

# ēducātiō

Faculty of Education

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# ēducātiō

Faculty of Education Publication

**EDITOR**

Elbie Els  
eels@sun.ac.za

**WRITERS**

Elbie Els  
Prof Michael le Cordeur  
Prof Mbulungeni Madiba  
Dr Chrischar Rock  
Delecia Davids  
Tyrese Human  
Nerisha Jagwanth

**TRANSLATION & EDITING**

Language Centre

**GRAPHIC DESIGN & LAYOUT**

Elbie Els

**PRINTING**

African Sun Media

**COVER PAGE PHOTO**

Stefan Els

**Cover page photo from left to right:**

**Back row:**

Victoria Nel  
Zoe-Grace Bennet  
Llewellyn van der Ross  
Charity Matiwane

**Front row:**

Prof Liezel Frick (Vice Dean: Research)  
Prof Mbulungeni Madiba (Dean)  
Prof Michael le Cordeur  
(Vice Dean: Teaching & Learning)

*The opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the editor, the Faculty of Education or Stellenbosch University.*

## FROM THE EDITOR



It is the sincere love for education and children that makes remarkable teachers and educators different. Teachers have the opportunity to make a difference in someone's life every single day like Mieke Matthee (p. 16) said. It is students, graduates and educators like her who make the world a better place. It is also people like Prof Michael le Cordeur (p. 27) who dedicated his career to having a positive impact and who will even in his retirement, go on to make a difference.

I hope you are inspired by the stories in this edition and find the courage to pursue your own dreams.

Contact me with news events at:  
eels@sun.ac.za

This edition is available in English and Afrikaans on the Faculty of Education's website.

**Elbie Els**

*Faculty of Education Marketing & Communication*





# contents

Foreword: Farewell Message Vice Dean Teaching & Learning .....	4
Message: Dean .....	7

## GRADUATES


More than 500 students graduate .....	8
Renewal of SU academic dress .....	9
Provincial Best Teacher Award for Llewellyn van der Ross .....	10
2024 Graduates reflect on their academic journey .....	12

## STUDENTS

Tedx StellenboschED event .....	14
Hard work rewarded .....	16
Education Student Committee .....	18
A dance to remember for the fourth years of 2024 .....	19
Teacher voices matter .....	20
Lecturer of the year 2024 awarded .....	23

## STAFF

Retirement: Dr Erna Lampen.....	25
Retirement: Sarie Wilbers.....	26
Retirement: Prof Michael le Cordeur .....	27
Social Impact Week create awareness .....	30
Published books by Faculty of Education staff 2024 .....	32



# FOREWORD:

## Farewell message

### Vice Dean: Teaching and Learning

I have had several mentors: Miss Sarena Samaai taught me the value of reading as an empowering skill; at high school, Ivan Samaai taught me the virtue of *never quitting*; my Afrikaans professor, Jakes Gerwel, cultivated a lifelong love and passion for Afrikaans literature in me; my philosophy professor, Adam Small, motivated me to become a writer; Franklin Sonn showed me the political game in South Africa; and my education lecturer, Brian O'Connell, constantly emphasised the importance of hard work.

I was privileged that so many leaders of note have spent time with me. They honed my thinking and shaped my sense of justice. Through them, I came to the realisation that all people are equal and deserve equal treatment. But how do we do this when not even the Harvards and Cambridges of this world can prevent prominent world leaders declaring war against innocent children? How do we create peace and love when the most powerful nations are threatening one another with nuclear bombs?

If I may quote one of my mentors, Brian O'Connell, *"How does one respond to this world that is constantly in flux, where the ice is melting and there is drought in the Amazon basin, and where the wars for oil will soon be replaced by wars for water? How does one create effective health services when people are living too long for state welfare budgets to deal with; when viruses are becoming smarter; when the rich are becoming richer, and the poor are becoming desperate?"* So desperate that foreigners enter our borders illegally in search of diamonds and gold – two kilometres underground – long after the rich had abandoned those same mines?

For me, the answer to most of our questions lies in education and hard work. It was Mandela who said, *"Education is the most powerful weapon to change our world."* That is why our work as lecturers, whose responsibility is to send capable teachers into society, is so critical. Confucius once said, *"Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in*

*your life."* I was blessed to have had a job that I truly loved. My love for children, education and languages, especially my mother tongue, Afrikaans, was such that I could teach with passion. In fact, if there is one thing that I *will* miss, then it is the interaction with students. Youths simply inspire me. They have so much to give, so much talent and energy that I am always intrigued by the fact that we hesitate to employ young people.

Today it is exactly 45 years ago that I achieved my first degree: a BA in languages at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) – the only university in those days that coloured people could attend. UWC had no venue to host the graduation, so the ceremony took place in the Good Hope Centre. The keynote speaker was Dr Anton Rupert. He quoted Aristotle: *Excellence is not a single deed. It is a way of life.* Since then, I adopted this quote as my own philosophy of life. Coming from a poor family and dreaming of becoming an author and a professor, I realised then that there would be no diamonds and gold waiting for me – that hard work was the only way to reach my dreams. And so it was. And I never looked back.

My last words to you are in my mother tongue; the words of Afrikaans' greatest poet, Van Wyk Louw: *"O Heer, laat hierdie dae Heilig word: laat alles val wat pronk en sieraad was."* (Vroegherfs)

I leave you with the words of Brutus in Shakespeare's Julius Caesar: *"And whether we shall meet again, I know not. Therefore, let's say an everlasting farewell. Farewell, forever and forever, Cassius! If we do meet again, we will smile. If not, then we have parted well."*

Baie dankie. Soekran. Thank you. Enkosi.

**Michael Lucien Arnaud le Cordeur**  
(15 December 2024)



PHOTO: Stefan Els



# MESSAGE:

## Dean

As we begin the new year, I extend my heartfelt gratitude and warmest welcome to our staff and students. Your unwavering dedication and collective efforts have defined our success, and it is with great pride that I reflect on the remarkable achievements of the past year while looking forward to the exciting opportunities that lie ahead.

The past year has been a transformative one for our Faculty, marked by several milestones and accomplishments. Among the highlights of 2024, we celebrated the graduation of approximately 570 students in December, including 500 undergraduates, about 70 honours students, nine master's graduates, and four PhDs. This achievement underscores the hard work of our students and the unwavering support of our academic and administrative teams.

Our Faculty's research output continues to thrive, bolstered by robust mentorship programmes and international collaborations. These initiatives not only strengthen our reputation as a research-intensive faculty but also contribute to global knowledge production, addressing critical issues in education and beyond.

Against the backdrop of financial challenges in higher education, our Faculty has demonstrated resilience and foresight. Robust budget allocations ensured the sustainability of our operations, enabling us to invest in our people, infrastructure, and strategic projects. These efforts highlight our commitment to fostering a stable and supportive environment for teaching, learning, and research excellence.

Building on the momentum of 2024, our Faculty is poised for an impactful year ahead. The Faculty Strategic Planning Workshop, held toward the end of last year, served as a pivotal moment for aligning our efforts toward achieving our Vision 2030. With its emphasis on reflection, innovation and future readiness, the workshop reaffirmed our commitment to academic excellence and societal impact. This forward-thinking approach will guide our priorities and initiatives in 2025. **Key strategic priorities for the year include:**

- **Expanding mentorship programmes and funding for postdoctoral researchers:** These efforts aim to foster a culture of academic excellence and innovation that supports the development of the next generation of scholars.



