge other cultures and languages. One of the benefits of learning a foreign language is that it makes one aware of one's own culture and language.

Comparisons between languages and cultures and recognise African and South African languages and cultures during teaching and learning promote the movement from the known to the unknown. Lecturers also strive to introduce connections between Germany and the German-speaking countries and Africa in the teaching and learning content. A few examples of aiming to be inclusive are the following: The tutorial letters contain functional images of people reflecting racial diversity. African/South African names that are familiar are used together with German names. However, the textbook also presents names from many other countries (for example, South America, Mexico, Eastern Europe, etc.) In this sense an international atmosphere is created. Familiar South African places (the student's hometown, Vanderbijlpark, Potchefstroom, etc.) are used when teaching directions. The lecturers use translanguaging in classes or request students who speak the same mother tongue to explain a grammatical concept in their own language to the other student. Specific grammatical concepts are compared to other languages.

From the second-year year onwards the modules also consist of literature sections from the Baroque up to contemporary literature. The nature of literary works tends to protest oppression; comment on social circumstances; and present constructive views in terms of justice. Writers like Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, Friedrich Schiller, Georg Büchner, and Wolfgang Borchert were German men that wrote to promote fairness, criticise oppression and war. However, from the nineteenth century onwards it became possible

to add women's voices like Annette von Droste-Hülshoff and Marie Luise Kaschnitz. But there are also other voices of, for example, Jewish writers (for example, Franz Kafka, Wolfgang Hildesheimer and Anna Seghers) that are part of the learning content.

To make the German works relatable to the experiences of the students, the fictional experiences of characters are compared to South Africa and Africa. Themes like power, wealth, weather (drought and rain), oppression, gender roles, etc. are to an extent universal. However, the uniqueness of experiences within specific cultures and the cultures themselves is always acknowledged. South Africa and Africa is also introduced more directly by means of literary texts, for example, South African poems translated into German for the Byderhand project; a comparison of the folktale "Mmadipetsane" from Lesotho with "Little Red Riding Hood" of the Brothers Grimm; Kirsten Boie's youth story about experiences from Swaziland "*Es gibt Dinge, die man nicht erzählen kann*". Chimamanda Adichie's talk "The danger of a single story" as well as feminist and postcolonialist ideas are used to approach literary texts.

Themes in, for example, tutorial letters in language and literature include Africans in Germany, Germans in Africa, and Afro-Germans. The poetry of an important Afro-German, May Ayim, is read as part of the contemporary literature section of GERM321.

11.8.4.7 Language Practice

Initiatives to decolonise the curriculum include choosing materials which are relevant to the South African context. Even though we still use the Global North textbooks we include local practices where they differ from the content of the textbooks. Practical work and classwork challenge the students to focus and critically think about the themes of gender, race, religion, and sexual orientation in the South African and African contexts.

11.8.4.8 English

In one of the study sections of the Historical Linguistics component of ENLL311 we focus on contact between English and other languages, specifically as a result of the colonial spread. Students are sensitised, of course, to the purely linguistic reflexes of colonialism (borrowing, creoles, pidgins) but also to some of the more deleterious effects (e.g. language death, negative attitudes towards local languages and their speakers). In this module linguistic change in the English language is viewed as a result of contact due to colonialism. This topic is taken up further as part of the Topics in Linguistics Honours module, where the history and development of World Englishes are dealt with explicitly and in relatively close detail. In the Sociolinguistics component in ENLL321 we focus on South African Englishes, and also compare different varieties of World Englishes. In this component, the notion of standard English is questioned, and the norms of local varieties of English are promoted. The influence of indigenous languages on varieties of English are also explored in a positive light. The linguistics components in 1st and 2nd year focus more on grammatical analysis and as such do not lend themselves to decolonisation beyond the choice of texts used for analysis – which typically are South African corpus texts or texts from African news websites. One suggestion which has flowed from a recent conference attended by most linguistics lecturers was that

course material in these grammatical analysis modules be accompanied by translations of key terminology and illustrations of concepts – in line with promoting multilingualism and encouraging students to make use of their full language repertoire.

The literature content in the two modules ENLL111/121, and ENLL321 is chiefly concerned with the study of literature written in English, broadly categorised under the subject 'colonial and postcolonial literature.' Students at undergraduate and postgraduate levels are sensitised to a range of genres and literary epochs starting from writing of the empire (colonial literature) to the study of contemporary English literature, broadly categorised as postcolonial writing, particularly within the South African and African context. By analysing poems, short stories, and novels written not mainly by metropolitans, but also by creoles and indigenes, the curriculum explores perceptions and experiences from the perspectives of male and female writers, exploring the complex and ambiguous relationship between history, culture, and identity. This topic is further explored in-depth in ENLL321 module South Africa and the World, and at the postgraduate honours level ENLL676 under the heading Postcolonial Literatures: South Africa and the World. It is at this level where the theories about the history and development of colonial and postcolonial literatures written in English are scrutinised and critiqued. The curriculum is regularly assessed and agreed across all three campuses. It already contains significant decolonised content and is to be reviewed again in a pan-campus meeting planned for 28 Sept.

11.8.4.9 Setswana

Setswana is offered as a first and third language. In the first language modules the focus is on linguistics and literature. The third language modules also include grammar and literature but also include language skills sections such as oral, reading and composition. Prescribed literature texts cater for discussion on decolonization.

11.8.4.10 Afrikaans and Dutch

In our choice of material, there is a strong focus on previously marginalised voices. We try and incorporate female authors, black authors, gender, and colonial theory. Our choices of Dutch literature also places the focus on critical reflection and active debate. The conversation between Africa and The Netherlands is essential when choosing Dutch texts and we try and bring the focus back to the African context. Our modules take a diachronic approach and given the socio-historic time frame, inevitably lead to matters of transformation and decolonization. We employ reflective teaching practices and are constantly critically thinking about, discussing and re-evaluating texts and practices in terms of decolonisation and Africanisation.

11.8.5 School of Communication

Specific examples used by the School of Communication is outlined below.

During School meetings and subject group meetings certain modules in the subject group Communication

were identified where revision will take place in order to ensure that decolonisation, transformation and Africanisation is being addressed. Lecturers of different modules indicated that they are exploring the inclusion of more African theories as well as the work from more African scholars within the current module outcomes of the modules they teach. COMS311 (communication theory) specifically includes communication theories from an African perspective and in the final module assignment students had to reconceptualise an existing communication theory to make it relevant for the African context.

It was imperative that the student experience was enhanced by exposing the students to teaching and learning that is embedded in the Southern African experience. As such, many of the modules in Mahikeng saw the need to apply the content in teaching and learning to sources, content and examples relevant to the Southern African experience, and in particular to South Africa.

Theories in Communication were also related to the South African experience not only in content but in assessments as well. For example, in COMS 214 and the flagship module COMS 123, current developments in the South African space were included in the assessments for students to relate with.

11.8.6 School of Philosophy

The re-curriculum of the Understanding the World modules is completed for our faculty. The new WVLS317 module was introduced in the 1st semester of 2022, and the new WVCS223 is introduced during the second semester 2022. These modules' online presentation was developed with the help of an instructional designer and the end product looks incredibly professional.

11.9 SCHOOLS'-SPECIFIC INITIATIVES RELATED TO TRANSFORMATION AND ALIGNMENT

11.9.1 General

The school has four major interventions running during the 2022 second semester. The first is what we are calling a curriculum coherence workshop. This is designed to build on the foundation laid by the readiness documents and meetings we introduced in 2020. It has become clear that the discussion of modules and curricula at subject group level require a shared platform for productive disagreement if we are to achieve a fully aligned collaboration at the level of module design. It is also clear, based on the analysis of readiness documents across campuses and subject groups that there is a need to align expectations at the various year levels between the different subject groups as we have observed great differences in reading load, assessment and cognitive level between subject groups at the same NQF level. This intervention will address these issues and further build on the already strong decolonial work in some subject groups.

The second is a community engagement matchmaking event on each of our three campuses. In our school strategic plan, developed in 2019, we recognised the need to improve CE in the school substantially. Our

analysis of obstacles to this revealed two significant ones. First, many colleagues do not know what civil society and other organisations are in their area and available for WIL or SL or research collaboration. Second, those colleagues who have previously undertaken SL initiatives reported the challenges of maintaining these relationships year to year given that there is a semester long break between each SL collaboration. We are thus, in 2022, hosting fifteen (15) organisations on each of our campuses in a programme where they will each have 15-20 minutes to present their organisations, foci, needs and aspirations before colleagues from the school present to them our modules and research activities. These presentations will be followed by a mixer during which participants can find and discuss potential collaboration.

The third is a raft of project interventions in our administrative, student support, working environment, alumni tracking, employability, marketing, and tutorial support areas. These are intended overtly to regain ground lost to covid in our 2019 strategic plan. A secondary objective of this is to continue the work of shifting the culture of the school further towards collaborative teaching and curriculum design. We recognised that there is a need to capacitate academic and administrative staff with project leadership and team leadership skills and I will be working with each team leader to build this capacity. The objective here is to ensure good succession in the school's assigned functions and also to take a big step forward in capacitating successful coordination of teaching teams in aligned modules.

11.9.2 School of Music

The School is utilising composition as a learning tool is an innovative curriculum initiative which is increasingly employed in the African music modules. In this way, students are free to interrogate, integrate (or ignore) their own cultural and musical identities in whichever ways they feel resonate. Their musical creativity is warmly received in the classroom setting and they can choose how to conceptually relate their sounds to the ideas we have discussed and learned about.

In terms of highlights from this year, the newly formed African Music Ensemble has now had a few performances as part of different events which have required the students to build up some important professional skills (arranging, ensemble leading, logistics, stage set-up, administration and invoicing) beyond playing the music.

Another highlight is the Diploma first-year group: Their class attendance and morale overall are fantastic, especially in Music Theory. The group is informed of all their formal responsibilities, and the students are fully committed to their studies and other responsibilities.

11.9.3 School of Languages

The throughput for the 1st semester is at 80% to 100%, for instance, SSSL 312 students all passed. All SSCO students passed with distinctions. There were distinctions noted for SSSL 212.

For Creative Writing, one of the highlights for 2022 is surely the Bua! Poetry Sessions held on 12 August on campus. Funded by the School of Languages and organised by Creative Writing, 110 students and staff attended the event, which aimed to foster multilingual poetic expression at NWU. Four experienced poets were invited from around the country (Ikageng, Soweto, Brixton and Cape Town) and twelve student poets got an opportunity to share their poems. Some of the languages that featured on the night include Setswana, isiZulu, isiXhosa, Sesotho, English and Afrikaans. NWU students from Mahikeng and Vanderbijlpark were transported to and accommodated in Potchefstroom to attend the event.

The subject group Language Practice is planning an intervention programme to assist students at all levels to improve their writing so that by the time they exit the programme they are ready for in industry. This will be done in collaboration with CTL and the Writing Centre. The lecturers have included the training of using freely available software that are used by industry.

The subject group Setswana has developed acquisition courses in Setswana that were indicated as priorities in 2020 by Prof Balfour. Colleagues on PC updated the basic Setswana language acquisition course with the assistance of CTL while an intermediate course was developed and is in the quality control phase.

11.9.4 School of Government studies

The School recognises the following milestones achieved by its members of staff.

- Dr Christa de Wet completed her PhD with NWU and was subsequently promoted to senior lecturer.
- Dr Frank Lekaba completed his PhD at UJ

The School of Government studies recognises its position as a thought leader in society and as such aims to remain engaged with the key debates that are taking place in the country. As a result, the school has an ongoing seminar series aimed at ensuring ongoing conversations about key developments within government and the country. The seminars are hosted by the school and invites academics from around the world to engage with the subject matter. The seminar series is among the most successful engagement initiatives in the faculty.

So far, in 2022 the school has hosted the following seminars

1. Covid-19 Vaccine Seminar_ A seminar regarding the political economy of vaccines.
2. Prospective Trajectories of Terrorism in Africa
3. Decolonisation and Transcendence: The challenge of Education for Liberation_ a seminar about the importance of decolonising the curriculum.
4. Seminar: A Tale of Three Cities; South Africa's foreign policy towards the United States and the Russian Federation - A seminar to explore which foreign policy direction should take in the long term.
5. A Discussion on the newly appointed BBBEE Presidential Advisory Council_ a seminar to review and discuss the value of BBBEE as a redress policy.

6. A new Dawn or in a Donga? - A discussion about the impact of the Russia/Ukraine war and South Africa's foreign policy.

11.9.5 School of Philosophy

The School of Philosophy, with the Faculty of Engineering, is organising the NWU Forum on 29 September 2022, entitled: "*Getting to nett zero carbon emissions: Philosophical perspectives and Engineering realities.*" The school was very much involved with the organising and presenting of the NWU Gender Awareness Week. The school of philosophy is currently doing an IPE of the Hons programme. This will be completed during the second semester of 2022.

