

The CHUM Institutes, Centres, Units and Journals

Prof Jannie Smit has circulated a document to Deans in respect of the 6 CHUM Schools' identification, consolidation and planning around the established/ establishing of Institutes, Centres, research Units and Journals.

The plan is for the Humanities Institute to assist in school plans in optimising research capacity development and outputs, via these organisational instruments.

This is according to the approved POLICY ON INSTITUTES, CENTRES AND UNITS (RESEARCH POLICY IV) REF: CO04040507 (2014).

13.1 Institutes, Centres and Units

Each school Dean was provided with a grid indicating all Institutes, Centres and Units in each school. It is important to identify each functioning entity, and also will continue to function for the next 5 years, (2022 – 2026).

If there are new entities to be established, these need to be identified.

The Humanities Institute will support the establishing of the noted entities, if need be. It is noted that the Institutes, Centres and Units Policy of UKZN (2014) was supposed to be updated in 2018.

13.3 Journals

The UKZN library, with the assistance of Mrs. Faith Magwaza (HC), and Prof Jannie Smit, has applied for funding to have the current 7 journals on the OJS system managed by PKP, the originators of the software.

This will hopefully see the journals functioning according to uniform PKP set standards and protocols.

Once the journals operate well, UKZN may then wish to manage them from within the library system, as is being done at other universities internationally.

The present website of the journals on OJS: <https://journals.ukzn.ac.za/>

At present these 7 journals are active.

- 2 *African Journal of Governance and Development* (est. 2011)
- 3 *Alternation* (est. 1994)
- 4 *Journal of Education* (est. 1969)
- 5 *Journal of Inclusive Cities and Built Environment* (est. 2021)
- 6 *Journal of the International Society for Telemedicine and eHealth* (est. 2013)
- 7 *International Journal for Indian Studies* (est. early 1980s)
- 8 *South African Journal of Chemistry* (est. 1912)

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14 KZN Provincial and Inter-provincial Tertiary Institutional Collaboration

One of the objectives of the HI is to upscale inter-institutional collaboration in research and research capacity development, and also to make our collective knowledge production outputs more visible nationally, continentally, and internationally.

Below are a few snapshots from these initiatives, some of which have already included talks on MOUs.

14.1 Intra-University Cross-College Collaboration

At present we have active collaboration in main projects from the College of Law and Management Studies. Cf. <http://alternation.ukzn.ac.za/Files/uploads/2021/11/Information%20and%20Knowledge%20Management%20for%20Social,%20Economic%20and%20Political%20Development.pdf>

14.2 Durban University of Technology

So far, we have supported one research group from DUT and Unisa. Cf. <http://alternation.ukzn.ac.za/pages/volume-26-2019/alternation-special-edition-29-2019.aspx>

This group is led by the DUT Research Office.

At present there is one more publication being worked on, from the same grouping, and led by DUT and UNISA scholars.

We are working with one more DUT research group that has organized a national conference on Community Engagement in late 2019. The peer reviewed publication will come out early 2022. We are working to have the effects of COVID on CE, also captured in the publication.

Prof Smit was also requested to do two webinars for researchers at DUT on,

- Starting and Establishing a Research Trajectory
- Research Networks and Editing Research for Peer-reviewed Publication

Around 50+ colleagues from DUT attended.

DUT is pursuing a collaborative Research MOU with HI at present. We shall take this forward in 2022.

14.3 University of Zululand

Towards the close of 2021, the UniZulu Research Office requested Prof Smit to also organise supervision workshops for UniZulu staff. He organised 5 events, with around 10 staff present, including Prof Kevin Durrheim from UKZN, on 15 and October, and 29, 05, 12 and 18 November 2021.

Around 50 staff from the Faculty of Arts attended each day.

14.4 Free State University

At this point, we have some collaboration via Prof Dipane Hlalele, with FSU, on rurality. So far, one publication has come from this collaboration, with one more pending.

<http://alternation.ukzn.ac.za/pages/volume-27-2020/alternation-272.aspx>

The one pending is on: Rurality, Education and the Coronavirus Pandemic.

Prof Smit is also officially involved in the FSU project on the mentoring of prospective future Associate Professors.

14.5 Northwest University

In addition to some collaboration in the 2010s, we also have one publication from a group led

by Prof Labby Ramrathan and others, in Education, from UKZN, for 2020. Cf.:

<http://alternation.ukzn.ac.za/pages/volume-27-2020/alternation-special-edition-31.aspx>

Another, led by Prof Phumlani Myende and Jan Heystek, is available at:

<http://alternation.ukzn.ac.za/pages/volume-28-2021/alternation-281.aspx>

14.6 Engaged Regional/ National/ Southern African Collaborative Research and Internationalisation

Important to mention is the publication led by Prof Maheshvari Naidu, in which we have collaboration from Botswana University academics. Cf.

<http://alternation.ukzn.ac.za/pages/volume-27-2020/alternation-special-edition-36.aspx>

We also have a currently planned one for 2022, from UB academics. Cf.