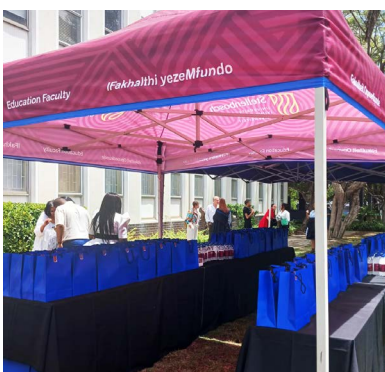
- **Strengthening our Working Group on Internationalisation:** By enhancing global partnerships and collaborative opportunities in research and teaching, we aim to solidify our position as a globally connected faculty.
- **Integrating artificial intelligence (AI) and digital tools:** These technologies will be incorporated into our teaching practices to modernise educational delivery and prepare our graduates for a digitally-driven world.
- **Launching innovative initiatives:** New programmes such as Early Childhood Development (ECD) and a hybrid Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) will expand our offerings and meet the evolving needs of the education sector.
- **Implementing two new postgraduate diplomas through SUNCEP:** Programmes in maths education and science education reflect our commitment to responsive curriculum design that addresses critical skills shortages.
- **Exploring a new BEd (Senior Phase) programme:** This initiative will focus on emerging fields such as coding and robotics, ensuring that our graduates are equipped to teach in dynamic and future-focused areas.
- **Implementing the ICTS Innovation Hub project:** This project will position the Faculty as a leader in the integration of cutting-edge technologies into teaching and learning.

As we embark on this new chapter, I encourage each of you to continue contributing to our shared vision with the same passion and dedication that have brought us this far. Together, we will ensure that the Faculty of Education remains a transformative force in higher education, driving innovation, fostering inclusivity, and preparing our graduates to meet the challenges of a rapidly evolving world.

Warm regards  
**Prof Mbulungeni Madiba**

# More than 500 students **graduate**

On 13 December 2024, approximately 570 students from the Faculty of Education graduated. These include students who received a Bachelor of Education (BEd), an honours or a master's degree, a doctorate, or a Post-graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). Graduates and staff gathered at the Faculty for a celebration of their achievements.



# Renewal of SU academic dress

In its commitment to transformation and redress, SU has launched a comprehensive brand renewal project to support our University's vision of being Africa's leading research-intensive university, acknowledged globally for its excellence, inclusivity and innovation, where we promote knowledge in service of the community.

The Division Corporate Communication and Marketing and the Registrar's Office undertook the renewal of the SU academic dress as part of the phased implementation of the brand renewal. The

new academic dress serves as an extension of the University's visual identity and boasts bright colours, unique patterns and materials of high quality that reflect SU's research focus areas, commitment to excellence, our African continent and its diverse cultures. A unique pattern, with elements related to the faculty, was designed for every faculty.

*Photo: Prof Liezel Frick (Vice Dean: Research), Prof Mbulungeni Madiba (Dean) and Prof Michael le Cordeur (Vice Dean: Teaching & Learning) with the new SU academic dress. The unique Faculty of Education pattern is embroidered on the dean's gown.*



PHOTO: Stefan Els

# Provincial Best Teacher Award for Llewellyn van der Ross

In 2024 Llewellyn van der Ross received the Best Teacher's Award in the Western Cape as announced by the Western Cape Education Department. He also graduated with a master's degree at the Faculty of Education, Stellenbosch University, in December 2024.

## **How long have you been a teacher?**

I have been in the teaching profession for seven years, dedicated to fostering learning and development in young minds.

## **What motivated you to become a teacher?**

My passion for education stems from a desire to make a meaningful impact in learners' lives. Growing up, I was inspired by teachers who saw potential in me and nurtured it. I wanted to be able to provide the same for others, offering guidance and encouragement that could change the course of their lives.

## **Please tell us about your initiatives at the school you are currently teaching at.**

I've had the privilege of leading several impactful initiatives at my school, all aimed at building literacy levels and fostering a love for reading to improve reading comprehension; especially given the recent learning losses from the pandemic. I launched the first-ever Cape Argus Quiz for primary school learners, which fosters engagement in current affairs and general knowledge. Additionally, I organise annual spelling competitions, creating an environment that celebrates literacy and language skills. I also started a "Reading for Meaning" initiative to strengthen comprehension skills, a critical area for learner success. I initiated a reading club as an extracurricular activity, allowing learners to explore literature in a supportive and enjoyable environment. I conduct writing workshops for teachers throughout the province and facilitate the "How to Teach Reading for Meaning" workshop to empower educators in developing strong reading comprehension skills. I collaborate with our local library and EDULIS, the Western Cape Education Department's library, to expand learning resources and opportunities. Furthermore, I've integrated technology into language lessons through digital storytelling, enhancing learners' engagement and creative expression.

## **What drives you to persevere through challenges?**

I am driven by the belief that every learner has potential. Even when faced with challenges, knowing that I can make a difference in a learner's life gives me the resilience to persevere. The reward of seeing learners overcome obstacles keeps me focused and motivated.

## **Any advice to young teachers starting their careers?**

I would advise young teachers to remain adaptable and open to continuous learning. Building strong relationships with learners is key; once trust is established, effective learning can flourish. Finally, remember that growth takes time – for both learners and yourself.

## **Why did you decide to do your master's at SU?**

I chose Stellenbosch University because of its reputable Faculty of Education and its commitment to impactful research. SU provides a platform where I can engage with critical educational issues on both a local and global scale, equipping me to be an even better educator. In 2023, I was honoured to be selected by my supervisor, Professor Christa van der Walt, to conduct international research on multilingualism at Humboldt University in Berlin, Germany, which has enriched my perspective and deepened my commitment to inclusive education practices.

## **Future plans or goals regarding your career?**

Looking ahead, I am considering pursuing a PhD at Stellenbosch University. It has long been my dream to work at this prestigious institution, and I would love the opportunity to join the Faculty of Education as a lecturer while completing my studies. My goal is to make a meaningful contribution to educational policy and practice in South Africa, particularly in support of teachers.

## **How do you feel about education in South Africa?**

Education in South Africa faces numerous challenges, including resource disparities and learning losses. However, I am optimistic about the resilience of our educators and learners. With continued support and targeted reforms, I believe we can achieve transformative change.

## **What will help you as a teacher with your daily task?**

Support systems that prioritise teacher well-being and ongoing professional development are essential. Access to resources and technology in the classroom also significantly impacts daily teaching effectiveness and allows for more engaging, learner-centred learning experiences.



# 2024 Graduates reflect on their academic journey

*Educatio* asked a few of the Faculty's Top Achievers to share about the experiences and highlights during their years of study.



**Zoe-Grace Bennett**

Over the past four years, my journey at the Faculty of Education has been both transformative and rewarding. I will forever cherish the moments of growth – whether it was collaborating with staff and peers, engaging in leadership roles, or stepping into the classroom as a student teacher, where I had the privilege of connecting with learners and shaping their potential by fostering a love of learning.

Among the most cherished moments of my journey are the opportunities to collaborate with passionate individuals in fostering excellence in our Faculty, celebrating academic milestones together, and building lasting friendships and relationships that have enriched my life in countless ways.

Balancing my studies with leadership responsibilities required discipline, a clear sense of purpose, and a passion for serving others. This taught me invaluable life lessons, such as the importance of perseverance, accountability and the ability to inspire through action.

For the next chapter of my journey, I am stepping into an exciting new adventure by continuing my studies within the Faculty. This path reflects my commitment to shaping young minds and my unwavering belief in the life-changing power of education.

To friends and peers, I encourage you to embrace every opportunity that comes your way, to lead with compassion and courage, and to hold steadfast to your dreams – because with dedication, heart and a passion fuelled by purpose, you can achieve more than you ever imagined.

Thank you, SU Faculty of Education!



**Hannah Cable**

Studying education at Stellenbosch University has been one of the biggest privileges and blessings I have ever been given. Not only did I get to pursue my passion for education and teaching, but this degree paved the way for me to make new friends, discover more about myself, and build the foundation of a career I love.

Working under the high expertise of dedicated lecturers has allowed me to obtain a well-rounded education in this field, and every insightful conversation regarding the world of education with my mentor teachers has allowed me to grow into a confident and understanding educator.

Working with the learners in the classroom has been, without a doubt, the highlight of these four years of studying. Practical classroom experiences, seeing the learners understand a new mathematical sum or smile when being taught a new concept made every late night of studying and all the hard work put into my assignments worthwhile.