11.10 CONCLUSION

As we progress with the academic project in 2022 with a return to campuses for our staff and students. The Faculty has experienced quite a productive use of team-teaching across campuses in aligned modules in a manner that has shared practices and approach between campuses and subject groups to build a broadly shared student experience. We have made good progress into student-centred learning and a blended approach, both of which are in keeping with our strategic plan and relate to curriculum transformation. The introduction of School level processes in most Schools to continue to work on alignment, renewal and transformation has opened the discursive space in which to make accelerated progress in other important aspect of these strategic priorities such as curriculum renewal and transformation in 2022.

The pressures of responding to covid-19 took a toll on staff and students on the personal level. But, despite the challenges and experiences interventions conceptualised in the Schools have seemed to be working. As a faculty we continuously aim to establish interventions that will assist in improving the participation from students on the delivery sites. The first semester of 2022 has also shown not only how interconnected we are, but how we need each other for the successful running of the entire Schools in order for the FHUM and the NWU to reach its strategic goals in Teaching & Learning. We strive to assist our students to attain the graduate attributes as outlined in the NWU Teaching & Learning strategy, despite challenges we might experience.

12. FACULTY OF LAW



12.1 INTRODUCTION

The Faculty of Law embraced the positive experiences from the 2020/2021 covid-19 period in the T&L environment. Most of the gains of that period were carried over to the current academic year and adapted to fit the T&L modality employed in 2022. The call to return to contact teaching (albeit to a limited extent in the first semester) and online modality presented new opportunities. The faculty continued with a collaborative method of teaching across campuses and the students benefitted from having three lecturers teaching one module. The management structure of the faculty has stabilized, and it is business unusual. The School for Undergraduate Studies is excited to report the following experiences, successes and challenges regarding T&L in 2022.

12.2 2022 TEACHING AND LEARNING CHALLENGES, INTERVENTIONS AND SUCCESSES

The faculty embraced most of the positive experiences and learned from the challenges of the 2020/21 pandemic period. As in the 2020/21 academic years, the faculty in 2022 continued to follow the English timetable having decided to use English as the primary medium of instruction. Although this was the case, all students had access to multi-lingual supplemental instructions during additional facilitation and tutoring sessions.

Team teaching was encouraged, and all modules were aligned across campuses. In the first semester,

classes continued in hybrid modality with classes being streamed across campuses (“cross-campus classes”). The lecturers on each campus took turns in teaching the same class to give students a differentiated experience of learning from three lecturers. All classes were recorded and uploaded onto eFundi, and all students had access to learning material, lessons, Teams/video recordings and tutorials on eFundi and other platforms (WhatsApp, Telegram) irrespective of which campus they are registered.

In the second semester, even though there were no cross-campus classes, students still had a similar experience in that all learning materials were available to them on eFundi, and they could join any class that was presented online (all online classes were recorded and uploaded on eFundi).

There is always open and early communication with students concerning the plans for the semester. In all modules the lecturers prepare and share module plans, assessment plans, work programmes and test dates as early as possible in the semester.

In the first semester, attendance of the cross-campus sessions varied – in some instances high levels of participation were experienced, while in some cases attendance figures were low. In the second semester, students were expected to be on campus, and to attend classes in person. Again, attendance varied and in most instances the class attendance was very low despite attendance being mandatory. This was an interesting observation in that whilst students indicated in the surveys that they wished to return to campus and yearned for contact with their lecturers and fellow students, students still preferred to attend online despite being on campus.

12.2.1 Challenges

When students were informed that they had to return to campus, all faculties had to pull resources together to make it possible for T&L to continue without disruptions. It was anticipated that there will be some contact classes and online teaching. Block teaching was done for most of the modules with larger classes whilst some had to alternate between student groups.

The availability of suitable hyflex venues was one of the biggest challenges in T&L in the first semester of 2022. In some instance whilst venues were said to be hyflex ready, this was not the case, and in some instances some venues were double booked. The challenges with unstable network and the unavailability of roaming microphones also made it difficult to have cross-campus classes. These classes had to be recorded and uploaded for students, but this meant that student missed out on the interaction during class.

The issues of IT and equipment failure also added to the challenges. The class time of one hour, (1 was too short to begin with and to compound it with system failures that ate into the teaching time created problems for T&L in the first semester. Sanitization of venues was also another factor when this was required as it was never done.

Shortage of staff was another challenge in the faculty as we experienced resignations at all the campuses. This led to the decision to continue offering some modules online, mostly electives and the language modules. The appointment of locums to teach in some modules poses a risk for the university as there is

lack of continuity and in certain instances possible quality issues. Another challenge was the fact that students could not do their practical work in the fourth-year modules and were forced to choose other electives in the place of practical modules. This challenge was resolved in the second semester and students were able to do their practical work in the law clinics and to go to the communities.

Assessment practices in the first semester also revealed the concerning challenge of student collaboration during the online assessments. However, the faculty experiences fewer numbers of academic dishonesty in the 2022 as opposed to the 2021 academic year. Because students had sit-down assessments in the first semester, this was reflected in the pass rate which was lower than the results from the 2020/21 period. There was an increase in students who present with mental health issues, mostly citing anxiety with written assessments/tests and class anxiety. Students are receiving the needed support from the student support office and the wellness centre.

The faculty has a student support office which is charged with attending to students' needs and works together with the lecturers to identify at-risk-students. Students identified as at-risk do not always respond to correspondence and fail to make use of all the interventions available, despite being contacted via email and WhatsApp. The other issue is that the contact information on the system is not always correct. Students do not attend the webinars in large numbers, although the webinars are advertised on eFundi, and the WhatsApp groups (academic). There is a need to improve the attendance of facilitation and tutorial sessions, so that more students can receive assistance, creating more awareness. The faculty Board has approved mandatory attendance of the facilitation sessions for all students who obtain 50% or less in a test/assessment.

Another issue that was identified was the fact that CTL training of the facilitators and tutors lacked specification and was not necessarily discipline specific. It was suggested that it was important that lecturers are involved in the training of the tutors and facilitators so that they are also aware of their duties and expectations. The issues of capacity in the office of the student support manager ("office of the SSM") was another stumbling block in the important work of this office, the office of the SSM consists of one person appointed on a fixed-term basis, and student appointments. The students can only work for 23 hours per month, which in essence limits the work that can be done by the office of the SSM. It will also assist if the SSM has access to the academic records of students when consultations are being done (with privacy protocol being observed). The process of referring students and reporting; and making notes of consultation with students is not done on a system, but manually. The work will improve if we can create an electronic referral and consultation system, that can be updated daily.

Other challenges include, late registrations of students, late training of facilitators, early due dates for submission of examination papers and memoranda (before any assessments/test are written) and this affect the quality.

12.2.2 Interventions

Some of the interventions that were put in place during the first semester included the recording of classes

and uploading these on eFundi. Lecturers also took their laptops to class to assist with facilitating the online classes where there was equipment failure or the hyflex camera in the venue did not work.

Risk modules and at-risk-students were identified as early as immediately after the first assessment and the students were referred to the student support office for assistance. The faculty worked together with CTL to assist the students to prepare for sit-down assessments. A more detailed account is set out below. Students who obtain 50% or less in their test or assessment must now attend intervention sessions provided by the office of the SSM.

The faculty has managed to fill most of the vacancies and hopefully by the end of the year all the positions at all the three campuses will be filled.

12.2.3 Successes

The faculty started the alignment of skilled based modules in 2021 and the initial phase of the project was to ensure that there was an alignment of civil and criminal procedure modules as well as legal practice modules. This project focused on refining the required specialized skills base that students would need in practice. This was successfully attained and in 2022, the lecturers in the procedure modules held simulated trials as part of the classroom experience to show students the practical application of their module content.

The second phase of the project in 2022 has started and it involves aligning the skills-based modules from first to fourth year as well as to introduce community hours from the student's first year of studies. This is also meant to alleviate the pressure on the Law Clinics when student reach the fourth year, in light of the limited resources and staff available. Most students in the fourth year elect Moot court instead of dissertation and this places enormous pressure on the Law Clinics who need to balance this responsibility with trying to meet the statutory requirements of students who have to complete community service hours in order to obtain their degrees. This project is part of the PQM review process and will be move forward once the curriculum mapping has commenced.

We are working on establishing an ePortfolio with CTL for the students to be able to compile a portfolio of work done as evidence of their community engagement hours. This will then ensure that they do community engagement throughout their studies as opposed to only in the final year as well as adding different method of assessment at the faculty. We will also be the only faculty that is embarking on this project.

Since 2018, IURI 174, IURI 274 and IURI 377 have undergone curriculum transformation via the Carpe Diem process. Considering that 2020-2022 presented its own challenges and that lecturers needed to adjust their lecturing strategies, the overhauled language modules have only really had a single year (2019) of contact exposure (the way the modules were originally designed to be delivered). However, lockdown presented its own opportunities in terms of how to offer students more support and alternative ways of evaluating student performance (which is one of the elements of curriculum transformation). One of the standout supportive measures offered in IURI 174 is that students had and still have various modes in

which content is supplied to them so that they can choose the mode that best suits their learning preference (in addition to classes). Students in IURI 174 have had access to their content in the form of live (online) lectures, recorded lectures, voice-over PowerPoint slides of those lectures, just the PowerPoint slides of the lecture, as well as full transcripts of each lecture. Students in IURI 174 and IURI 274 have had access to lecturer support on a multitude of platforms including discussions with lecturers and informal consultations via Telegram (more intuitive for the current generation of students). Overall, the students engage with the content, and we have not yet had a need to change the content again after the Carpe Diem processes.

However, a need to improve writing skills in terms of the research proposals (IURI471) became apparent in recent times. Since IURI471 is the research component and does not have dedicated weekly classes like the other language modules, it was clear that contact sessions to help students with this particular writing skill is important. For that reason, in 2022 IURI 377 overhauled their entire module content to dedicate an entire 2nd semester to proposal writing skills for Law students. It is important to note that the focus of the proposal writing semester goes beyond the technical writing skill (students are exposed to the technical skills from their first year in two different modules [IURI 174 is one of them] and then continues into their second year at a progressive level). The CHE (2018) notes the value and need of combining research and writing skills; thus, students are expected to apply their technical writing abilities garnered over the past two years in IUR 174 and IURI 274 (we offer technical writing revision) to a research process context. There is so much value in giving student the time to critically think and formulate problems which they will be expected to solve in a systematic manner through a writing process.

The 2nd semester in IURI 377 is designed in such a way that students are required to constantly engage with the content in a linear and systematic manner (guided by the lecturers) with each week having a practical component in conjunction with the theory. As part of their contact sessions, there are practical sessions dedicated to students writing in the venue and working on their research where lecturers are there to guide them should they need guidance etc. beyond normal consultation hours. Students are also evaluated differently where they compile a portfolio of all the tasks that they have completed throughout the 2nd semester (each task is worth a mark as opposed to students receiving one “big” mark upon completion). At the end of the 2nd semester, when the portfolio of all the tasks is completed, students will effectively have a draft proposal ready to present to their supervisors and effectively offers them more time to focus on the actual mini dissertation they wrote for IURI 471. In addition, the portfolio does not only assess students’ technical ability, which also has reflection activities that students need to complete. However, these reflection activities are guided by asking students to reflect on very particular issues/topics that they would have dealt with concerning the content covered at that point in time. This self-reflection is partly based on Socratic-style questioning (a technique used to improve critical thinking). Furthermore, this Socratic self-reflection process in improving proposal writing skills for undergraduate Law students is now the focus of a SoTL project undertaken by the three lecturers of IURI 377. The SoTL proposal/application is currently in its draft phase and aims to collect data end of October 2022 and conclude in 2023.

Since 2022, all electives are available to students across campuses and team teaching is at the centre of delivery of these modules. In some modules, one lecturer teaches across campus. The number of students

in the elective modules is capped to ensure maximum participation and quality of the offering. The faculty has developed two new elective modules which have been approved to be offered in 2023 in the first semester. The modules are Cyber Law and Space law. This is part of the faculty's drive to transform the curriculum and make it more relevant and attractive. The skills to be learned from these modules will put our students in the advantage and cutting edge of IT law (skills required in the 4IR).

As part of rearticulation and transforming our offerings, the faculty has resolved to discontinue two qualifications in the BA programme, BA in Law with English and BA in Law with Philosophy as from 2023. English is represented in the three language year modules mentioned above whilst the Philosophy module will be represented in most modules once the transformational constitutionalism project aimed at decolonising the curriculum is finished. The faculty is currently busy with the project which will also see the inclusion of indigenous knowledge systems into the modules.

The faculty currently has four colleagues participating in the Faculty Teaching Excellence Awards. Although only two campuses are represented, colleagues from Mahikeng will also be part of the project as soon as they become eligible. The faculty encourages colleagues to participate in the project.

The PQM process is well underway, and the faculty has identified project areas that need attention and is working together with CTL and Q&APP to realise its transformation mandate.

