

THE 2ND ANNUAL RESEARCH COLLOQUIUM ON ACADEMIC MONITORING AND SUPPORT

INVITATION AND CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

The University Teaching and Learning Office in partnership with the College of Law and Management Studies Teaching and Learning Unit invites the submission of abstracts.

THEME:

BEYOND ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT: RECONCEPTUALISING AND INSTITUTIONALISING ACADEMIC MONITORING AND SUPPORT

Abstracts not exceeding 200 words should be emailed to Dr Saras Reddy on reddys15@ukzn.ac.za by 30 September 2014. Abstracts will be peer-reviewed.

Presentation Types:

- Individual papers: 25 minutes (including discussion)
- Poster presentations: Size A2 (for display during the Colloquium)

The Colloquium will be hosted as follows:

Date:

Wednesday, 26 November 2014

Time:

08h00 to 17h00

Venue:

Graduate School of Business and Leadership Auditorium, Westville Campus, UKZN

Fee:

Free to participants

Refreshments will be provided

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ABOUT THE COLLOQUIUM

Academic Development (AD) in South Africa can be traced to the changes within the higher education sector in post-apartheid South Africa. It emerged in the 1980s as academic support in response to the relatively small number of educationally disadvantaged students who were being admitted to institutions of higher learning with a view to offer 'catch-up' instruction. The democratically elected government had to redress past inequalities and transform the higher education sector to serve the new order.

One of the major changes in higher education was the shift in student distribution patterns which saw a marked increase in the number of students who had been systematically excluded from higher education. Ever since, academic development has evolved to become a powerful discourse encouraging wider participation of students, in response to national policies and transformational objectives. At the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), AD was conceptualised into an academic monitoring and support (AMS) policy framework which was implemented in 2006. Quality Promotions reviews were conducted in 2011 and 2012, and both revealed disparities in the conceptualisation and implementation of AMS as well as roles of AMS personnel.

The 2013 AMS Colloquium brought together AMS practitioners from across UKZN with the broad aim of sharing exemplary practices, to generate consensus and to provide a coherent framework for aligning AMS practices at UKZN. Notwithstanding the remarkable evidence of work being done in this area, some challenges remain within AMS, mainly because it has been largely on the periphery, and work on student monitoring and support has been carried out in isolation.

A comprehensive AMS framework is required by the institution in order to harmonise the roles and responsibilities of AMS personnel and to share best practice. To achieve this, there is need for AMS to be integrated and formalised as part of the University's teaching and learning practices. This moves AMS beyond the development of individual students, to a view of AMS as the practice of the entire university.

In line with this background, the purpose of this colloquium is to bring together perspectives about how AMS is conceptualised and enacted by AMS practitioners as well as the wider academic community. The overall aim is to reconceptualise AMS to move from student attributes and policy towards a framework of best practices and institutional culture. The objectives of the colloquium are as follows:

1. To reflect on national and international AMS trends in successful student retention, progression and throughput with a view to appropriating practices that entrenches AMS in mainstream academic culture at UKZN.
2. To critically reflect on the practices of AMS at UKZN since its inception.
3. To explore AMS practices in both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes as a means of promoting scholarship in academic development.
4. To develop a framework to harmonise the key roles, responsibilities and career progression of significant role players in AMS at UKZN.
5. To reflect on tracking systems to monitor undergraduate and postgraduate students' engagement, progression and support throughout the curriculum and research process respectively.
6. To critically reflect on the status and the provision of tutorials in the mainstream curriculum at UKZN.

Hosted by: College of Law and Management Studies Teaching and Learning Unit in partnership with University Teaching and Learning Office