The advice I would give to other students, and something I often told myself, is to "remember your 'why'". When things get tough, or you start to doubt yourself, always remember why you are doing what you are doing in the first place – be that for the love of teaching or for the joy and passion for learning you want to instil in your learners.

Upon reflection on my four years of studying, I am filled with gratitude for the memories I have made, and although this chapter of my life is coming to an end, I am excited for my new chapter as a teacher to unfold!



**Victoria Nel**

Reflecting fills me with profound gratitude for the lifelong, treasured student memories. Although there were days of challenges, I will always fondly remember the immense knowledge, support and expertise imparted by the incredible lecturers in the Faculty of Education. They nurtured skills and built a foundation of knowledge that will guide me throughout my teaching career. They instilled in me a love for learning and emphasised the importance of being a lifelong learner. Their advice to embrace continuous learning and upskilling, to adapt to the ever-evolving needs of education and to remain passionate in all that we do, will always be at the forefront in my mind.

My tertiary journey has a few significant milestones. The first is being awarded a Rector's Award for Academic Excellence in my final year of studies. Being recognised for not only my academic success but my overall involvement and accomplishments in the Faculty of Education was a highlight of my undergraduate years. Additionally, being given the opportunity to represent my University and Faculty at the Association for Mathematics Education of South Africa (AMESA) Annual National Congress in 2023 is a core memory. Participating in this event was a moment of immense pride, as I had the honour of showcasing key knowledge and skills learnt in my mathematics lectures to esteemed professionals and leaders in the field. This experience not only validated my learning from SU but also inspired me to strive for excellence in my future career. Finally, a highlight of my student experience was the opportunity to build lifelong friendships and to create future networks.

To future students, my advice is this: do not wish time away. Before you know it, four years will have passed, and you'll be on the verge of graduating. Cherish every moment.



**Keren Parker**

It is with a full heart that my undergraduate studies draw to a close at Stellenbosch. Over the past four years, the Faculty of Education has become a special place where I have built new friendships and grown not just in knowledge, but also as a person.

As a first-year student, I often felt that those around me had such huge ambitions and had everything together. But I have since learned that most people were also in the process of figuring everything out and doing the best they can with the knowledge and skills that they have. I have also learned that asking for help and being humble enough to accept feedback is one's greatest asset.

Teaching is a difficult job, and no one has all the answers. Leaning on others and seeking advice is not a sign of weakness. To be a good teacher, one must first be a good learner, one who is willing and eager to learn. So, to the undergraduates who remain – be open to feedback, remain curious, and speak up when you are struggling.

In the Faculty there have been many lecturers who have helped me along my journey. I extend my gratitude to each of these incredible individuals.

Their generosity with their time and their kindness left a lasting impression on me. The camaraderie they created in sharing amusing stories from their own practice, which had our class in stitches, I will also treasure!

I look forward to collecting my own amusing stories, and making new memories as I follow God's calling to teach at a mission school in Villiersdorp in 2025.



PHOTOS: George Jonker

## Transformative ideas discussed at first TEDx StellenboschED event

The TEDxStellenboschED event, presented on 22 June 2024, was a landmark gathering that brought together educators, students, innovators and thought leaders to discuss transformative ideas in education.

The theme, *Emerge: Nurturing Ideas, Growing Futures*, focused on how education can foster personal growth, innovation and community impact. With 140 attendees, 11 speakers, four performers and various interactive activities, the event highlighted the power of education to inspire change. The event was a resounding success, meeting and surpassing our objectives of sparking dialogue, sharing innovative ideas and building connections among participants.

### Vision:

To become a flagship event that bridges the gap between academic research and community engagement, TEDxStellenboschED aims to inspire and empower a diverse audience by showcasing innovative ideas in education. We envision a collaborative space where educators, researchers, students and community members come together

to cultivate a future-driven dialogue, enhancing the social impact of science and education for the greater good.

### Event theme and objectives:

The theme, *Emerge: Nurturing Ideas, Growing Futures*, was carefully selected to reflect the transformative power of education and the importance of fostering environments where ideas can grow and evolve. It set the tone for an event that sought to inspire action and promote a new approach to addressing some of education's most pressing challenges.

The event objectives included providing a platform for thought leaders, educators and students to share innovative ideas and best practices in education and to foster collaboration and networking opportunities among attendees. Additionally, we were able to empower postgraduate students to share their research ideas at the event.

### Future plans

Looking ahead, TEDxStellenboschED aims to solidify its role as a registered social impact initiative. By focusing on incorporating event videos and talks into classroom teaching, we will enhance educational experiences and foster continuous innovation, ensuring that these transformative ideas have a lasting impact. - Delecia Davids



*Nicci Glanville*



*Prof Jonathan Jansen*



*Jane Rossouw*



*Thabani Mtsi*



*Wayde Groep*



*Jana du Plooy*



*Jean Greyling*



*Roy Williams*



*Ella Gardiner*



*Judy-Ann Cilliers*

# Hard work rewarded

Stellenbosch University presented the annual Rector's Awards for Outstanding Achievement at the end of 2024. The formal gala dinner celebrated the outstanding achievements of students in academic and co-curricular areas. Faculty of Education students **Mieke Matthee** and **Victoria Nel** received awards for academic excellence and **Ongeziwe Mali** received an award for sport (hockey).



*Mieke Matthee*



*Prof Madiba, Victoria Nel & Prof De Villiers*



*Ilhaam Groenewald, Ongeziwe Mali & Prof De Villiers*

## **Mieke Matthee (2024 PGCE graduate):**

**Please explain what you received the award for and what you accomplished in the field.**

I received the Rector's Award for Academic Excellence in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences.

**What does this award mean to you?**

It means a great deal. Even though achieving this award was not my main motivation for studying hard, receiving an award that acknowledges and rewards your effort is a great feeling.

**What are your future plans?**

I plan on being an accounting and economics teacher.

**Why did you decide to study education?**

Being a teacher is one of the most rewarding careers I think. It gives me the opportunity to make a difference in someone's life every single day. I had the best teachers who impacted my life incredibly and therefore I know what it can mean to a child when you support and value them.

"Being a teacher is one of the most rewarding careers I think. It gives me the opportunity to make a difference in someone's life every single day."

## **Victoria Nel (2024 BEd graduate):**

**What does this award mean to you?**

Achieving this Rector's Award is a huge accolade and a testament to not only following my dreams but the hard work, dedication, and effort I've put in over my four-year undergraduate. This award represents not only the academic growth I've achieved but also the personal development and resilience I've cultivated along the way. I would not have been able to achieve this without the invaluable guidance and support of my supportive lecturers, who have played a pivotal role in my journey in becoming an educator. This award motivates me to continue striving for excellence in my future career as an educator as I hope to make a meaningful impact in the lives of my learners.

**What are your future plans?**

I aspire to continue my studies in the field of education by enrolling in a postgraduate programme in 2025. This opportunity will allow me to further deepen my skills and knowledge as I embark on my journey of becoming a lifelong learner and striving to be the best teacher I can be.

**Why did you decide to study education?**

I initially enrolled in BA Law and began the course in 2020, but soon realised that it did not align with my true aspirations. I felt compelled to pursue the deep-rooted passion I had always nurtured: becoming a teacher and making a meaningful difference in the lives of others.

### Ongeziwe Mali (2024 third-year BEd student)

#### What does this award mean to you?

This award is special. Only a few people receive it and I'm blessed to be one of them. The cherry on top, I was in the last bunch to get it from Prof Wim de Villiers before his retirement.

#### Why did you decide to study education?

I have a passion for teaching. I've always loved seeing the learners' faces light up when they finally understand something. It brings me great joy. Additionally, to change the narrative on education in the impoverished areas.