Another success story from the faculty is the Law and Language project which promotes inter-discipline research. Language and Law has a clear and infinitely important relationship not only in terms of practice and undergraduate studies, but in research as well. At the NWU, Language and Law research is underrepresented and remains an untapped potential for growth in research within the faculty. As part of Justice in Practice's portfolio, a Language and Law colloquium was organised and took place in March 2022. The colloquium presented a range of topics within Language and Law with both national and international prolific speakers having presented: <https://law.nwu.ac.za/research-unit-law-justice-and-sustainability/language-law-colloquium>.

Colleagues from different faculties and institutions attended and engaged in important discussions surrounding this interdisciplinary field. In an attempt to foster and encourage publications in Language and Law (especially at the NWU) a special issue in the PER was created and the call for papers is currently open (closes 31 October, 2022) extended both nationally and internationally (see the call for paper for this issue on a Nepalese Facebook page for example, which spread on its own - <https://nep.facebook.com/NWUFacultyofLaw/posts/call-for-papersper-special-edition-on-language-and-lawalmost-four-decades-ago-gr/5103274473061811/>). Please find the official call on the next page.

The faculty also successfully hosted an ADR Colloquium which will also take place again on the 13th of October 2022.

12.3 2022 FACULTY ASSESSMENT PLANS

Due the high rate of academic dishonesty and plagiarism in the previous two years, in 2022, the faculty

decided to continue with continuous assessment but with sit-down written assessments in the first semester. All the modules had at least one sit-down written assessment which were scheduled on the timetable by SALA. All assessment plans for the first semester were approved by Senate.

In the second semester, the faculty decided to keep the continuous assessment modality for year modules only but reverted to yearbook modality (participation mark and examinations modality) for all semester modules. For all semester modules, the guidelines of three assessments, the best two counting towards the calculation of participation mark was adopted. All students were expected to write sit-down tests during the test week which started on 28 September to 7 October 2022.

All examination question papers and memoranda were uploaded on the system on time (the faculty was the first faculty to be 100% compliant). All the examination papers and memoranda were moderated, and language edited and checked for compliance with SALA requirements.

Teaching and learning will be concluded a week before the examination period to allow students time to prepare for the examinations.

12.4 2022 STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES

At the beginning of the year, the university announced that all students must return to campus and limited contact face-to-face classes were introduced. This presented with a few challenges as there were few venues with hyflex capability, the WIFI stability (IT) was also a major contributor to this challenge and availability of covid compliant venue with capacity. Although most students responded to the call some students did not return to campus. This caused challenges in the second semester when the restrictions were lifted.

When the restrictions were lifted, the faculty received a number of complaints from parents, fee payers and the students. Some students had already taken employment, some could not find accommodation in the middle of the year and some cited financial constraints as reasons why they could not return to campus.

The return to campus with full contact fact-to-face in the second semester, came with opportunities and challenges. Although most students are pleased to be back on campus and appreciate the face-to-face interaction. The gains made during covid 19 like teaching with technology, Hybrid and flipped classroom modality and team-teaching across the campuses are some of the highlights. All modules are continuing with team teaching and lecturers have embraced the online experiences and the advantages it has brought. Together with CTL the faculty is working on transforming the teaching and assessment practices in all the modules, and lecturers are encouraged to attend training provided by CTL.

However, with the gains came challenges and one of those being the struggles that students experienced with coping with sit-down assessments/tests. Most students struggled with the transition to full contact and written assessments. The challenge was more prominent with the 2nd and 3rd year cohort who were experiencing on-campus university life for the first time in 2022. These students although they started their

studies in 2020/2021, have never had face-to-face engagement and the experience of the hard written tests or examinations. The T&L challenges in 2022 have carried from the 2020/21 academic with a marked increase in the number of students presenting with mental health issues. This can be attributed mainly to the anxiety of returning to full time contact teaching and sit-down assessments/test. Students in their 3rd and 4th year were particularly affected by this new “normal” and were struggling to cope with their academic performance. To assist the students and to get them ready for the sit-down assessments, additional measures were put in place in collaboration with CTL. Workshops, seminars and video content were available to all the students to prepare them for the sit-down assessments.

Some of the challenges that students mentioned which are highlighted in the attached report from the office of the SSM include the following:

- Sit-down assessments - studying and preparing for it; the complexity of questions
- case law – how to read cases, how to incorporate it when answering, not sure how many marks are allocated to the case law in an answer
- In-depth memo- discussions, and how the questions should be answered
- Academic writing – what is expected, academic integrity/dishonesty
- Adapting to University, anxiety and depression; being overwhelmed; Social anxiety; anxiety in venues.
- Soft skills such as -time management

Material that was available to student in 2021 relating to academic integrity is still available and relevant as it is in line with the newly adopted academic integrity policy of the university. The information can be accessed on the faculty’s eFundi site. The resources are available to all students, via the “Academic Integrity” tab, in the “Law Communication 2022” eFundi site (direct link: <https://efundi.nwu.ac.za/x/7cwsAo>) This includes:

- A video on Academic Integrity;
- A guide explaining Academic Misconduct;
- Faculty of Law House Referencing Style Guide and
- NWU Policy on Academic Integrity.

Overall, students experience is improving and there is positive feedback. Students are now realizing the advantages of returning to campus and being involved in the academic community. The activities within the faculty geared towards student engagement saw a few students taking part in faculty specific projects as part of their studies and/or community engagement.

Some of the projects that the students were involved in include:

- Juta Mock trials
- The Ubuntu Ambassador Public Speaking Competition

- The Christof Heyns Child Moot Court competition in Egypt
- Final year LLB student exchange programme
- Cross campus student seminars – one seminar per campus
- First year excursion
- Gender Based Violence Awareness project at the Department of Health for Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality
- Department of Education’s Provincial Moot Court Competition

For fear of prolixity, a list of the projects with posters is included. Student experience survey results are available on the CTL eFundi project site and the information is updated on a weekly basis. Both management and staff have access to the report and can use the report to improve student engagement and T&L pedagogy.

12.5 2022 STAFF EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES

The faculty experience an exodus of skills when a number of academic staff resigned at all the three campuses. The competitive salary packages continue to be the primary reason for staff leaving the institution for other universities. As of September 2022, a total of six vacancies were filled and four other vacancies still to be filled (one at VC, two at MC and one at PC).

The management in the faculty has stabilized with all the positions in management having been filled. The faculty continues to support all its staff members and provides regular training through CTL and the R&I office. The faculty has also seen a rise in research output with more publications for the 2021/2022 academic year.

Some of the challenges for staff include poor class attendance, availability of hyflex venues and equipment failures in the venues. IT and facilities have been engaged on all the challenges experienced by the lecturers in the venues. Fortunately, the lecturers are resilient and have devised some remedial measures to accommodate all these challenges and ensure that T&L continues. Certain modules (mostly electives) and language modules (due to shortage of lecturers) had to remain online, and lecturers use a collaborative approach to teaching. All online classes are recorded and uploaded on eFundi for all students across campuses. This ensures that students from the three campuses receive a similar experience and benefit from three academic minds.

The academic and support staff experience fatigue and have raised concerns with the increasing administrative burden. The issue of keeping registered and reporting on class attendance is but one of the issues. Shortage of support staff places enormous pressure on the academic staff and this impacts on their ability to do research. Although the work division is done in such a way that there is possible time for research, all that time is spent on administrative tasks.

On a positive note, the faculty is proud to announce three senior academic promotions, Prof Elmien du

Plessis, Prof Henk Kloppers and Prof Howard Chitimira were promoted to full professorship.

Mahikeng campus has appointed three senior colleagues at senior lecturer level.

12.6 CROSS-CAMPUS COLLABORATION

The undergraduate management team holds regular meetings with subject group leaders who are appointed from across the three campuses to plan what should happen in the different modules. The deputy directors and director of the School for Undergraduate Programmes have a standing weekly meeting during which all upcoming matters for the week are discussed.

Although the deputy directors are appointed per campus, the functioning of the team is now based on functional division of tasks in addition to campus-based duties. For example, the deputy director based on the Vanderbijlpark Campus oversees the subject group responsibilities and reports back on any issues raised by the lecturers in their meetings. The deputy director at Mahikeng Campus is charged with reviewing the Ext LLB programme and assessment processes, including the appointment of moderators and managing of marks submissions; the deputy director based in Potchefstroom is responsible for the Faculty Excellence Awards and involved in the PQM process together with the deputy director at Vanderbijlpark campus.

All lecturers are expected to collaborate in their teaching and assessment practices to afford students with a similar experience.

12.7 STUDENT DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

12.7.1 Community engagement

The faculty in collaboration with the Law Clinics, and as part of its efforts to improve our student's learning experience and the blended learning approach, has embarked on a project to develop video content simulating certain procedures (for example: mediation session, bail application, full trial, etc.), as well as hosting talk-shows with different role-players in the legal profession on relevant topics (such as Child Justice Act, bail applications, criminal trials, etc.). We are pleased to report that the first two talk shows have been hosted and that the videos are available and shared with students.

The faculty through the Law Clinic believes that students should be involved in community engagement as part of their preparation for the legal profession. Students are as such required to do 40 hours at the Law Clinic as part of their practical work of community service in the module IURE 416 (First Semester module completed)/426 on going. Arrangements are in place for students to attend to this.

As the faculty, we ensure that students are exposed to practical knowledge in all the different career possibilities available to them in the legal profession. As part of the Law Clinic's initiative to give students the true feeling of practice in the real world, local Magistrates, Attorneys, Prosecutors, Advocates, and other legal professionals are invited to give lectures or take part in the talk shows as mentioned above.

Students gain practical experience and make a meaningful contribution to the public. Student assistants working at the Law Clinic are exposed to the following skills:

- Consultation with clients.
- Client file administration.
- Observation of court appearances of attorneys and candidate attorneys
- Drafting correspondence.
- Research.
- Drafting pleadings.
- Observation of round table discussions of attorneys and candidate attorneys
- Preparing for court appearances with attorneys and candidate attorneys (strategic planning and analytic thinking skills).

Students are offered the opportunity to do community service/practical vocational training at the Law Clinic for them to understand the social plight of the poor and marginalised members of the community and to inculcate in them the notion of social responsibility and justice.

12.7.2 Faculty based student community engagement

Students are also granted an opportunity to gain life and soft skills that they will need in practice. To this end, they have opportunities to be involved in projects in the faculty geared towards this purpose.

LSAC is also involved in community project such as clothes collection drive and the comfort packs which were all collected and delivered to different charities at the three areas where the campuses are situated.

A list of the projects that the faculty had in 2022 for students is attached at the end of this report.

12.7.3 Student support and intervention

The office of the SSM provided support to students this academic year. What follows is some of the support that was afforded to the students:

12.7.3.1 Student webinars

The Faculty of Law went back to sit-down assessments and in order to support students to cope with the

demand of preparing for sit-down assessments; the Student Manager in the faculty conducted the following webinars and trainings:

- (a) Tips and Guidelines for summative sit-down assessments.
- (b) Studying and preparation tips.
- (c) How to answer application questions.
- (d) Multiple choice questions and true or false questions.
- (e) How to read and interpret caselaw.
- (f) Declutter your mind.
- (g) Self-directed learning and time management

12.7.3.2 SI and Tutor appointments

The following first semester modules made use of SI or tutors:

- (a) IURI 173 (Tutors: PC 3; MC 2 and VC 1)
- (b) IURI and IURIX 171 (Tutors: PC 3; MC 3; and VC 1)
- (c) IURI 272 (Tutors: PC 2; MC 2; and VC 1)
- (d) IURI 273 (Tutors: PC 2; MC 1; and VC 1)
- (e) IURI 271 (SI: PC 1 and MC 1)
- (f) IURI 275 (SI: PC 2; MC 1; and VC (no SI appointed))
- (g) IURI 371 (SI: PC 2 and MC 1)
- (h) IURI 373 (SI: PC 1; MC 1; and VC)
- (i) IURI 376 (SI: PC and MC 1)

12.7.3.3 Final Year Research Project Webinar Series

4 webinars were presented and a total of 87 students attended. The recordings and PowerPoint slides were accessed 1 514 times.

- 11 May: Importance of the Research Questions: 36 students attended. 232 students accessed the recording and 104 the presentation.
- 18 May: Structure of the Final year research project: 18 students attended. 237 students accessed the recording and 120 the presentation.
- 25 May: Sources of law and where to find them: 22 students attended. 177 students accessed the recording and 70 the presentation.
- 1 June: Technicalities (plagiarism; how to reference; write legal arguments; paraphrase): 11 students attended. 181 students accessed the recording and 63 the presentation.



Figure 45: FLAW Final Year Research Project Webinar Series

12.7.3.4 Additional learning support material

Additional resources cover a variety of different topics aimed at supporting students. In total all the additional resources were accessed 4 277. Additional resources take the form of pdf documents, videos, and recordings.