<http://alternation.ukzn.ac.za/Files/uploads/2021/11/Information%20and%20Knowledge%20Management%20for%20Social,%20Economic%20and%20Political%20Development.pdf>

Then, after some collaborative work with academics from Zimbabwean universities, we have this publication. To note is that Prof Nisbert Taringa, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, from ZU who was leading the project tragically passed away last year, and his co-leader, Prof David Bishau (Africa University, Zimbabwe), has seen the project to completion earlier this year.

<http://alternation.ukzn.ac.za/pages/volume-27-2020/alternation-special-edition-35.aspx>

15 Internationalisation and Partnerships

Internationalisation and inter-institutional research partnerships are hallmarks of universities universally speaking. Over the years, these were primary focuses of the different initiatives that have culminated in the formation and establishing of the Humanities Institute.

Each of the projects have their own internationalisation dynamics and research partnerships, and these will be upscaled as we go forward in 2022 and onward to 2030.

Some of the international collaborations have already born fruit in collaborative research project publications, around which we have already also engaged in talks on MOUs.

A new generation of scholars are being mentored and supported to scale the heights of research and knowledge generation excellence internationally.

We are confident that the initial steps the institute took on this route will upscale and develop empowering scholarly relations and partnerships for transformative epistemic networking and research outputs sharing and knowledge dissemination universally.

We are also most grateful for the systemic support we have received from our funders over the last three years.

Conclusion

Despite the impacts of COVID-19 on academia and education more generally speaking, it is profoundly significant that the different projects of the Humanities Institute, as established in 2019, did not only come together to function optimally in terms of their own commitments and responsibilities. The period of the pandemic also provided the opportunity to accelerate, pilot and explore the possibilities virtual reality has for its very focused transformative Humanities and Social Sciences projects.

In the near future, we hope to appoint more Research professors who will lead the signature research projects of the institute. They will pioneer not only the establishing and leading of international research groups in key signature project areas, but also facilitate and guide collaborative research publications nationally, continentally and internationally.

We foresee that our collaboration with the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS), the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the South African Department of Science and Innovation, and the International Development Research Centre (Canada), Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (Canada), Spencer Foundation (US), and the Ford Foundation (US), amongst others, will continue to grow substantially.

As we seek to lead, partner and support even more key catalytic and affiliated projects on the continent and further afield, we also invite colleagues to step forward and step up in taking research and knowledge generation leadership by, for, on, with, in and of Africa. All the institute's projects to various degrees pioneer this focus and we are confident that our graduates, postdoctoral fellows, and research collaborators will pioneer the post-, and decolonial epistemic transformation in Africa, for the benefit of humanity internationally.

The future of an Afrikology-founded and grounded and inspired research focus is bright. In this endeavor, the intellectualisation and capacitation of our African languages are key.

Our Ma'at Institute is centrally positioned and focused on the care and support of the psychological wellbeing of the African people, and our centrally involving of our rural African populace will ensure the incremental upscaling of the scientific and cognitive contributions of our partnering institutions and research collaborators, in geopolitically integrated ways.

In this endeavor, we need to move beyond the exclusionary and subjugatory systems associated with race and racism, gender-based inequalities in our collective Humanities and

Social Sciences work for the eradication of the variety of the basic levels of destitution and poverty in South Africa, in our own lifetime. The impact and effects of our very robust Centre for Creative Arts provide a key avenue not only for the School of Arts, but also the College of Humanities.

We also wish to substantially grow our collaborating institutes, centers, research units and journals to increase the visibility, social effects and academic impacts of our research, as we accelerate into the digitally-informed and mediated blended forms of research, teaching and learning, and community engagement.

And, as the strategic objective of the Humanities Institute states, we collectively, and collaboratively aim “To systematically develop the range, reach and scale of the digitally-informed impacts of the Humanities Institute’s signature, catalytic and strategic signature research projects”.

Afterword



Prof Pholoho Morojele
College Dean of Research
College of Humanities (CHUM)

We are thankful for the great work the Humanities Institute and its various research, catalytic and affiliated projects are doing.

Each, individually, but also collectively, already have significant impacts across a broad front, nationally, continentally and internationally.

Established in mid-2019, to catalyze and grow the research mentoring and support, as well as research outputs of the College of Humanities from within its Afrikology baseline systems of values, the Humanities Institute has already made substantial inputs towards the College's research capacity, capabilities and annual research outputs.

The secondment of its current Chair, Prof Johannes A. (Jannie) Smit assisted in articulating and operationalising Afrikology values in research collectively across the participating projects. All projects work in specific areas that add value to some of the key functions of the College of Humanities. They collectively operate in accordance with a workable and a reasonable vision, and mission, with strategic objectives, which will be reconfigured from year to year.

Finally, I want to highlight the incredible value of the NIHSS Regional Doctoral School (established in 2013), the Doctoral Academy (established in 2019), and the NIHSS- and College of Humanities-funded postdoctoral fellow projects. Collectively these projects not only empower our doctoral students to graduate in optimal time, but also mentor and support all to start to function as our academics of the future, with their future-oriented, incisive and contextually-relevant research publications.

Together with our numerous funders, and the Department of Higher Education (DHET) and South African Deans' Association (SAHUDA) we are looking forward to the upscaling of all the projects concerned - both in terms of capacity and impact.

The Humanities Institute is a hub for knowledge development and dissemination on a world scale. We are looking forward to the next few years.

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