#### Please tell us about your hockey journey.

I started hockey in Grade 4, when I was ten years old, at Summerwood Primary School in Port Elizabeth. I never knew what a hockey stick was, nor did I know what the sport was, but I had an LO project to do with a friend of mine and she had hockey practice prior to going home. She then invited me to go with her to go play as we were partners in a project. My love for hockey began that day, and it never ever ended.

I proceeded to play in high school where I made the respective national teams in my respective school ages and proceeded to make the national team for adults at the age of 18. I made my debut at the Commonwealth Games in 2018 and proceeded to play at the World Cup at age 19. Afterwards, I got a scholarship to study at James Madison University in America, where I studied occupational therapy for two years. In 2021, I enrolled at Maties and studied education. Since then, I have been playing for the Maties' first hockey team. I represented SA at the Olympic Games in 2024 as part of the South African Women's Hockey team.

#### Did you ever experience challenges and how did you handle them?

Yes, I have experienced challenges in sports. Challenges such as exclusion from the team due to fitness or exclusion from the team due to injuries, and of course it is not a nice feeling for an athlete who wants to perform at an elite level. What helped

me the most was my faith in God and trusting the process throughout my journey, because I knew what doesn't kill me makes me stronger and with my faith I knew that the Lord has plans for me – plans to prosper, not to harm me but to give me hope and a new future. Taking that into every single challenge or trial and tribulation that I've faced I knew that there's a light at the end of the tunnel.

#### Do you have a mentor/coach/teacher who had a positive impact on your life?

I have a coach, Jeanette Makkie, from my high school who helped me to become the player that I currently am. We still speak about the system and about what happens on the field when I play and what I should work on. She has been such an impeccable individual in my life, and she has played such an amazing and huge role in making me the player that I am. I am always so grateful to have her in my life and I will never ever forget who she is as an individual and as a mentor/coach.

#### How do you balance your studies and sport and keep up with everything?

The way in which I balance my studies is by making my yearly planner and my diary my best friends. I love being organised and knowing when the due dates for assignments and when the tests are. This keeps me in control of my studies while I'm away. It is very difficult being a student athlete as well as an international athlete as everything is demanding, but I know that making sure that I stay on top of my academic work is crucial to graduating in due time. So, I would definitely say that planning my year out at the beginning of the year as well as planning my days the night before, is crucial.

#### Any advice for young sport stars?

Deep within you lies a seed of greatness waiting to be germinated. So, each person and each player has the seed inside of them. It is up to that player or that person to nurture the seed and to ensure that that seed grows into becoming a very beautiful flower in one's life. Another one is never to stop believing in yourself, for God works in mysterious ways. Always trust in God's timing.



# Education Student Committee

"Our mission is to make the Faculty of Education  
a home away from home."



Tyrese Human  
Chairperson



Revando van Wyk  
Vice-Chairperson



Cathrine Nieuwenhysen  
Secretary



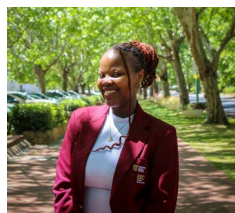
Lihle Shabangu  
Treasurer



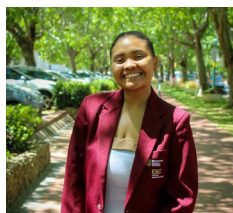
Bjorn van Sensie  
Social Impact



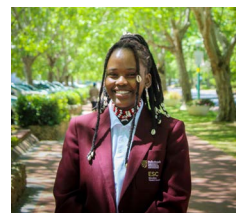
Ndikhokele Mgcineni  
Transformation



Sisipho Maliwa  
Student Relations



Stefney-Rose de Vries  
Marketing & Image  
Transformation



Vee Tshongweni  
Professional  
Development



Wandile Mqadi  
Events

The Education Student Committee (ESC) for 2024/2025 recognises, values and embraces the voices of all students in the Faculty of Education. Aligned with our core values of excellence, accountability, integrity, human dignity and respect, and the promotion of innovation and ownership, we are committed to creating a collaborative and inclusive environment within the Faculty of Education at Stellenbosch University.

Guided by the principles of Listening, Engaging, Actind and Delivering (L.E.A.D.), we aim to build a strong, supportive community that empowers students and enriches their experiences. Our approach begins with listening to the concerns and questions of the student body. We then engage with students to explore the best ways forward, encouraging open dialogue and mutual respect. Next, we act on their concerns within our capacity, and finally, we deliver outcomes back to the student body, ensuring transparency and accountability every step of the way.

Looking ahead to the 2025 academic year, our vision is focused on bringing together the management, staff, lecturers and students who make up the Faculty of Education, to work in unison to foster a culture of trust, engagement and shared purpose. The ESC pledges to facilitate open collaboration in defining, planning and implementing initiatives that empower our student body.

Our mission is to create and cultivate a platform where students' voices are not only heard but also acknowledged and valued. The ESC is dedicated to enhancing the academic, social and personal well-being of students by providing meaningful opportunities for communication, collaboration and leadership development.

For the 2025 year, one of our key goals is to strengthen student engagement with the various departments within the Faculty. We aim to foster stronger connections and trust between students and faculty members, creating an environment where students feel comfortable and supported when interacting with different departments. This rapport will enhance approachability, build unity, and ensure that students can engage with faculty with confidence.

As ESC members, we understand that the positions we hold are a privilege and a responsibility. Our primary role is to serve the fundamental well-being of the students and improve their overall experience. These positions are not isolated, and we are committed to involving students in the initiatives we have planned for the academic year ahead.

We invite you to join us in our mission to make the Faculty of Education a home away from home, a place where every student can feel supported, valued and empowered.

# A dance to remember for the fourth years of 2024

The fourth-year dance, held at the picturesque Vredenheim Wine Farm in October 2024, was a resounding success. Lecturers and final-year students gathered in a joyful atmosphere to celebrate this special milestone. The evening was filled with laughter, unity, and a vibrant display of diversity as students came together in a spirit of collaboration. A heartfelt thank you to the management team and lecturers who joined us and made the evening even more memorable with their presence.

We are deeply thankful to everyone who contributed to making this event unforgettable and are grateful for the shared experience.

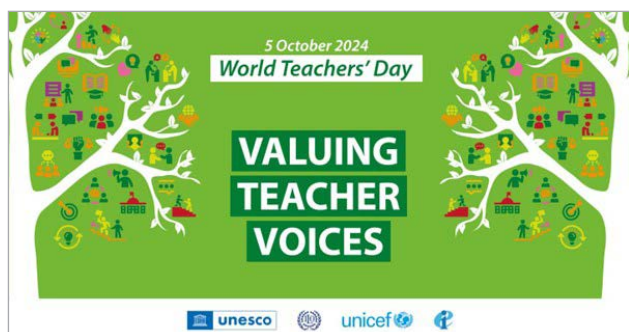
2023/2024 Events Planner: Nerisha Jagwanth  
DJ: Kurt Brown  
Photographer: Abraham Jantjies



# Teacher voices matter

- Dr Chrischar Rock  
(Practical Learning Coordinator)

In 2024, the World Teachers' Day campaign focused on *"Valuing teacher voices: Towards a new social contract for education"*. This theme underscores the urgency of engaging with teachers to address the challenges they face but, most importantly, to acknowledge and benefit from the expert knowledge and input they bring to education. For this reason, the Practical Learning team approached staff and our pre-service teachers to share their thoughts and inputs on this important day in our calendar year and what they would like to voice as part of the campaign.



## Prof Michael le Cordeur

The government's recent decision to cut teaching posts has led to widespread unhappiness in education circles. Having been a teacher myself for many years as well as a principal, I know that a very difficult time awaits teachers, principals and newly qualified teachers. I am aware of the negative impact that the layoff of teachers will have on the morale of the education community. The whole process is extremely traumatic for teachers and has a paralysing effect on education as a whole. Many teachers, especially the recently qualified teachers, start doubting themselves and their abilities, which leads to low morale. We see more and more young teachers moving overseas to find a home elsewhere.