- Successful Law studies (roadmap) pdf accessed 516; How to stay productive pdf accessed 105; How to not feel overwhelmed pdf accessed 102;
- Different study tools (different study & memorizing techniques) pdf accessed 26; Summative assessments (sit-down) tips and guidelines pdf accessed 78; Writing sit-down assessments strategies pdf accessed 74;
- FIRAC & IRAC pdf accessed 257; Approaching case law pdf accessed 164; case law summary example accessed 155; Application questions with FIRAC & IRAC pdf accessed 101; Webinar recording on application questions with FIRAC/IPAC accessed 204.
- Timetable example accessed 93; Time management recording accessed 241; Time management strategies pdf accessed 229; Time management & self-directed learning pdf accessed 76.
- Note-taking recording accessed 221; note-taking presentation accessed 113; Cornell note-taking pdf accessed 42; Different note-making techniques & strategies pdf 27.
- How to approach assignments recording accessed 191; How to tackle a take-away assignment pdf accessed 249; Different levels of questions recording accessed 359; Different levels of questions pdf accessed 128; Tips on Online Studying recording accessed 175; Online tests/ assignments recording accessed 93;
- Drafting CV, applying for vacation work, and interview tips recording accessed 258.

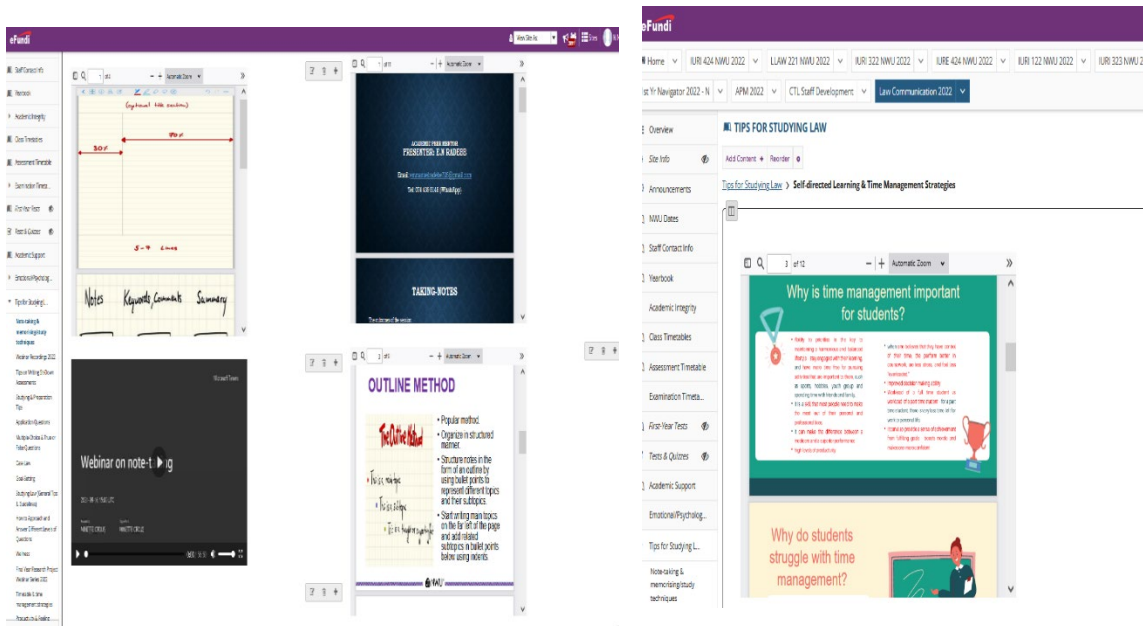


Figure 46: FLAW Additional learning support material

12.7.3 At risk students

12.7.3.1 Students reached and consulted

At-risk students (either student who contacted the support office or who successfully appealed against the termination of studies or received a warning letter): 296 students (± 110 students in the first semester and ± 186 students in the second semester to date) who is being consulted and assisted continuously. This does not include further students who contacted the office for assistance and help regarding academics, but not necessarily at-risk students being helped and assisted, as well as referrals based on HYM. On average, meeting with ± 21 students per week.

12.7.3.2 At risk students 2022

Issues students identified that they struggled with in the previous academic year: personal circumstances (depression; anxiety); time-management; struggled with online learning; unsure as to how questions should be answered; feeling overwhelmed; data and technology problems.

- Students assisted: 67 students on PC, of which 23 are not registered; 1 is cancelling her studies due to medical reasons. 4 students on MC; 1 is cancelling her studies (wants to change courses). 6 students are on VC, and 1 is not registered. Additional 52 students are being assisted for various reasons. 11 out of 51 students did not respond to any communication. 78% of students make use of the support. All 51 have allocated APMs
- 458 Second-semester students received a warning letter. MC: 181 1st warnings & 23 2nd warnings; PC: 170 1st warnings & 48 2nd warnings; VC: 23 1st warnings & 13 2nd warnings.

12.7.4 Impact and effectiveness of intervention programs

Of the students who were on the at-risk list in the 2022 first semester (51), 11 students received a final warning in August 2022.

Of these 11, 2 did not make any contact; 4 made use of the support; 5 partially made use of the support.

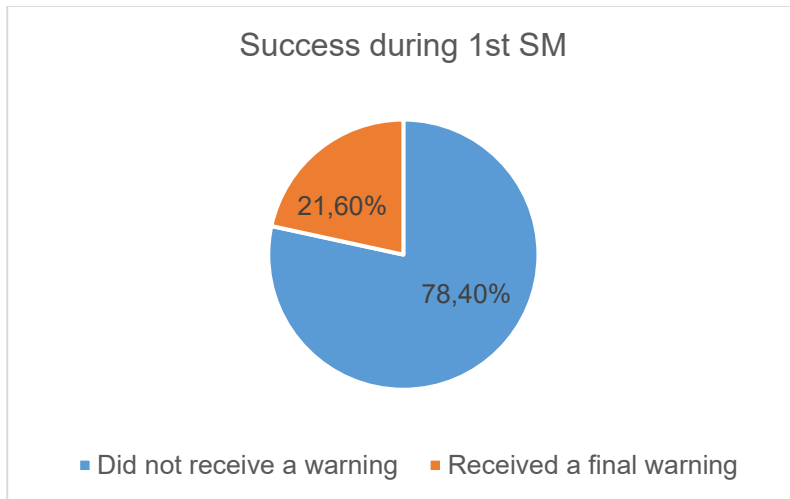


Figure 47: FLAW intervention success 2022

The 2022 group's success can only be determined at the end of the year, after the final results.

The 2021 group did not perform academically in 2020 and their results from 2020 are compared to the results they achieved while forming part of the intervention program. In 2020 the students failed 52% of the modules they were registered for and in 2021 they only failed 16%

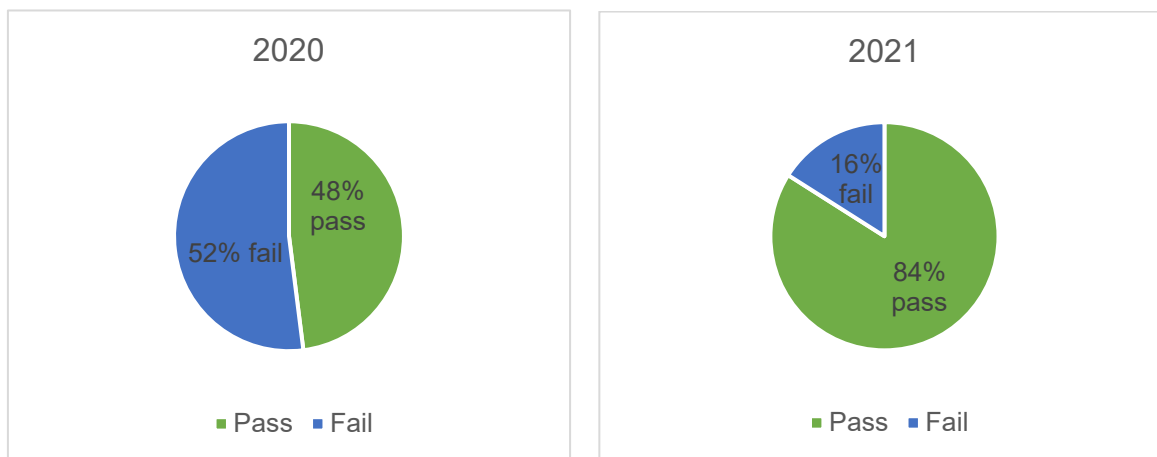


Figure 48: FLAW intervention success 2021

The next diagram is an average of the students' results from 2020 and 2021. The total number of modules and then on average a comparison is done on the number of modules passed per student, failed per student, distinctions per student, and per year.

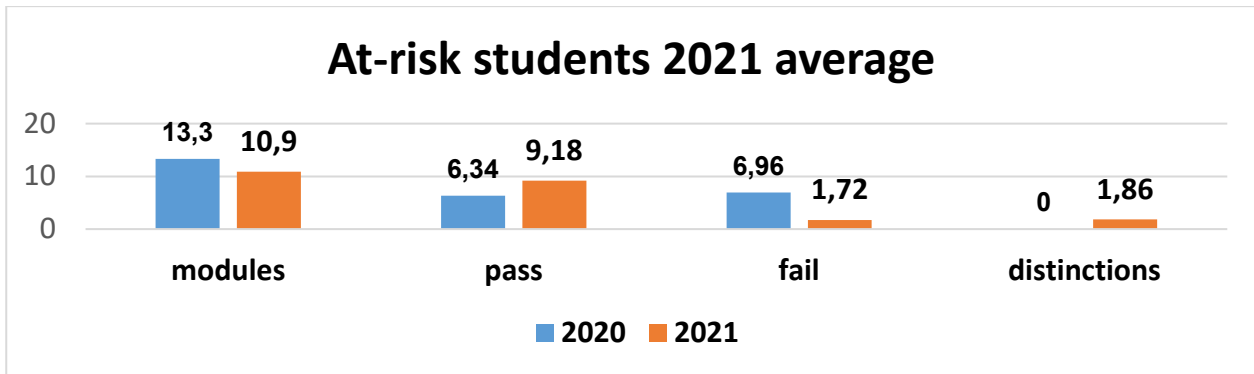


Figure 49: FLAW average of the students' results from 2020 and 2021

12.7.5 Student projects for development

The following extra-curricular projects contributed to development of students in the Faculty of Law:

- (a) First year excursion – May 2022. 3 x 3-day 1st year camps were hosted in May 2022. Physical attendance of Law students across campuses. Different speaker, activities and projects were done over these 3 days.



Figure 50: Students engaging during FLAW first year excursion

- (b) First year R&O week – faculty specific themes
- (c) Career fair - 27 July 2022
- (d) Candidate Attorneys advertisement from different law firms
- (e) Cross campus seminars – July – September 2022
- (f) Faculty Academic Prestige Function – Merit Awards event May 2022
- (g) Faculty final year LLB exchange programme with England, Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands

(h) NWU Juta Mock Trial - August 2022



Figure 51: Juta mock trial finals

(i) Christof Heyns Moot Court competition – Egypt. 2 Students represented the NWU Law Faculty.



Figure 52: Moot participants on their way to Egypt

(j) Child Moot court – Pretoria. Two students represented the Law Faculty in Pretoria in 2022.

(k) Ubuntu Ambassador Public Speaking Competition – 23 September 2022.



Figure 53: Ubuntu Ambassador public speaking competition

12.8 DRIVING INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY IN TEACHING AND LEARNING IN 2022 AND ONWARDS

The Innovative teaching and learning with technology project got off to a slow start but is now gaining momentum. A needs analysis was completed in order to determine where the staff competencies are in respect of the use of technology within the teaching and learning environment.

A new member has been identified to represent the Mahikeng Campus thereby allowing the project to gain momentum again. However due to the number of newly appointed staff in the faculty, a needs analysis will have to be redone in order to ensure that all staff's needs are catered for as the purpose of the project is to empower staff and expand on their skills within the sphere of technology within the teaching and learning environment.

Working together with CTL to digitize and embrace ITC into the module design and content, the faculty is encouraging the staff to make use of CTL expertise to design their curriculum and lesson plans.

Final year LLB students enjoy the initiative taken during covid-19 to develop video content to simulate teaching and assessments. Lecturers in the procedural skills modules are using simulations to give students a near real life experience of the theory in teach and assessments. The idea is to extend this model to all year groups, starting at first year students. This is being explored during the re-curriculum process.

12.9 TRANSFORMING BY DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM

The Teaching Learning Committee previously decided that the list of LLB final year electives must be re-evaluated to ascertain which modules were still relevant, how they are structured and whether the faculty would not add value by either redesigning existing modules or developing new electives.

A few modules have been identified in the curriculum and these modules have not been offered for more than two years. It is expected that if such modules are not being elected by the students, that they will be removed from the curriculum and replaced by new ones or redesigned ones.

A Language Skills module in Setswana has also been developed and will be offered in the 2023/2024 academic year. A further 2nd semester Setswana Skills module is also being developed.