However, my plea to our student teachers is to stay focused and to stay here. Make sure that you qualify as well as you can. Being a teacher is one of the most rewarding careers. To become a teacher means you have the potential to interact with learners at all stages of development. Great teachers want to play a part in shaping the person their learners will become. You can do that by encouraging them to realise their potential. Always remember: Teachers do more than just teach. They try to make a difference in the lives of learners – the adults of the future. Your impact extends far beyond the classroom. You are their friend, a mentor, and a parent.

## We asked our pre-service teachers to share their thoughts on the 2024 World Teacher Day campaign. This is what some had to say:

"To me, being a teacher is not just a profession; it's a joyful journey of inspiring young minds, sparking curiosity, and nurturing a love for learning. Every day is an opportunity to create a vibrant classroom filled with laughter, creativity, and the thrill of discovery. Remember, the impact we have on our students can shape their futures; so let's embrace each moment with enthusiasm and a heart full of hope!"

"Being a teacher is a profound calling that transcends mere instruction; it is about igniting curiosity, nurturing critical thinking, and shaping not just minds but hearts. It involves creating a safe space for vulnerability and growth, where every learner feels valued and inspired to explore their own potential. Teaching is a commitment to lifelong learning, both for myself and my learners, and a chance to make a lasting impact on future generations."

"Let the children play!" – **Carmelita Oosthuizen**

"Use more art, drama and interactive, stimulating activities with all learners!" – **Tayla Pflugler**

"Give more attention to what learners are saying and going through!" – **Carina Swart**

"Expose learners to diverse and multicultural literature in the foundation phase. This should be present in all classrooms." – **Lauren van Collier**

**An integral part of the journey in becoming a teacher is the school-based practicum. This year, we had more than 1 000 pre-service teachers in schools across the country! In Practical Learning, much of our time, after the school-based practicum, is focused on reflecting on what has been learnt and how we can continue our development journeys as teachers in the making.**

## We asked our pre-service teachers to share their experiences and reflections from their 2024 school-based practicum:

"The most rewarding aspect of my school-based practicum has been the opportunity to cultivate



Students during practicals at schools in 2024.

and refine my unique teaching style, allowing me to connect with students in meaningful ways and create an engaging learning environment."

"Having an assessor look at me and say, 'I would hire you if I were opening a school'. To have someone see my hard work and love for the learners and acknowledge it was truly special."

"The most rewarding aspect of my school-based practicum has been the opportunity to build meaningful relationships with my learners. Observing their individual growth, celebrating their successes, and providing support during challenges have deepened my understanding of the teaching profession and reinforced my commitment to creating an inclusive, engaging learning environment. Each interaction has highlighted the significant role a teacher plays in shaping a learner's journey."

"Being able to be part of forming learners, helping to make a change in such a small amount of time."

**As we bid farewell to our BEd IV and PGCE cohorts, some of our lecturers shared a few wise words:**

**Ms Lynn Chambers**

***In your novice teacher toolkit, please have ...*** a go-to mentor or colleague for advice, support, and encouragement when needed. Whether you're

dealing with a challenging classroom issue, an endless to-do list, or just need to vent, having someone who's been there and understands the ups and downs of teaching is essential.

**Dr Elzahn Rinquest**

***What I wish I had known as a first-year teacher ...*** is that teaching is more than a job. It's a transformative experience. I thought it was a stepping stone, but it became a life lesson. Teaching taught me dedication, empathy, and the importance of listening. It showed me the power of authenticity and the profound impact you can have on young lives. It changed me forever.

**Ms Aggie Lebeth**

***In your novice teacher toolkit, please have ...***

**Guts!!** Please/Ndiyacela, loads of it. This guts thingy needs to come from the bottom of your belly, from the deepest pit of your heart and from the brain ne. Do you hear me?? Survival is what you need to be able to do. This I believe you can and that you WILL. You will teach maths, so please I beg you, have heart and have the belief that every child can achieve!!

**Content knowledge.** Yes!! You need a whole lot of this. If you don't feel confident then do something about it. What on earth are you waiting for? I expect you to have this in your toolkit.

**Trust.** Trust that I have prepared you to teach mathematics. I trust myself, but do you trust yourself? Trust that you can read and understand what children need to learn maths, trust in your

ability to know what to do and trust that you know how to encourage little ones to do the best they can in the maths classroom. Why? Because they will believe that you believe that they can achieve.

### Dr Shannon Bishop-Swart

***In your novice teacher toolkit, please have*** ...teacher well-being in mind. Take care to do something positive for yourself every day, whether it is meditating, writing in a journal, talking to a friend or family member, or taking a walk. If you don't take care of yourself, you can't take care of others.

## To conclude, we asked some of our final-year students what advice they would give to new first-year students in 2025:

Embrace your profession with passion and enthusiasm. Ask questions, seek clarity, and dive into every opportunity. Get involved in your community and collaborate with fellow educators. Confide in your lecturers – they're there to support you. And remember, don't procrastinate; seize the day and tackle what you can do today rather than waiting for tomorrow. Every small step you take now can lead to significant growth and success!

– **Paige Nass**

Don't lose sight of your passion – the learners – while you study. There will be many policy changes and workload challenges that come with teaching, but you cannot let those hinder you from loving your learners and teaching them to the best of your ability. Remember why you started teaching.

– **Keren Parker**

Always remember the reason why you chose to study education. – **Hannah Cable**

Always believe in yourself. Trust your abilities and instincts and remember that your unique perspective is valuable. Embrace challenges as opportunities for growth, and don't be afraid to take risks. Confidence in yourself will empower you to make a meaningful impact in education and beyond. – **Jessica Hackett**

In reflecting on the past four years, the biggest piece of advice I can give is to find your people. Be brave and talk to the person next to you on the first day. The two girls I met during welcoming walked the four-year journey with me side by side and are two of my lifelong best friends. They made all the tough times easier, and I have countless moments of us laughing so hard that our stomachs hurt. Having a community of people who lift you up, who study education and also those OUTSIDE of the Faculty are key to your success, both professionally and personally. Enjoy the journey, try your best and give yourself grace. Four years seem long and daunting, but you blink, and you are in your final term of the final year, embarking on the next chapter. So, make the most of the learning curves, of being uncomfortable spaces and places, because you learn the most in those situations. In tough times, remind yourself of why you are here and what made you want to become a teacher. Good luck and see you on the other side! P.S. You're going to spend A LOT of money on coffee, especially during prac, so start saving up! – **Victoria Nel**



Students during practicals at schools in 2024.

# Lecturer of the year 2024 awarded

Ms Lynn Chambers, Prof Nuraan Davids and Ms Agatha Lebethe are the top lecturers in the Faculty of Education according to student votes.



*Ms Lynn Chambers*



*Prof Nuraan Davids*



*Ms Agatha Lebethe*

## Ms Lynn Chambers:

### What does this award mean to you?

It is very meaningful to me because it represents the trust, appreciation and recognition of my students, whose success means the world to me. As educators, we rarely see the full ripple effects of our work, but I regularly remind myself that a teacher touches eternity – we cannot know where our influence ends (Henry Adams). When I teach, I feel the presence of not only my students in the room but also the thousands of children whose lives they will shape. This award is a reminder of that impact and a call to continue striving for excellence.

### What do you enjoy most about lecturing?

Each lecture is an opportunity to engage with the lived experiences, ideas, challenges and aspirations of my students while we work together to build the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to become excellent teachers. The thought that my work contributes to their growth and, in turn, to the lives of their future learners, is incredibly fulfilling.

### What motivates you to excel?

I am motivated by the goal of preparing my students to be the best they can be. The world of education is dynamic, facing rapid technological shifts while still demanding that teachers remain effective in any context, no matter what resources they have at hand. In 2024, I started coaching my students on how to use generative AI as a tool to lighten the often-overwhelming workload of teachers. We experimented with prompting techniques to create the best possible (SMART!) lesson objectives – a cornerstone of effective lesson planning. In 2025, I will extend this to the area of differentiation, equipping my students to use technology to help them meet the needs of all their learners in any given lesson. Excellence feels like a necessity

because the skills they learn here will impact their everyday lives as teachers, and the lives of their learners.