The T&L committee is also working towards transforming the content of most of the modules through the transformative constitutionalism which will see indigenous knowledge systems forming part of the curriculum or module content. The epistemological framework of the modules will; be focused on constitutional transformation based on lived experiences of South Africans in order to decolonize the law. The idea is to bring indigenous knowledge systems into the module pedagogy as a law in itself.

The UG T&L committee is busy reviewing all the programmes to ensure that they are relevant and there is a proper scaffolding of the required skill for graduate employability. We are also strengthening the ties with the profession to tap into this resource. The Black Lawyer Association is collaborating with the Law Clinics in assisting to place candidate attorneys and final year students to meet the 40-hour practical experience component before they qualify.

The UG T&L has also formed task teams within the committee to work on different projects. These task teams will comprise members of the T&L Committee and Faculty board members with different expertise to maximise the transformation of the curriculum:

- a. PQM and re-accumulation task team
- b. The WIL & SL task team
- c. Assessment & Evaluation methods/practices task team
- d. T&L rules & RPL task team
- e. Teaching methods/practices task team

12.10 FACULTY-SPECIFIC PROJECTS

The faculty has welcomed new colleagues to the faculty: In MC the following colleagues were appointed - Prof Moses Retshilitswe Phooko – Associate Professor, Dr Nazreen Shaik-Peremanov – Senior Lecturer, Mr Katlego Mashiane - Lecturer, Mr Obakeng Terrence Van Dyk-Lecturer; Mr Victor Meso – Lecturer. Three colleagues being promoted to full professorship: Prof Elmien Du Plessis; Prof Henk Kloppers and Prof Howard Chitimira. Prof Elmien Du Plessis appointed Acting Judge in the High Court.

Adv Sikandar Kola will host the 2nd ADR Colloquium on the 13 October 2022.

Three faculty members are taking part in the Faculty Teaching Excellence Awards, Prof Oliver Fou, Dr Brews Soyapi and Mrs Stephanie Mostert.

Success at the South African Law Teacher Society Conference – Port Elizabeth – Two colleagues received awards: Ms Zaida Essop – Best Paper and Dr Lerato Ngwenyama- Runner-up for Best Paper and Faculty members elected to the Executive Council - Prof Chitimira elected deputy president, Adv Rene Koraan – Treasurer and Prof Tumi Mmusinyane – Magistrates’ Commission. NWU Law Faculty nominated to host the next SALTC Conference in 2024.

Other initiatives include all the student development projects listed under 12.7.5, including the student cross campus seminars celebrating “Imbokodo”.



Figure 54: FLAW cross campus seminars

- Postgraduate Prestige Function – May 2022
- 2nd Annual International Corporate & Financial Markets Law Conference – 24 – 26 October 2022
- Law and Language Colloquium – March 2022



Figure 55: FLAW Exchange programme

12.11 CONCLUSION

The faculty is growing strong and determined to reach its goal to transform the curriculum and to support its students to reach their potential. The UG T&L management is grateful to all the academic and support staff who make it possible to ensure our core business. The re-circulation project is well underway and will yield positive results to transform the programmes to equip the law graduate with the skills that are relevant and needed in the profession. The aim is to make NWU Law Faculty the faculty of choice for any student who wants to study law. The faculty is committed to serving its community and to contribute to the scientific community with cutting edge and relevant research which makes an impactful change.

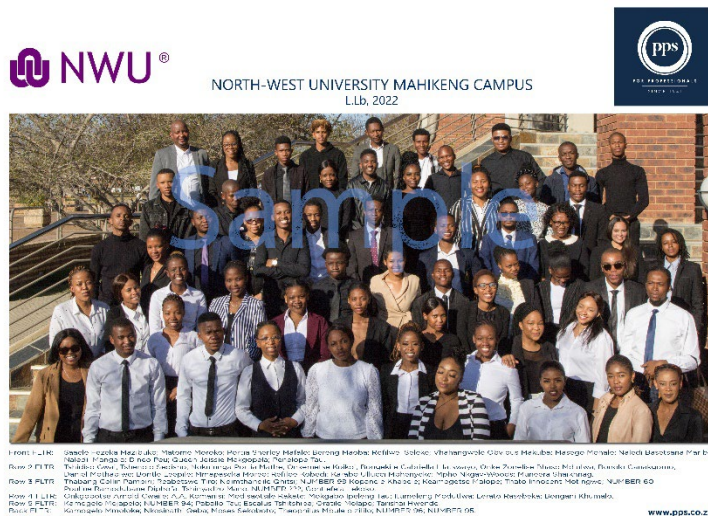
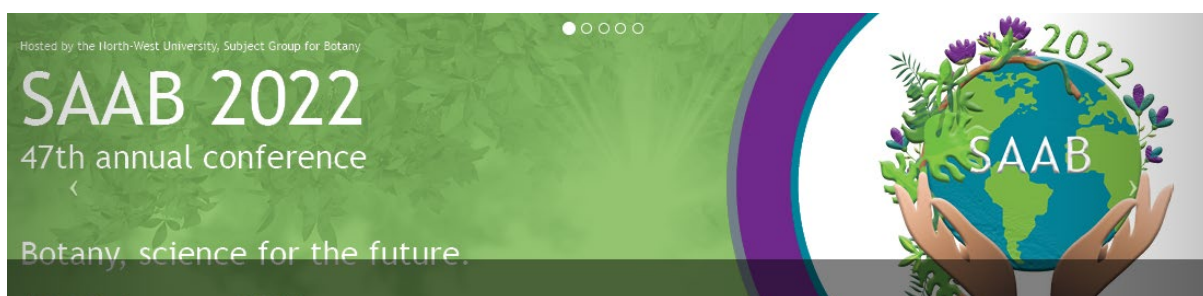


Figure 56: NWU FLAW Mahikeng Campus class of 2022, photographs sponsored by FFG

13. FACULTY OF NATURAL AND AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES



13.1 INTRODUCTION

The Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences learned many lessons from emergency remote teaching, learning, and assessment in 2020, and these empowered staff with advanced knowledge and skills for more effective online programme and module delivery and also to improve the student experience of online learning in 2021. The Faculty planned for limited contact teaching and learning, particularly for practical work and WIL, and for a limited number of sit-down assessments and exams. The staff showed resilience to develop and transform the material for online teaching, helping to ensure the successful completion of the year.

In 2022, Staff were excited to return to full-time teaching. We had learned new ways of doing things, and proved that it was possible to conduct successful teaching and learning online. However, for many of our modules, particularly those which are practical based, we also realised that this was second best. The return to meaningful contact teaching, while keeping the best of online learning, in other words the move to blended and hybrid learning, was welcomed.

It did come with many challenges however. Not all the students were ready and able to cope with the transition back to contact teaching, particularly since most of the current students started their studies online. Many of the third-year students did not want to return to campus due to the financial implications of living close to/on campus. We saw a number of requests from students to pursue their studies online or to complete the remainder of their modules at another university such as UNISA. Staff found that the attendance at contact sessions was often low, and also that lecture venues were often not large enough

for their classes. In addition the technology in the venues often did not operate and work optimally. Systems are slow, computers are outdated, and sound problems are reported for lecture venues across campuses.

13.2 2022 TEACHING AND LEARNING CHALLENGES, INTERVENTIONS, AND SUCCESSES

13.2.1 Challenges

Over the past two years, staff were forced to explore all aspects of e-learning to the fullest - from free easy-to-use online recording programs to the full capability of eFundi and other platforms. This has come with many benefits, and access to recorded lectures has been welcomed by many students. In 2022 staff have continued to use online resources, in order to make resources available to all students, but in addition have been able to have contact sessions as well.

A Chemistry lecturer reported that going back to contact classes and practicals made things way better as compared to 2020 and 2021. The challenge however was getting students to come back to the normal contact teaching and practicals. He had to ease them in by having a few classes to introduce them to the module and the practicals.

Return to campus was a challenge due to the severe restrictions that were still in place due to covid in the first semester. There were very few venues available for large classes. Lecturers had to resort to innovative “classrooms”, such as a Botany lecture which took place under the trees on Mahikeng Campus.



Figure 57: Innovative lecture venue

Class attendances were below average during the first semester, as students struggled to adapt to contact classes. Fortunately, due to COVID all eFundi sites were set up and operating effectively, so that no

students were disadvantaged. However, it was mainly due to the effective use of the eFundi sites that students assumed that they do not need to attend class and that all material would still be available on eFundi.

This lack of engagement led to very low marks in the examinations in some modules and was found to be a problem in first year Physics classes, where some students chose to continue with online learning and may not have attended classes frequently. Biochemistry lecturers used a hyflex approach and found that students appreciate the fact that they can attend face-to-face classes, although there is also a large fraction who decide not to if the opportunity is given to also tune in online. Not more than 50% attend the face-to-face lectures and only about 30% join online.

Due to lack of venues that accommodate all students, some lectures still have to be online, and only practicals can be hands-on. Students have requested more to face to face teaching, but the venue is a challenge.

Transition from online to contact learning is proving a challenge. Some students find it tough to keep up with the pace as they are used to their own free pace during online learning. In addition, for most physics and electronics modules, the general worry was that most students lacked basic skills in mathematics and struggled to understand simple concepts in physics. As one third year physics lecturer put it : “ *Those students that failed could not grasp basic concepts and were unable to reproduce some of the examples and derivations done in class. My suspicion is that this is due to the online assessments which they have been doing since their first year.*”

One of the biggest challenges of online learning over the past two years was found to be online assessments. The faculty recorded many instances of dishonesty, and many lectures struggled to provide reliable and valid forms of assessment which were answered by the students with integrity. For this reason, in the first semester of 2022, many lecturers welcomed the fact that their modules were able to revert to sit-down assessments. For the second semester, FNAS made a decision not to continue with continuous assessment, but to return to formative and summative assessment, as outlined in the yearbook, with only a very few exceptions.

Students found it challenging to study and complete sit-down semester tests and exams. This was most prominent with third year students. Marks were lower than in previous years and the throughput values were lower than during and even before COVID. As intervention student facilitators were appointed to assist students with their studies. However, not all students made use of this opportunity. It was explained to students that the successful completion of modules on NQSF levels 5, 6 and 7 requires not only knowledge but also insight and application of knowledge by the students.

Many lecturers experienced practical issues regarding scheduling of venues, as student numbers were often too large for available venues. First semester booking of classrooms was a time-consuming challenge. Lectures were often held in labs, which are larger spaces (Figure 58).



Figure 58: Laboratories used for teaching and for practicals while obeying Covid protocols

Even after the lifting of Covid restrictions, large classes for many modules are still causing issues with venues. This is particularly a challenge in laboratories and computer laboratories. One lecturer in Computer Science reports: *“Another challenge is limited venue capacity – therefore I have reverted to a hybrid approach. Unfortunately, the hybrid equipment setup in the venue is not functioning as it should. Audio does not work (I purchased my own microphone to use during my sessions) – Also, the podium computer crashes regularly, therefore the online stream cuts out often.”*

Lecturers experienced challenges and frustrations with hardware and technology in the Hyflex venue and lack of technical support. Changes made on short notice to the software in the computer labs also presented challenges. Not all lecture halls were equipped with the same hardware (for example lecturers could not use a laptop with an HDMI cable in all lecture rooms).

Computer labs also presented challenges, for example the lack of required hardware for programming modules to function optimally, as well as issues with accommodating large groups in the available computer labs. For example, groups of the same module had to be divided among several labs with the lecturer broadcasting from one lab to the others. At times, this broadcasting didn't work, and the lecturer had to squeeze in all the students into one small lab and students had to sit on the floor, a practice that is not recommended, specially after two years of social distancing due to Covid.

Another issue that is mentioned by lecturers every year, is that computer labs are made available for all students to do their assignments, which create a situation where students can enter and leave the computer lab at any time. Some action is needed to minimize access control, so that during a lecture only students registered for that module can enter the labs.

The limited budget for student assistants meant that there were not enough student assistants available.

The School of Computer Science and Information Systems had a lot of challenges to overcome for the first semester with regards to the BSc IT distance program. The challenges were mainly external where, for example, the UODL failed to communicate with staff and students regarding exam arrangements, registration for students who only need to write a 2nd opportunity, outstanding modules that need to be completed before they can graduate or even about official decisions that were requested to be loaded on their records. Students also complain that they do not get quick feedback from the UODL. They sometimes wait up to 3 weeks before they get any feedback/response. The exam arrangements especially for the practical exams were also an issue this year. Although we supplied all the software requirements etc. to the Timetables and Assessment department there were still a few exam centres who did not have everything in place for the exams.

13.2.2 Interventions

Some of the interventions included dividing students into groups for contact classes and having some students in the room for contact classes, while providing videos for those who could not attend, or repeating contact classes for different groups.

Staff reported that they have had more engagement with student tutors at all levels, they have used more tutorials, quizzes, and practical work, and have had practice sessions to get the students used to writing sit-down assessments again, as well as student-lecturer individual physical or online consultations to motivate anxious students. This has taken a toll on lecturers' time however.