### Your advice to students?

Lean into the learning process and fully embrace the journey of becoming a teacher. Spend as much time as possible during your undergraduate years in school environments. Identify teachers you admire and learn as much as possible from them. And above all, remember that teaching is a profession of influence: your work shapes the future.

## Prof Nuraan Davids:

### What does this award mean to you?

I am humbled and honoured by this award, because it shows that I have succeeded in demonstrating the beauty and power of teaching. Teaching is an emotive process; it is deeply dependent on how a teacher connects with students, how they feel not only about the subject, but also about the teacher. In turn, my teaching is dependent on my students – their participation, interest and curiosity. That I have been honoured in this way, can only mean that I have had an amazing group of students.

### What do you enjoy most about lecturing?

My students, their youthful energy, their unknowing wisdom about the world around them and their courage to want to create a better world. I see the opportunity to teach as a tremendous privilege. I don't think there is a greater privilege than teaching, and engaging with young people. Every single year I meet new groups of students, from a myriad contexts, with a myriad expectations and challenges. There is nothing more fulfilling than walking a path with students and watching them grow in their thinking, questioning and writing. Regardless of the number of students in my

class, teaching is an intimate encounter. It involves much more than sharing knowledge. It is a space of deliberation, debate, provocation, frustration and laughter. This is how I define my teaching. This is what I *need* from my teaching. It is the only way that I know learning is possible.

#### **What motivates you to excel?**

To live a meaningful life by making a difference, whether it is through my teaching or writing. I am acutely aware of the privilege of my position, and with that comes an immense responsibility to give 100% of myself in all that I do, professionally and personally.

#### **Your advice to students?**

Teaching is a gentle profession; it requires love, warmth, care, compassion and hope. It matters what you say, and how you treat those you teach. So, be gentle so that you might be remembered not only as a teacher, but as someone who saw and awakened the good in those you teach.

### **Ms Agatha Lebethe:**

#### **What does this award mean to you?**

Receiving the Lecturer of the Year award is an incredible honour and a humbling experience. It signifies recognition of my dedication and passion for the teaching of mathematics. This award is not just a personal achievement but a testament to the collaborative efforts of my colleagues and the enthusiasm of my students. It motivates me to continue striving for excellence and to continue being innovative in my teaching methods to ensure that students receive the best possible education.

#### **What do you enjoy most about lecturing?**

What I enjoy most about lecturing is the opportunity to inspire and engage with students. Seeing the moment when a complex concept clicks for a student is incredibly rewarding. I love fostering a learning environment where students feel comfortable to ask questions, think critically, and develop a genuine interest in mathematics education. The dynamic interaction with students keeps me energised and constantly learning, which is both challenging and fulfilling.

#### **What motivates you to excel?**

My primary motivation comes from my students. Their curiosity, determination and progress drive me to continuously improve my teaching methods. Additionally, the support of and collaboration with my colleagues inspire me to innovate and stay updated on the latest educational practices. I am also motivated by the impact that effective teaching can have on students' lives, helping them to build a strong foundation for their future careers and personal growth.

#### **Your advice to students?**

My advice to students is to embrace the learning process with an open mind and a positive attitude. Don't be afraid to ask questions and seek help when needed. Remember that making mistakes is a natural part of learning. Stay curious and be proactive in your studies. Believe in your abilities and never underestimate the power of hard work and dedication.



# Retirement: Dr Erna Lampen

Dr Erna Lampen, senior lecturer in Mathematics in the Department Curriculum Studies retired at the end of 2024. *Educatio* asked her a few questions.

## How long were you with the Faculty of Education and what did your career path look like up to this point?

I have been here for 10 years and I came here from Wits School of Education. I entered academia late, only at the age of 40. But I was involved with the teaching of mathematics throughout my whole career, first as high school teacher, and then as nursery and primary school teacher in the Montessori system, and then as facilitator of basic mathematical literacy for adults. My journey with Stellenbosch started in the 1980s, when I worked as co-researcher with Piet Human, Alwyn Olivier and Hanlie Murray and did my master's degree under Hanlie Murray. This was an opportunity granted to few and it shaped me. The heritage of those three in teaching mathematics is still great and esteemed worldwide, but uncelebrated by their own alma mater. Working with them I could learn to develop teaching materials and academically develop my knowledge and experience of pedagogy and didactics.

## Could you mention a few of the highlights of your career?

Any researcher who also finds themselves in reflective practice, is sometimes amazed about what they produce – "Did I write this? Piaget is of the same opinion!" Of course this is said tongue in cheek, but the times when great researchers in my field came to talk to me at conferences, and when I could experience during workshops by the greats that my thinking was in line with theirs, was wonderful. One specific highlight was when Anna Sfard told me during a workshop at Wits that she could see that it was worth her while to listen when I say something! And my master's thesis is in the library of the Freudenthal Institute! But other highlights are the letters written to me by students over the years, about how their "minds opened up".

## What will you miss about the job and what won't you miss?

Academia is definitely not financially rewarding – my Polo will have to be my transport until the day I die – but I will miss the privilege of attending conferences and seeing the world in this way. I will not miss the superficialising competition that has been going on at universities over the last few years. This is what causes silos and makes people mistrust one another. And I remember that somewhere in Lamentations the question is asked – what is the value of all the writing? At the end of my career, I could collaborate with an international group that had to prepare a review of the teaching of statistics at school level for



ICMI. I was devil's advocate – worldwide, academics had been working hard for at least 30 years to reform the teaching of statistics, but the Germans, Americans, Japanese, British and Australians had to accede that, despite the fact that all this research led to hundreds of doctorates, it changed very little about school practice.

## Do you have any plans for the future?

I find myself as sharp as a razor blade now and I still have much to contribute. I would like to become involved in teacher training in the private sector or as community service. Education in our country finds itself at a bifurcation once more, just like in 1995. The rest of the world is currently working on curricula that place statistics and modelling and the integration of learning areas at the forefront in a pedagogy that continues to let learners experience that learning can only grow from problems. Here we have once more, just like then, a small window of political will to change, but we are missing it because academics and the bureaucracy are avoiding one another. I will

be looking for opportunities to contribute to change at a decision-making level.

**Any wisdom/useful advice you acquired over time and would like to share?**

Good communication is much more difficult than mathematics! The old adage that it is better to listen than to speak, also applies to teaching mathematics. One can train animals such as bonobos, dolphins or parrots to appear to be thinking, if the trainer has enough patience to put them through their routine over and over again and if the animal is rewarded regularly and richly enough. One cannot do this with people.

People want to understand and make sense. It is a misconception that mathematics is simply practice and students who rejected mathematics in circumstances where they had been denied the opportunity to think and to understand, show their intelligence by this rejection.

I retire as a firm constructivist and for me the epistemology plays out in that I accept that what people do makes sense to them, even if it is different from what I would prefer (and wrong or false in mathematics). Communication and learning are only possible if I try to understand what sense it makes to them and then work with that way of thinking. A constructivist approach to life simply entails trying to place oneself into the shoes and thoughts of one's fellow man. This brings reconciliation.

We all have strong and weak points. Decide to focus on colleagues' strong points and 'have their backs' with regard to their weak points. Thanks to all who obviated my weak points (the lack of will in respect of administrative order and empty desks, amongst others)!

What one reads in the newspaper, or the scare-mongering that takes place in the halls, is seldom what really plays out in communities. We are 60 million people in Mzansi. I have never even seen, or read about, or heard about one million people gathered together to instigate destruction or hatred.

## Retirement: Ms Sarie Wilbers



**How long were you with the Library/Faculty of Education?**

01 Julie 1988 was my first day at the Library. I was appointed as the subject librarian for Social Sciences. At the time it was still known as the JS Gericke Library. From 06 Julie 2006 on, I was the faculty librarian for the Faculty of Education.

**Please tell us about some of the highlights of your career?**

- Being the faculty librarian for the Faculty of Education, although I was somewhat afraid of change at the start. I was embraced by the friendly, appreciative staff of the Faculty.
- Students, whom I assisted up to the successful completion of their studies, leave me feeling very grateful.
- Moving up 50 places on the Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2023-2024 to among the top 200 faculties of education worldwide.

**What will you miss about the job and what won't you miss?**

My colleagues in the Faculty and in the Library. Renewal is not always nice, but it is necessary for development as a person and in the end, you realise it was for the best. Won't miss: Writing reports and getting up early in winter.

**Any plans for the future?**

I won't have any trouble keeping busy. Visiting, travelling, reading, community work and boxes and boxes of photographs that have to be sorted out, will keep me very busy. My husband will be very glad of my help in the garden.

**Any message to colleagues or students?**

Make use of opportunities, work hard but try to maintain a balance between your career and/or studies and spending time with loved ones and friends. What I strive for: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

# Retirement: Prof Michael le Cordeur

Prof Michael le Cordeur, Vice-Dean: Teaching and Learning, retired at the end of 2024. He shared about his career and highlights.



*Prof Le Cordeur and his wife, Sonia, with Prof Madiba.*

## **Where did your love of teaching and education start?**

I used to play school from a very young age and my five brothers and sisters just had to suffer my 'teaching' them. But in this way I also taught my older brother to read when I was still a child. This is where my love of reading comes from. From a very young age I saw how reading and education could open worlds to one. I read literally thousands of books from our local library; a love I shared with my parents.

## **Was there a teacher who inspired you as a child?**

Yes, there were many. Miss Sarena Samaai taught me to read and Mr Ivan Samaai (her brother-in-law) was a father figure to me in high school. Both of them saw my potential and provided me with opportunities. Ivan was also the one who suggested that I write the book about his eldest brother, the tennis legend, Davey Samaai.

## **Please provide us with a short synopsis of your career from the start to the present.**

My mother sent me to school when I was five and my elder brother was six, as she could not deal with both of us at home. Then we both passed! At 16 I had the opportunity to tour Europe with the Boy Scouts as part of the World Jamboree. I wrote matric at the age of 17 as part of the class of 1976. Hence, I experienced 16 June 1976 first hand. Our exams were disrupted, our school was burnt

down and I could only write matric at a later stage. Nevertheless, I still passed with matriculation exemption and a first class (today's A symbol) and received a state bursary to study BA (Languages) at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) – the only university in those days that coloured people could attend.

Here I studied under legends such as Prof Jakes Gerwel and Prof Tony Links and Prof Adam Small. What a privilege! I became involved in student politics and the black consciousness movement and took part in protest action. Adam Small sided with the students, which led to his suspension. Thereafter, I would have a lifelong relationship with Uncle Adam and it is thanks to him and Prof Gerwel that I became a lecturer in Afrikaanse literature. Then followed the Diploma in Higher Education (HDE), whereafter I taught at my alma mater, High School Berg River, in Wellington. This was before all coloured schools, with the drawing of a single line, were changed to 'secondary schools'. With my small salary, I continued my studies for an honours degree and a BEd at UNISA. In the meantime, I became the head of department (Afrikaans) and then the vice-principal of Weltevrede Secondary and at 37, I became the youngest principal in Stellenbosch when I took the reins at Kylemore High School. I continued my studies at this Faculty (Curriculum Studies) and obtained my MEd in 1992 under Prof Arend Carl as my supervisor. After my



*Prof Le Cordeur and Lorraine van As (Department Curriculum Studies: Senior Secretary), the first person he met at Stellenbosch University and whom he spent 32 years working with.*

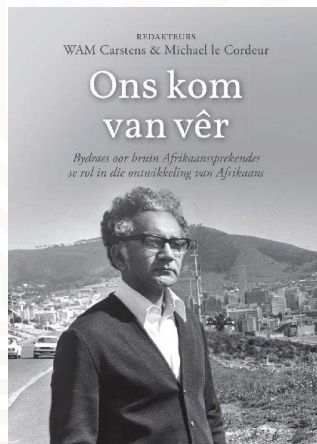
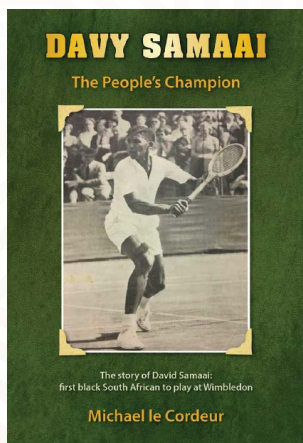
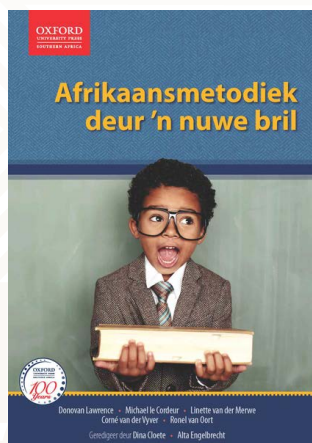
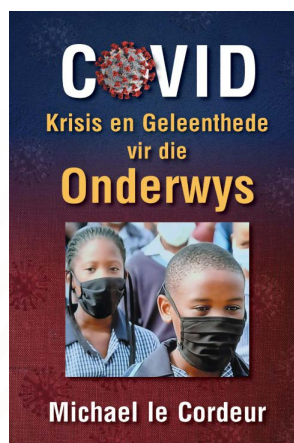
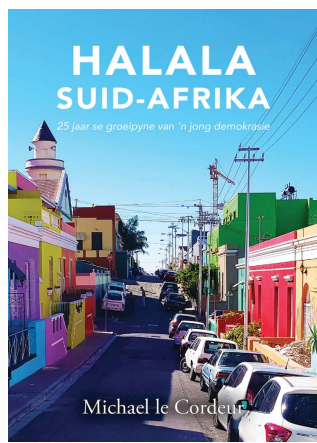
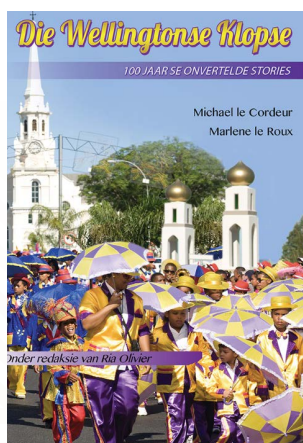
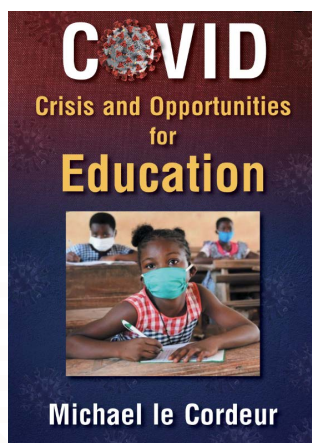
term as principal, I was appointed as Area Manager of Education for Stellenbosch and its districts in 2000 – a position I held for eight years. At the same time, I was doing research for a PhD on the reading deficits of learners as I, as area manager, experienced them at schools in Stellenbosch. I obtained my doctorate in 2004 under Dr Hannie Menkveld as supervisor.

In 2009, I made the leap to the Faculty of Education at the University and started all the way at the bottom once more: as lecturer and later senior lecturer and head of Afrikaans in the Department of Curriculum Studies. I was promoted to associate professor and

eventually full professor. I was, amongst others, chair of the BEd committee when this programme was renewed and chair of the Department of Curriculum Studies for two terms. Thereafter I was the chair of the department for another year, as well as Vice Dean of Teaching and Learning. And now I am retiring as Vice Dean of Teaching and Learning after a career of 15 years at SU.