In some modules, in order to give students every chance of success, all students were allowed to write examinations, irrespective of their participation marks. However, some students did not take this opportunity and missed both examination opportunities.

13.2.3 Successes

The alignment between campuses helped as expertise can be shared and lecturers are able to lean on each other's strengths and upskill together, as necessary. In a module focused on dealing with new technologies, upskilling is essential and having different skills sets between lecturers combined fast-tracks the upskill progress.

Many (but not all) students seem excited about being in class. They enjoyed being able to hear questions and answers that are part of class discussions – instead of a separate video of just a lecturer speaking the whole time.

In the computer labs Citrix was updated to cope with higher loads, with some success. Students were able to complete practical examinations with limited technical issues. However, this remains a challenge in the second semester (CMPG122). Some students find it hard to participate during contact classes because of

computers that regularly crash which results in them being moved around the lab. Task teams were set up to find temporary and long-term solutions – but nothing resulted from it yet.

A staff member in the School of Computer Science and Information Systems reported being fortunate enough to be able to work in Articulate software such as Rise for the modules he is responsible for, which enriches them. SCSIS pays for this license and the lecturer would not be able to create interventions for these modules without these tools. Many modules were taught successfully with hands on practicals in the computer laboratories, some students even using their own devices.



Figure 59: Computer laboratory in use

13.3 2022 FACULTY ASSESSMENT PLANS

As a result of the pandemic it became necessary to use continuous assessment in 2020 and 2021. However, to comply with the requirements of professional bodies, some modules had sit-down examinations, some of which needed to have a weighting of 40 – 50%. Many modules in 2021 requested sit-down examinations, due to various problems experienced in 2020 with regard to student dishonesty and also to ensure that the outcomes of the modules are adequately assessed. More planned sit-down assessments were possible in the second semester. In addition, some modules had contact sessions, many of which took place in laboratories or computer laboratories, or involved field work and Work Integrated Learning. These modules included appropriate assessment types.

In 2022 the Faculty was able to re-introduce contact teaching and learning for all modules, and all students returned to campus. Many modules reverted to formative/summative assessment in the first semester.

In the second semester, remaining Covid-19 restrictions have been removed. The Faculty has thus made a decision to return to formative/summative assessment, as outlined in the calendar.

There are only 6 modules which have opted to keep continuous assessment. Four of these are Honours

modules, and two are the Understanding the World Modules, for which continuous assessment is appropriate.

The assessment plans for all modules consisted basically of the divisions listed below, with various weights attached to them depending on the module and the work required.

- Semester test sit-down
- Class & practical tests sit-down/online
- Assignments & practical reports
- Practical exam sit-down/online
- Exam sit-down
- Module mark 50% and Exam 50%

Modules use sit-down assessments / examinations, with exceptions of, for example, CMPG112 and CMPG171/2, where the very large student numbers made this impossible. Assessment plans returned to the use of participation marks / examination and final marks calculated as specified in the yearbook.

Another challenge with sit-down tests is that assessment tests for all aligned modules should be written at the same time. SALA currently only caters for aligned tests during the assessment week, yet there are often about three assessment tests for many modules.

13.4 2022 STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES

Some lecturers have found that students reported during anonymous feedback that they find online teaching and learning to be effective and on par with contact sessions. In fact, in classes where discussions between students are necessary (such as in WVNS modules), the outcomes can be achieved more effectively than in contact classes since students work in small groups. With online group assessments (such as group papers to be submitted as well as peer-review), all students have to fully participate if they want to be successful. However, other lecturers complain that it is very difficult to get students to participate in the online setting. On the other hand, many students are reluctant to answer questions in class.

Many students experienced financial difficulty in returning to campus. Students found it difficult to return to campus for lectures at the beginning of the first semester and listed the fact that they could not arrange for/find accommodation. Class attendances are still below average even in the second semester in many modules. It is clear that students enjoy being back on campus and the interaction that comes along with that. Many students do however have trouble studying. Marks are lower than before and after COVID.

Many lecturers report that students continue to be scarce in terms of participation. Students must constantly be motivated to physically attend lectures, and they struggle to get used to working in an environment where they must keep to a schedule, without being granted many extensions and extra opportunities (as was the case during Covid). According to one Computer science lecturer:

In general students are coming back to class and are attending well, however many still think it's okay not to attend classes, believing that it's possible to meet the minimum requirements even if they do not attend

classes. It is an adjustment for the student to be back on campus, with full face-to-face classes, the attendance started poorly but increased through the semester. The students found it difficult to write semester tests and exams, they struggled especially with the time limit (one even felt that the lecturer was unreasonable setting a time limit for a test - even though the time given was more than in previous years).

Another lecturer commented: *“I find that while students (and parents) complained in the past two years about not being able to attend classes due to Covid, they now actually use it as a convenient excuse not to attend classes when it suits them.”*

In Zoology, third years could continue with their excursion on the banks of the Vaal River, and the students had the opportunity to experience field-based zoology research practices. During this excursion, the students are exposed to reporting on their findings by a simulation of a conference. At MC, the Botany third years had their excursion at and around campus on the 7th and 8th of April and the exercise was used to contribute towards their first semester assessment. The Microbiology third travelled to ARC Onderstepoort, Pretoria in August, and similarly, the exercise shall be used to contribute towards their second semester assessment.

Animal Science and Animal Health students were able to continue with their Work Integrated Learning (WIL) activities and field trips.

13.5 2022 STAFF EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES (ACADEMIC AND SUPPORT STAFF)

Challenges were experienced during the registration period, when there was over-enrolment in some programmes, and in particular the Agriculture diploma programmes and the Bachelor of Indigenous Knowledge Systems, on Mahikeng Campus, as well as the BSc in Information Technology. Student numbers were very high, and due to an extended registration process, they changed a lot. One lecturer reported “I had to go back for students who just joined. If registrations can go smooth it will truly help my timelines for teaching and learning.”

The staff were excited to return to the lecture theatre and the majority of teaching took place face-to-face. Even the first years who were too many for any of the usual teaching venues under Covid regulations, could fit into the practical laboratories and they had a theory contact session once a week in that venue. Lecturers used the blended-learning model by having recorded lectures available on eFundi, and added to this, there was the weekly contact session where students had the opportunity to engage with the lecturer regarding understanding the content. The second- and third-year students were taught in practical labs within the School of Biological Sciences: for those two levels, we were teaching face-to-face since the start of 2022 (see Figure 2). The practicals continued as usual, face-to-face, with still maintaining the more relaxed Covid restrictions that were implemented NWU wide in the first semester. However, many staff members reported that students did not attend class and practicals. Students demanded to only be told what to study and were not interested in understanding the work presented or applying it when provided with work assignments.

In terms of demonstrators for practical sessions on Potchefstroom Campus, it was reported that lower

numbers of postgraduate students available and willing to work as demonstrators, reduced the total number of students available for appointment into marker and demonstrator positions. Due to the nature of most practical sessions, a considerable amount of time is required for preparation of the materials required for these sessions. This has significant time implications for the demonstrators in particular, i.e. they were overloaded. To resolve this problem, an application was successfully made to appoint interns from the presidential stimulus program to microbiology for the second semester to alleviate the problem. Based on the success of this intervention, new interns will be appointed from the first semester in 2023. On Mahikeng Campus the budget was not sufficient to appoint enough student assistants to ensure the correct assistant:student ratio.

Support staff constantly had to deal with several problems in the lecture theatres. Systems are often out of order and do not seem to stay fixed even after several visits from the technicians. Although most support staff welcomed the fuller work days associated with face-to-face teaching and practicals, these types of problems accompanied by more staff going on fieldwork and field trips with the students led to a much heavier workload than usual.

SCSIS Staff report improvement within the school in regard to alignment: *“The experience is interesting, we are getting to create a more conducive relationship amongst lecturers of the same modules, it is also a good learning platform to improve one’s knowledge and skills”.*

Staff members are excited about face-to-face classes, where you can connect with your student: *“With the interactions, you can see if they are understanding the work and if you need to pause, take it slower, or go faster. When there are some question mark expressions on their faces you can explain again or rephrase your explanation”.*

Staff retiring, emigrating and leaving the university to join the industry put a lot of strain on the remaining staff.

13.6 HOW CROSS-CAMPUS COLLABORATION WAS FOSTERED DURING 2022

All programmes within FNAS are aligned across campuses. There may be some variation in module composition in the same programme, but there is a strong fundamental component that is identical with identical assessment plans and summative assessments for modules. However, there may be an allowance for different parts of modules on the different campuses where niches in the same specialisation exist and where assessments will differ yet are of the same quality and at the same level of competence. The experience gained by academics at NWU in online teaching makes it possible to combine formerly separated components of modules by team teaching so that students do get an aligned experience in terms of content. Team teaching, if used effectively, reduces workload, and simultaneously strengthens alignment.

Online teaching does allow for one lecturer to teach across campuses, thus strengthening alignment. But

as soon as two different people teach a module, there will be differences - this is inevitable. Even one person teaching the same module to two different groups will not do it in exactly the same way, due to student interactions etc. In a practical component all students may do the same number of practicals, but one experiment may be substituted for another due to availability of equipment on one campus.

It is also important to give academic staff some scope for doing things their own way. Otherwise they feel that they are not in control of their own modules, but have to do what they are told. This would limit innovation.

In Botany, lecturers ensured that the same teaching plans were followed on both campuses and that students were exposed to the same practical experiences. Lecturers on both PC and MC stepped up, planned together carefully, and organised a synchronized fieldwork excursion for the PLKS324 module students at the same time slot but in different locations. Lecturers still share the workload when setting tests and exam papers.

In Biochemistry, similar practicals were conducted, although Mahikeng sometimes did not have all the equipment needed by students. In these cases, online demonstrations were conducted using the Potchefstroom videos.

Cross-campus collaboration in terms of alignment of undergraduate modules remains a significant challenge and lecturers feel that they do not have support in certain matters. In the current semester, there were again issues with differing time-tables between campuses for the same programmes.

Microbiology is now doing an IPE and the following issues have been highlighted as recurring and putting quality and reputation at risk:

- (i) *Textbooks*: Sometimes the same textbook is not used on different campuses. Earlier editions of a textbook are used by students who prefer to buy second hand books. Many students, especially on Mahikeng Campus, report that they are unable to afford to buy textbooks.
- (ii) *eFundi (and associated eGuides)*: Some modules had electronic and interactive study guides available on one campus but not another. PC developed a working scaffold/template for the eGuides on eFundi and deployed it to all modules presented at MC during 2019/2020. The eGuide template was also transferred to MC modules and assistance was provided to lecturers to set up cloned sites to work from going forward.
- (iii) *Unequal contribution to aligned modules*: Alignment should imply that both campuses contribute to the specified modules, however, this is not always the case.
- (iv) *Timetable*: Another significant issue that persists is a severe desynchronisation of the timetable between PC and MC for the aligned modules. Fortunately lecturing mostly synchronises on a per-week basis, but not on the same days. Though not as problematic for lecturing (although online teaching by one lecturer is then impossible), it creates a logistical nightmare for assessments. In essence assessments cannot be held on the same days. To combat possible leakage of assessments between campuses, the test paper must be taken in along with the answer script from students. The timetable for practical sessions is very problematic.

The School of Computer Science and Information Systems reported that collaboration between staff members from different campuses is good and modules are aligned. In some modules one eFundi site was used for all campuses, as well as the Distance programme. Lecturers took turns addressing content in some cases. Lecturers had weekly check-in session to collaborate, brainstorm, and agree on what needs to happen during the next week. Study content such as class recordings and videos were shared. In some modules all assessments were the same.

The School kicked off the year with a 2-day workshop, attended by about 35 staff members. The feedback from this was positive, and this should be done every year. As one lecturer commented: *“Communication is essential for successful cross-campus collaboration. I believe our SCSIS Workshop at the beginning of the year was also a key contributor to the successful collaboration. Most lecturers from the 3 campuses attended the workshop which allowed us to meet the lecturers (aligned modules) that we will be working closely with, brainstorm and plan our modules for the year. We were able to have informal conversations with lecturers from other campuses that made it a lot easier to then work together and collaborate in a formal sense and via emails”*.

Of course, this will have an impact on the budget.

Staff also commented on advantages of alignment:

- *“Also, the workload is divided between us (setting assignments, tests, etc) – which has helped tremendously in managing the high student numbers – and elevating the standard of module content”*.
- *“As new technical skills are to be acquired by students it is very difficult for one person to have all the required knowledge and skills. The content of the module changes on a yearly basis due to the requirements of the fast-moving IT industry. Lecturers combine their strong points to provide a more diverse and meaningful exposure to new technologies to students”*.

The director and deputy director spend time together on the three campuses as often as possible, and individual meetings were also held with staff. Zoom-meetings were held for the School, with staff from all three campuses attending. But, on the other hand, alignment is also often difficult, e.g., when protests started on one campus and the other campus continued with work, the first campus fell behind. Where lecturers and students work/study experience and backgrounds differ, not all students can handle the same tempo and level.