### **What were some of the biggest highlights of your career?**

It is hard to say: there was obtaining the doctorate and being appointed as professor, and my parents regarded being a principal as a great honour. But I believe that the greatest achievement of any teacher or lecturer lies in how their students perform. When my school (a poor rural school) for the first time had a 100% pass rate in matric I was bursting with pride. The certificate is still up on the wall in the lobby of the school. My first doctoral student was quite special and also the first book I had published. I have received many awards: five rector's awards, the chancellor's award and a gold medal from the Academy for Science and Art. The greatest honour, for me, was the Neville Alexander Award for my lifelong contribution to Afrikaans. Another honour was the fact that Adam Small mentioned my name as someone who had promoted his work among the students at SU in his acceptance speech on receiving the Hertzog Prize. And when Franklin Sonn released his book the other day, it included an acknowledgement that I had made a university language of Kaaps.



*A few of Prof le Cordeur's published books.*

**Were you inspired by any mentors, colleagues or other authors?**

I have had several mentors in my life (and still have some of them): Sarena Samaai who taught me to read and the value of reading as an empowering skill; my teacher at high school, who I am still friends with, Ivan Samaai, who taught me the virtue of *never quitting*; my education lecturer, Brian O'Connell, who constantly emphasised the importance of hard work; my Afrikaans professor, Jakes Gerwel, who cultivated a lifelong love of Afrikaans literature in me; my philosophy professor, Adam Small, who motivated me to become a writer; and Franklin Sonn, who showed me the political game in South Africa.

**You are often in the media – has there been a specific interview on television or radio that stands out to you?**

It is anything but an honour. One receives a lot of hate speech from people. Nothing really stands out but I do regard it as a privilege that I was given the opportunity to share my research and my work and opinions with others thanks to the media.

**You have received many awards – which one means the most to you?**

As mentioned above, the Neville Alexander Award stands out. This award is still displayed in my office. Alexander is regarded as an icon of the struggle and Afrikaans education and was one of the few people who Mandela listened to. We drafted the Western Cape Language Policy with him. It is, therefore, huge to receive an award named after him and moreover for my work that I love so much!

**You have published several books. How do you go about writing a book? What is the process and how long does it take, more or less?**

It changes. No process is the same. For instance, my first school textbook was published after the publisher of the series of textbooks read an article about my master's degree. She asked me to convert my master's thesis to a school textbook. The response was overwhelming and more than one million school textbooks were sold across the country. Then the PhD thesis followed and the same happened. Thereafter, the publisher asked me to update the series of textbooks for Afrikaans First Language from grades 7 to 12 every five years. This was followed by another publisher who wanted me to help write the textbook for first additional language. One thing followed the other. When I moved to Stellenbosch University, I found that there were very few textbooks for Afrikaans methodology available in Afrikaans. So I wrote a new textbook in collaboration with a number of colleagues. There was also no Afrikaans book on research methods for Afrikaans students. So I asked a few colleagues at other universities to write the textbook, "*n Gids vir beginnervorsers*", with me. Other books were written over literal years: The book about Davy

Samaai was on the back burner for more than three years. When Covid arrived in 2020, I decided to use the crisis as an opportunity to finish the book. Then the pandemic lasted much longer and I decided also to have the book translated to Afrikaans! So I named the book: "*Covid: 'n Krisis met geleenthede vir die Onderwys*". And yes, if you want to write books, you have to say goodbye to sleep. Almost 80% of my writing is done during the night or in the early morning hours.

**What advice do you have for staff and students who wish to have a career in education?**

Students and young teachers have every right to become angry at a child, because you are human. But the following day, you have to put this behind you, smile, forgive and start afresh. If you cannot do this, then you are not a teacher and you should rather go and do something else.

**What are your plans for the future? Will you still be involved with education and Afrikaans?**

I was appointed as emeritus professor; so I will definitely still be involved with the Faculty of Education and postgraduate Afrikaans students. But not full time. There are still MANY books to be written. I have also been approached to do consulting work such as the training of principals and governing bodies for NGOs. I have also recently been appointed as the new chair of the *Stigting vir Bemagtiging deur Afrikaans* (SBA) and I am looking forward to my work there to make a difference to our children's reading skills through reading development among the youth.

**How do you see the future for education and Afrikaans in SA?**

The future for Afrikaans has never been as bright as it is now. Just because it is fading away at Stellenbosch does not mean that the rest of us are going to stop speaking, writing, singing and writing poetry in Afrikaans. There are already plans for an Afrikaans university in my (Paarl-Wellington) area. I am less excited about education. The deficits in SA's black and coloured schools are horrific and they will be costing our country dearly. A child that is not in school is a child that will be causing problems for us all. This is why the staff of this Faculty should be very aware of the seriousness of their work. Only education can turn this situation around.

**Name three things you do apart from your career.**

I have been doing a lot of research about my hobby, growing chrysanthemums, for which I have won many prizes. I look forward to spending time in the garden with my wife, while I work on an Afrikaans book on the growing of chrysanthemums, because there is nothing like that available at the moment. Due to my work, I have seen enough of Europe, the USA and the East. I would now like to explore our own country by visiting the Namib desert, Victoria Falls and the Drakensberg in a 4x4!

# Social Impact Week create awareness



*Prof Madiba with the Faculty of Education's Social Impact Project Leaders.*

The Faculty of Education presented a Social Impact Week at the beginning of October 2024. A week-long exhibition of the various projects as well as a social event was presented.

Prof Melanie Moen, head of social impact in the Faculty of Education, and Prof Mbulungeni Madiba, Dean, wanted to create an opportunity to inform students and staff about the various projects offered by the Faculty and to encourage participation.

Visit the website for more information about the faculty's different social impact projects and contact details:

<https://www.sun.ac.za/english/faculty/education/social-impact>

## **Projects presented by the Faculty:**

- Basic needs for better education
- Compassionate care to alleviate violence in children
- I can read
- MobileX
- Teacher Calm
- Towards evidence-based smartphone management in SA high schools
- Transnet-Phelophepa Healthcare Train Project
- Breede DigiCluster
- Family Math
- Key Concepts in Science
- SciMathUS
- Stellenbosch Hub
- Teacher Professional Learning

A big thank you to Limnos Bakery, Let's Meat and Henties who sponsored the social event.



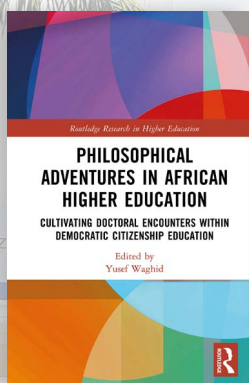
Staff and students at the Social Impact Week social event.

Left: Mr Peters (SU Division of Social Impact), Dr Mkhize (Head of SU Division of Social Impact), Prof Madiba (Dean Faculty of Education) and Prof Moen (Head Faculty of Education Social Impact).

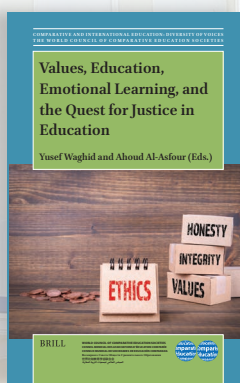
# Published books by Faculty of Education staff 2024



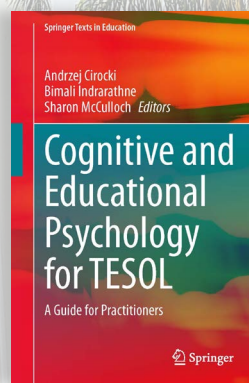
Prof Peter Rule



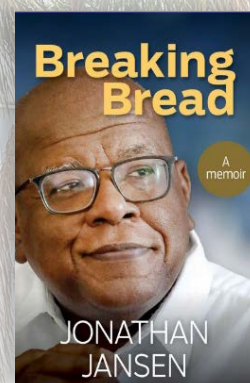
Prof Yusuf Waghid



Prof Yusuf Waghid



Prof Andrzej Cirocki  
(extraordinary  
professor)



Prof Jonathan Jansen



Dr Zelda Barends



<https://www.sun.ac.za/english/faculty/education>