In Geography there was team teaching across campuses for most modules, with the lecturers contributing different sections of the module. In certain instances (particularly Honours) one lecturer took responsibility for a module on more than one campus. Remote learning and eFundi made this feasible, but with the return to contact teaching, it is necessary to have lecturers on all three campuses present at all contact sessions. This increases the load on individual lecturers. Additionally, the assessments of modules have been normalised across campuses in many modules. This has meant that the expectations of students on the three campuses is fully aligned.

In the Understanding the World (WVNS) modules, lecturers assigned students to groups of 8 with the express aim to achieve maximum diversity - every group must contain students of all campuses and all cultural and language groups. This was done to achieve discussions where many students for the first time

in their lives were compelled to listen to views other than what they were used to. The results were astonishing, with the vast majority of students reacting very positively.

13.7 DRIVING BLENDED/ HYBRID LEARNING AND INNOVATION DURING 2022

Even though the Faculty decided to revert back to participation and exam marks, many lecturers still make efficient use of the eFundi sites that were built during the online teaching period. This allowed them to truly practice blended/ hybrid learning. For example, the Botany module PLKS211 incorporated innovative online practical exams to not only test knowledge but also application and insight.

Examples from the School of Computer Science and Information Systems:

Example 1

ITRI 614/624: By simulation of real-world scenarios, development of Software Applications for the NWU with possible commercial value:

Project 1: Development of a software tool to assess the level of Managerial and Governance Maturity of ICT Support Systems per the COBIT 19 framework, as prescribed by Principle 12 of the KING IV Code of Conduct and the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA)SA, Corporate Governance of Information Technology (CGICT) statutory requirement.

Project 2: e-Marking system to enable markers to assess faster and provide written feedback to NWU's academic literacy modules.

Project 3: Development of a Software solution to combine text-matching skills with stylometric analytics to provide more accurate reports that explain academic misbehaviour and improve remedial decision-making.

Example 2

Blended learning combines eLearning and traditional learning. This is achieved very successfully in CMPG 323 where an online class is held once a week for all students (distance, PC and VC). During the session, students can interact with the lecturer if anything is unclear. The session is recorded as students need to review the lecture to assist them to complete their practical projects. On each campus, face-to-face classes are conducted with students to provide more background on the topics discussed in the online sessions, and to ensure that students are on track. The combination of these modes of learning ensures that students make good progress with their projects.

Example 3

We have an online class / video to formally and theoretically introduce new topics followed by a contact class to debate and discuss these topics further. The students seem to really like this approach to hybrid learning.

In Chemistry one lecturer reported that he held online practicals and classes to complement the physical contact practicals and classes and that helped students with learning effectively as online work was preparatory for the physical classes and practicals.

In WVNS, students are urged to study background information on their own. To get them to comply, they write weekly eFundi tests on the contents. Simultaneously, they are guided in the semester schedule to work on their group assignment regularly during the semester and not to procrastinate. The group assignment requires students to apply knowledge and skills obtained in the weekly theoretical work. If they follow the suggested schedule, their theoretical knowledge and their progress on their group assignment will be perfectly aligned. They are thus supposed to apply every topic to their group assignment before they move on to the next theoretical topic. It was found that this way of guiding the students provided good results (but there are still those who leave everything to the last minute...).

13.8 TRANSFORMING BY DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM IN 2022

The challenge for educators is to engage with students at a level and within a context familiar to them and design learning experiences that make educationally sound use of the opportunities provided by the technologies and digital resources that they prefer while broadening their informational horizons.

In the achievement of this goal, the Faculty tries to involve its students in more inclusive learning experiences that address their diverse learning styles. These learning experiences will include student engagement with practice by means of work-integrated learning and community engaged service learning opportunities.

Within the Faculty it is an accepted assumption that programme curricula content must provide students with an orientation to various paradigms of thought and knowledge systems, e.g. undergraduate and postgraduate academic programmes with a focus on indigenous knowledge systems.

The Faculty deems it of importance to introduce students to different educational approaches – whereas the traditional train of thought and nature of teaching was that of the behaviouristic tradition, many of the subject groups have since realised that a more constructivist-related approach, where students are allowed to make meaning of their own learning and knowledge systems, are of essence to be able to substantiate their worldviews and the principles that inform their decisions and conduct.

One of the major themes of transformation is to make the content of the curriculum relevant to students, and to fulfil the needs of industry and equip students for job opportunities. Examples given are in the African context and within the experience of the students. Lecturers make sure that examples are local and that the module responds to the need of the country and reflects the problems faced by local communities.

Where possible, we strive to highlight variations of examples from the textbook with African/South African examples. In MKBS314, the fermentation process of Umqombothi is incorporated into the industrial microbiology curriculum. In MKBN121, examples of illnesses and diseases endemic in Africa and South Africa are focused on in the human infectious diseases section of the curriculum. All lecturers within the subject group of Botany focus on using South African examples, landscapes, and plants native to South Africa in their slides, and practical work such as in the module PLKS111. Students are familiarised with the Botanical Garden in the module PLKS211 where they are exposed to South African vegetation. In the module PLKS314, students are exposed to using plants usually grown as crops in South Africa.

Another theme is transformation of teaching strategies and methods to be inclusive of students from diverse cultures, and to structure the learning experience in ways that are not alien to the cultures of the students.

Another major theme in transformation involves language. Lecturers try to ensure that language is not a barrier to anyone, and use multiple languages where possible. According to one lecturer “I am sensitive to the group of students I am teaching. In a heterogeneous class, I use English as a medium of instruction when I teach. Although I encourage students to respond in English, I sometimes allow students to express their answers in their home language (if I am conversant with it) and interpret it in English for the benefit of the rest of the class.” FNAS has introduced some pilot modules for which Setswana can be used as an additional language of teaching and learning. The study guides and eFundi sites for these modules are available in Setswana. We are also in the process of developing glossaries of terms for all modules in the Faculty, particularly at first year level, in English, Afrikaans, Setswana and Sesotho.

Zoology started with a process of renewing the curriculum in order to stay relevant and to improve students employability. Transformation of the curriculum was not done for many years and the decisions was made to make changes after benchmarking with other universities.

The School of Computer Science and Information Systems strives to continuously change to keep up to the fast-changing field of Computer Science and Information Systems, and to ensure that our students graduate with the skills needed to succeed in the workplace. Our lecturers work hard to stay up to date, and we get feedback from industry on our curriculum and the readiness and progress of our graduates. Content is built on industry expectation and is therefore focused on what is required from the student to “get the job”. Content focuses on what is relevant in the industry and is informed by practice. Many assessments are based on what is currently required in the South African IT industry and some modules use local (South African) case studies for project-based learning.

For example, one lecturer commented: “*Bringing in new technologies and associated stacks, like UiPath for example, has an associated roadmap that lives in the industry realm but ties nicely into the delineation of the transforming curriculum. The flexibility that the module offers allows a lot of transformation to happen, which is evident in the implementation of binary rubrics, student mark visualisation and automated project marking*”.

13.9 FACULTY-SPECIFIC INITIATIVES RELATED TO TRANSFORMATION AND ALIGNMENT

A glossary of terms was compiled for each module in Biological Sciences that was translated into Afrikaans and English, and these are currently in the process of being translated into Setswana and Sesotho. The study material for the module PLKS223 is available in three languages, namely Afrikaans, English, and Setswana.

It was possible to hold open days again, and an open day was held on each campus. Staff used innovative ways to demonstrate their particular subjects to attract students to them. The Chemistry department gave a display of colourful chemical reactions that held the potential students spellbound.



Figure 60: Chemistry demonstrations at Open Day on Mahikeng Campus

The FNAS student chapters assisted with the open days, and were also very helpful in ensuring that teaching and learning went smoothly. For example, during registration, they assisted the students who were not yet registered and so unable to access campus. Their positive attitude contributed to the good relationship between staff and students in the Faculty. In addition, the Student Academic Chapter across all three campuses continued to present online events such as public lectures. They created WhatsApp groups for students and managed their other social media platforms well during this period to ensure that students who required information and assistance received it. The SACs also availed themselves to assist with faculty and university ventures such as Gender Awareness Week. Each campus' SAC provided regular feedback to and asked for advice from their Faculty Guardian, Faculty Administrators and the Deanery when necessary.



Figure 61: 2022 FNAS Student Chapter, Mahikeng Campus

13.10 CONCLUSION

In general 2022 has been a good year for teaching and learning in FNAS. Students are back on campus and are able to attend contact sessions, and particularly their practicals, computer practicals, work integrated learning and field trips. In addition there are invigilated exams and assessments, for which it is easier to ensure integrity. In addition to this, staff continue to use technology to enhance the teaching and learning experience, making use of blended and HyFlex learning whenever possible.

14. FACULTY OF THEOLOGY



14.1 INTRODUCTION

The Faculty of Theology shares the dream of the North-West University, namely “to be an internationally recognised university in Africa, distinguished for engaged scholarship, social responsiveness and an ethic of care.” Curriculum transformation plays a vital part in achieving this dream in our context as a South African and African faculty and university. The faculty fully aligns itself with the NWU 2015-2025 Strategy, the Teaching and Learning Strategy 2021-2025, as articulated in the revised Faculty Integrated Teaching and Learning Plan (FITLP) approved during 2021. In terms of the plan, it is imperative for the faculty to transform its teaching and learning. Such transformation would include critical reflection on the role, value, and future of theological education in the context of a contemporary university such as the NWU. In line with the purpose to be more relevant and to reorient our curriculum focus on Africa in terms of the construction, development and communication of knowledge, a snapshot of the faculty’s future will picture a culture of inclusion, enhancing and infusing diversity throughout the staff and student body and student experience. In terms of academic offering, we work towards differentiated programmes in order to increase the network of participating and collaborating churches, ecclesiastical bodies, and community partners. In this manner we wish to acknowledge the diversity and unique contributions of the communities we serve.

14.2 2022 TEACHING AND LEARNING CHALLENGES, INTERVENTIONS, AND SUCCESSES

Teaching and Learning during the first semester of 2022 was still affected by the Covid-19 pandemic with the associated uncertainty and challenges. Although more students returned to campuses for face-to-face teaching, regulations regarding social distancing and sanitation impacted on numbers of students allowed in venues. Students with connectivity issues and home circumstances not conducive to studying were encouraged to return to campuses in order to make use of institutional support. Some second- and third-year students experienced their first taste of contact teaching with timetables and venues while our postgraduate students in the professional qualifications for church ministry returned to full contact delivery. The experiences of staff and students during 2020-21 allowed for flexibility in approaches to teaching and learning, balancing contact and online delivery.

As was the case in 2020 and 2021 staff and students settled into a “new normal” while still experiencing the continued impact of the pandemic on the lives of staff and students alike. The “new normal” was characterised by blended and hybrid teaching and learning with limited face-to-face contact augmented by online delivery and interaction between lecturers and students. Generally continuous assessment was the norm in terms of mode of assessment, although some in-person assessments were possible in modules where students were required to return to campuses. Quality was assured in our implementation of continuous assessment through rigorous moderation processes.

During the registration period of 2022, the faculty experienced over-enrolments in most qualifications because of students not intending to study theology but wanting to gain admission into the system with the goal to switch to their preferred faculty or qualification at a later stage. Some students transferred during the first semester, but others could not because other faculties or qualifications did not have capacity. These students had a very negative effect on the pass and success rates (see below). In future the faculty will enforce the caps on admissions based on capacity limitations.

We continued our project with CTL and SI in identifying at-risk modules and actions steps will be implemented and monitored in the second semester, focussing on core modules that are offered across our programmes. Data indicated improvement in pass rates in these modules due to the interventions implemented by lecturers in collaboration with CTL. Continuous support was provided to these as well as first year students with lecturers identifying at-risk students at the earliest assessment opportunity and lecturers and school directors reaching out to such students on various platforms.

Based on the experiences of lecturers during 2020 and 2021 in terms of academic dishonesty among students, Faculty Board approved a faculty process for dealing with academic integrity matters. The process functions in addition to institutional disciplinary procedures and was approved by the Legal Office. Aligned with the NWU Policy on Academic Integrity (2021), the process encapsulates four elements: prevention, detection, internal faculty process, and the reporting of cases into institutional processes. The internal process follows the “Conceptual framework for the categorisation of alleged instances of academic misconduct, in particular plagiarism” contained in the policy, and allows for directors to issue warnings to students for incidents of academic misconduct.

14.3 2022 FACULTY ASSESSMENT PLANS

As was the case in 2021, the faculty compiled a Faculty Assessment Plan (FAP) for semester 1 of 2022. The final plan was the result of extensive consultations at subject group and school level as well as at Faculty Management Committee and was approved by Faculty Board and by Senate. The plan was based on online teaching and learning with limited face-to-face teaching and learning and all modules were assessed by way of continuous assessment (A-rule 1.13.1; Faculty Yearbook 2020 THE.1.3.8) which may have included in-person assessments. Module owners considered the number and relative weighting of assessments in each module, and directors moderated dates to ensure a fair workload for students. According to faculty rules, a student must have submitted all formative and summative assessments making up the assessment portfolio in order to pass the module (THE.1.3.8.1.1).

Module owners were encouraged to follow the guiding principles developed during the pandemic: eFundi-based (augmented by other platforms if necessary), mobile-friendly, low tech, low data, low immediacy. These principles will remain relevant in blended and hybrid modes of delivery post-pandemic. Most study materials were already available electronically via eFundi. Work-integrated Learning (WIL) and Service Learning (SL) for students studying to become ministers of religion were re-introduced during 2022 as part of the professional BDiv and MDiv qualifications as of module work or as part of a research portfolio.

The WIL/SL relates to preaching and practical work in congregations. Sermon preparation continued virtually, and the delivery of sermons occurred where and when possible, in person, observing Covid-19 protocols, and otherwise virtually. Assessment of the same occurred mainly electronically based on recordings, although some in-person assessment was possible.

All procedures and processes aimed at quality assurance and enhancement in the faculty were followed (both in the contact and distance modalities) irrespective of mode of assessment (participation and exam mark or continuous assessment). Measures put into place for the moderation of continuous assessment modules during 2020 were followed. We are satisfied that all necessary and possible quality assurance processes were followed to ensure a successful academic first semester of 2022.

	Enrolled pass rate (%)			Registered pass rate (%)			Success rate (%)		
	2020	2021	2022	2020	2021	2022	2020	2021	2022
Mahikeng Campus	78.7	67.2	75.0	77.7	70.5	74.6	79.1	69.8	70.2
Potchefstroom Campus	85.6	86.1	65.1	82.6	90.0	61.6	85.9	89.3	62.5
Vanderbijlpark Campus	83.6	75.8	54.3	81.5	80.5	53.7	86.0	80.6	50.5
UODL	100.2	86.9	74.1	83.4	89.1	73.1	99.2	89.4	73.8
Overall	82.0	80.7	68.7	88.6	84.2	66.5	89.0	83.5	65.7

Table 10: FTHE Comparative pass rates and success rates 2020-2022

The above figures (comparing the first semesters of 2020-2022) show that the enrolled and registered pass rates as well as the success rate declined sharply from 1st semester 2021 although the registered pass rate improved. This decline is due to the over-enrolment indicated earlier and affected all three campuses. Considering this context, the data do not represent an accurate picture of academic performance in the faculty during 1st semester 2022. The impact of the over-enrolment is borne out by the fact that more than fifty first time enrolments either transferred to other faculties or discontinued their studies. At its meeting The Undergraduate Examination Committee also issued 95 first warnings to students based on their results from the first semester of 2022. Attrition rates will be calculated at the end of 2022.

14.4 2022 STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES

The faculty received student feedback from leadership of the student chapters on the three campuses as well as individual reports from students to faculty leadership, and queries directed at institutional communication channels. A student survey was conducted during the second semester of 2021. The feedback can be summarised as follows:

- Generally, concerns about issues such as devices, data and connectivity decreased as more students returned to campuses. The studies of some students were disrupted by loadshedding and home environments, and these students were also encouraged to return to campuses (in the contact modality).
- Several students had issues in terms of finances and struggled to continue their studies which impacted

the pass and success rates in the faculty (see below).

- Some students fell by the wayside in terms of participation in modules during the semester due to a variety of factors (see also previous bullet). The faculty implemented measures for early identification of at-risk students with lecturers and school directors engaging with these students to determine what support could be offered on school, faculty and institutional level.
- Some issues remained in terms of communication between lecturers and students, although the complaints decreased substantially from 2020-2021.

The faculty requires all module owners to set up eFundi sites prior to the start of every semester, including communication tools such as forums, chat rooms, polls, messages. eFundi sites are reviewed by the subject chairs as well as the in-faculty e-learning technologist who report to the school directors and ultimately the Teaching and Learning Committee. Remedial action is taken by the e-learning technologist in collaboration with CTL where necessary. Lecturers have continued to make use of WhatsApp or Telegram groups to facilitate student communication, and in some instances contact sessions are augmented by Zoom or MS Teams engagements.

The Student Teaching and Learning Experience Surveys for Semester 1 2022 indicated an average rating of 86% for contact students and 87% for distance students (both maintaining the scores from 2021). Student participation was maintained at 2021 levels for contact students but declined for distance students.

During 2021 we launched an internal faculty process for the reporting of student academic complaints, dealing with complaints in an effective and equitable manner. Students complete a complaint form and submit it to the Faculty Administrator who directs the complaint to the relevant director. The director investigates the complaint and acts as mediator between the student and lecturer. The process also allows for appeal to the executive dean who makes a final decision on the matter.

14.5 2022 STAFF EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES (ACADEMIC AND SUPPORT STAFF)

Feedback from academic and support staff came to the faculty by way reports from directors and faculty coordinators, as well as personal conversations with staff members. Staff surveys were also conducted during the second semester of 2021 for academic and support staff. Generally, staff was positive about a gradual return to “normalised” teaching and learning. Although contact was possible, some academic staff expressed frustration with limited contact with colleagues and students as well as the reluctance of some students to participate in either face-to-face or virtual mode. Concerns were also raised by staff members about academic integrity and dishonesty amid online teaching and learning. Postgraduate supervision continued unaffected from a supervisor perspective.

The feedback among support staff followed the same pattern of positive attitudes despite the continued disruptions of the pandemic. Administrative staff returned to offices and provided faculty presence on the three campuses.

14.6 HOW CROSS-CAMPUS COLLABORATION WAS FOSTERED DURING 2022 (WITH GOOD EXAMPLES OF CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES)

Academic qualifications offered in the faculty are aligned across campuses unless specific to a local campus context or to a church denomination. Qualifications are aligned in respect of module content and assessment, as well as student communication via eFundi, ensuring that every student receives similar support, guidance, and communication. The module owner carries overall responsibility for all students in a module across the campuses as well as online, with on-site facilitators in each module to assist contact students. The alignment positively impacted on staff co-operation across campuses, with staff members working together as teams to present modules across campuses.

To effectively manage staff workload and foster cross-campus collaboration, Faculty Board approved the following definition of the contact modality (accepted by NWU Senate February 2020):

“Up to 50% of the modules of any contact programme may be presented by the module owner (thus discipline expert) irrespective of the campus where the module owner works. The basic principle that does apply, is that the student who is registered on a campus, will receive all his/her classes on the campus, but that up to 50% of those classes may be presented via technology-mediated processes with a facilitator in the classroom where the student is to ensure lively discussion and interactive learning.”

This approach engages team-teaching where the module owner, irrespective of his/her campus locality, presents the specific module on all the respective campuses via virtual means and eFundi. In this way we endeavour to align the student learning experience within the core modules of the different programmes across our campus footprints. Workload also informs the faculty’s approach to the institutional Programme and Qualification Mix (PQM) Review in terms of the modes of delivery on the different campuses. As faculty management we are conscious of the growing student numbers on Mahikeng and Vanderbijlpark Campuses which must lead to re-allocation of staff (already implemented on Mahikeng campus) and resources. Good progress has been made in the resourcing of the theological libraries on those campuses.

14.7 DRIVING BLENDED/HYBRID LEARNING AND INNOVATION DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The 2022 academic year offered further opportunities for lecturers to experiment with and expand on blended or hybrid teaching and learning as the NWU moved towards a hybrid model. Our e-technologist played a central role in this development which was reflected in the approved Faculty Assessment Plan (FAP) for the first semester of 2022, with face-to-face teaching for all contact students where Covid-19 regulations allowed, augmented by online teaching. In practice this involved the use of existing pre-recorded lectures with a blend of face-to-face session for contact students as well as virtual sessions for contact and distance students. Most staff also returned to offices. Contact classes were generally well attended although some students considered the sessions voluntary in addition to the teaching in the online environment. Mandatory attendance was enforced where lecturers deemed it necessary. The return to face-to-face

teaching posed some challenges to many second- and third-year students as they experienced their first taste of face-to-face interaction with lecturers, as well as the logistics of timetables and venues. The challenge for lecturers remained to nurturing a sense of community amongst students in the blended/hybrid environment, facilitating group and collaborative learning. The faculty embraced institutional efforts by the NWU to reflect on best- and effective learning practices in a changed environment, working towards a future vision for teaching and learning.

14.8 TRANSFORMING BY DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM

The faculty continued its efforts to transform the curriculum in 2022, embracing a diversity of academic orientations, theological convictions, and spiritualities represented by our staff and students. Lecturers and students consider issues and solve problems from a wide variety of social, economic, political, religious, ethical, and cultural perspectives. They also share their different cultural backgrounds and contribute to the discourse through relevant examples from their own contexts, especially those from Africa. The skills developed in this regard are reinforced in terms of Work-integrated Learning (WIL) and Service Learning (SL), especially in the qualifications aimed at the training of ministers, pastors, and pastoral councillors where the skills are applied in real-life situations, for example where students are engaged in cross-cultural congregational practical work. These initiatives all depend on creating a safe, non-threatening learning environment in which students can express their own views while respecting those of other students and staff. Faculty Board has established a Diversity Forum to facilitate the creation and fostering of such a climate. The faculty is fully aware of its obligation to accelerate transformation and create an inclusive and rigorous academic culture.

During the first semester of 2022 the faculty collaborated with CTL and the Faculty of Health Sciences in organising a colloquium on the topic of holistic human wellness focussing on physical, psychosocial, mental, and spiritual well-being. The colloquium heard student voices from the three campuses on the challenges faced during the Covid-19 pandemic, providing diverse contexts and perspectives. The incorporation of these perspectives was evident from the academic papers presented from the disciplines of theology, psychosocial sciences, and teaching and learning. Targets on decolonisation in terms of modules and programmes have for the first time been incorporated into performance agreements with staff members and are being monitored by the school directors.

14.9 FACULTY-SPECIFIC INITIATIVES

Efforts continue to integrate community engagement initiatives in the faculty with teaching and learning as well as research and innovation. In some modules in pastoral care, students are exposed to work-integrated learning and service learning in conjunction with the international Godly Play organisation. The aim of the organisation is to make the gospel meaningful to children through story, wonder, and play, and nurturing their spiritual lives by honouring the centrality, competency, and capacity of children.

The implementation of our Language Plan as approved during 2019 continued with the expansion of glossaries in Setswana and Sesotho and have started with the translation of study material. It again involved a competition for students in developing glossary terms in conjunction with lecturers, language experts and the Language Directorate. The next phase would be assessments in these languages in 2023. The faculty's approach and efforts were also showcased during the NWU's annual Language Awareness Week.

The accreditation of a structured master's degree in Arabic Cultures is being pursued linking existing modules in Arabic and Ancient Cultures in the School for Ancient Languages and Text Studies. The school is one of very few who offer Arabic as an ancient language, and this provides a niche in the market when combined with cultural studies into Islam and other expressions of Arabic culture.

Our new offering of diplomas and higher certificates is in the regulatory process with implementation in 2024 as target date. In the meantime, we are exploring ways to add capacity to faculty to offer these. This includes inter-faculty, interdisciplinary collaboration (already in process with Health Sciences) and national and international collaboration.

14.10 CONCLUSION

Curriculum transformation and alignment of the student experience remains a high priority for the Faculty of Theology. This report attests to the urgency of faculty management to not only affirm these goals on paper but also to make strides in its practical implementation. The faculty as a collective works towards these goals as part of the NWU's institutional ideals, while acknowledging the rapidly changing contexts of theological training and the higher education sector. As a highly dynamic and innovative Faculty, we hope to contribute positively to these issues in 2023 and beyond.

15. CONCLUSION TO THE REPORT

The NWU Teaching-Learning Strategy (the first covering the period 2016-2020 and the second, 2021-2025) has set the NWU on its path of continuous curriculum transformation and renewal, to equip graduates to address contextualised challenges of twenty-first century society. This transformation also heeds calls to decolonise and Africanise the curriculum.

All faculties and teaching-learning support departments, have reported on steps taken to attend to curriculum transformation and renewal for the period 2021-2022.

Part A of this report, provided a profile of the NWU, inclusive of student demographics, success rates, student feedback and student evaluations of academic modules and programmes.

Part B of the report described the extra-curricular initiatives undertaken to transform the student experience at the NWU for all its students, regardless of campus or faculty. These initiative focus on themes like inclusion, respect and diversity in language, gender and race.

Part C of the report contains detailed information on faculty initiatives to ensure that all academic programmes are coherently designed, intellectually credible, and consistently relevant, given the NWU's commitment to transformation and alignment of student experience.

Parts B and C contain earnest and self-critical evaluations of efforts, also highlighting challenges and sometimes shortcomings. However, this does not detract form the significant efforts and success reported on. The Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching-Learning appreciates each and every effort made to realise the NWU's goal to help its students develop the knowledge, attitudes and skills that will enable them to lead purposeful lives in the service of the science collegiate, their profession and civil society as responsible citizens.