

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONS

2021

1st semester issue

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Prof Veonna Goliath

Dear Colleagues and Students

It is my pleasure to welcome staff and students to the second semester of 2021, which effectively started on 24 August for the social work modules. Our second semester ends on 26 November 2021, and the university spring recess is from 24 September - 01 October 2021.

It is the final stretch for our FOURTH YEARS and our POSTGRADUATE students aiming to submit their research for graduation in April 2022. I wish you a very special and memorable final stretch.

The first half of the year remained quite difficult for us as staff, as we chartered the boundary-less way of working; lost a former colleague Dr Aldene Luck who passed in July, whilst journeying with several of our staff and students going through complex traumas. On a positive note, we celebrated Dr Natalie Mansvelt who graduated with her PhD in April 2021. We similarly honour our 9 Masters graduates (contract staff members names are in italics): *Desiree Konstabel*; Tankiso Phakane; Philisande Ndwanya; Vimbayi Chinyayi; Liziwe Mavongwana; *Retha Moletsane*; Karen Calitz; Busi Madikizela and *Lungile Ngwenya*.

A particular highlight of semester 1 of 2021 was the AVP (Alternative to violence) Training that our Social work mentors attended. One of our 4th year students, Debaneigh Jordaan, who is an accredited AVP facilitator, facilitated the online training, along with three colleagues from NPO, SADRAT. Another highlight is the increase in scholarly publications by our staff, despite the extended working hours and energy invested to lend emotional and academic support to our students. We are presenting the fourth year in our new curriculum for the first time this year, and our 4th years have been in practicum placements (NPOs, child and youth care centres and schools) since the start of the academic year. The value that they add to the practice organisations is celebrated; and the loyal partnership with our practice partners held in high regard. Our research capacity development, facilitated by Dr Annemarie Beytell for our Masters students is going well, and we are aiming to have all our M1 students present their proposals before the end of the Academic year.

On the Learning and Teaching front, we appreciate the efforts of our tutors (who are recent social work graduates), Tafadzwa Chikohora (1st year tutor); Athandile Williams (2nd year tutor) and Nomthandazo Pukwana (3rd and 4th year tutor) who have provided firm support to our students who had to register late. Thank you to our nine third year mentors; class representatives and our Social Work Student Society executive for your leadership as student peers during a very trying time in human history. We wish our newly elected executive of the Social Work Student Society well and appreciate the excellent launching webinar where you challenged our heteronormative lenses.

SOCIAL WORK STUDENT SOCIETY EXECUTIVE

Chairperson: Monyane Mohlomi

Deputy Chairperson: Sive Mthi

Secretary: Thina Mathomela

Treasurer: Mmabatho Monyela

NELSON MANDELA
UNIVERSITY

The vision of the Department of
Social Development Professions

To be a vibrant, authentic,
engaged department; recognised
for the training and development
of well-rounded, contextually
relevant social development
practitioners; responsive to the
diverse needs and who can
facilitate meaningful change and
enhance well-being of people.



The mission of the Department of
Social Development Professions

To engage in student-centred
teaching and generate indigenous
knowledge through research that
is responsive to community needs;
informs social work practice;
underpinned by theories of social
work, social and human sciences
within a social development
paradigm.

Change the World

Treasurer: Mmabatho Monyela

P.R.O / Communications Officer and Operations Officer: Getrude Chaoke

Social work student society mentor: Vuyo Diko

The Academic staff value students' attendance of the MS Teams lectures highly, since it affords an opportunity for active engagement and learning with and from students. Whilst we remain mindful of serious challenges to physical and mental health; online connectivity, access to devices; electricity and a conducive learning environment, we urge students to make a concerted effort to attend lectures. We respect students' autonomy to make the decisions about attendance of theory lectures, but need your full engagement in the lectures to achieve our quest to Africanise the curriculum; and to this end, we need your voices in the classroom. Communicate with your academic if you cannot attend the lectures and make sure that you access the MS Teams recording which is shared both on the Moodle sites and the email.

The ATTENDANCE rules for skills modules, practicum supervision and practicum remain MANDATORY, in accordance with the norms and standards of the Professional Board of Social Work.

In order to strengthen our mental health, we have to remain CONSCIOUS and ATTUNED to what is happening around us; REDUCE time on mindless social media sites; and read posts and material that stretch one's thinking; urge ourselves into activism mode and increase our empathy levels as the collective hurt simply expands daily. We have to make every effort to avoid harmful behaviours (such as taking performance enhancing drugs; excessive alcohol use; bingeing on series; indulging abusive relationships; avoidance and procrastination as a few examples)

As helping professionals in training, the importance and value of PREVENTION is no mystery. The African proverb: If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together, is a key underpinning of our Department's Learning and Teaching approach.

Valuable resources available are:

Emthonjeni Student Wellness: Book your counselling journey: <https://bit.ly/3g9KDD5>

OR visit Website link: <https://emthonjeni.mandela.ac.za/> to book an appointment

Student success coach (by appointment): Unathi.silo@mandela.ac.za

Faculty academic coach: Nathi.nelani@mandela.ac.za

Academic literacy support:

Submit drafts of your assignments for comments at: <http://forms.mandela.ac.za/writingcentre/registration/>

Whilst vaccination is a personal decision, I URGE students and staff to PLEASE vaccinate. Social workers (and students doing practicals) are FIRST Responders, and we have to ensure that we have maximum protection against COVID-infection and severe COVID-disease effects. We applaud the University's excellent vaccination programme.

Lastly, I wish to remind students of the support structures in the department:

1st year coordinator: Dr Razia Lagardien; 2nd year: Dr Zurina Abdulla. The academic assistant for year 1 and 2 is by Mrs Conisa Gqoboka (Skosana); 3rd year coordinator: Dr Natalie Mansvelt; 4th yr: Prof Annaline Keet. Academic assistant at 3rd & 4th year: Ms Ziphonke Moyikwa (who is also our Public relations and marketing director)

I wish students and staff an engaging second semester, with prayers for good (holistic) health.

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Bachelor of Social Work – Class of 2021

Teaching and Learning

First year M2M experience from 1st year reps

By Ms Aashiqah Ford

My experience as a first-year social work student was not what I expected it to be. Due to COVID-19 and the restrictions and lockdowns caused by it, we were hardly given a taste of “university life”. Even though the experience was not what I expected it to be, it was still an experience that I wouldn’t trade for anything else. So far, our lecturers have assisted us in such a way that we can adjust more easily into university life through the help of mentors, as well as sessions with 3rd year students. I, as well as Vuyo Gwadana, were selected as the first-year social work student representatives which was quite a highlight in my year thus far. This role is one where I can help other students as well as help our lecturers. As the year progresses, I feel we are all slowly but surely finding our feet and building a solid foundation for the rest of our university life as well as our future careers. Not only have the lecturers and Vuyo been a great help, but the rest of my course-mates as well; they’ve been able to assist where I didn’t understand and vice versa. Even though we are working online, I have found great friendships throughout my different modules’ WhatsApp groups. I hope for the best for everyone and pray that the Corona Virus goes away and creates normalcy in our lives once more.



By Mr Vuyolwethu Gwadana

The 2021 Academic Year for first year Social Work Degree studies commenced later than usual due to the break-through of the Covid-19 pandemic. Initially during the first semester, academics appeared as an anxiety with loads of work and less time. Most of the Social Work module content was new but due to lectures conducted by our department, it appeared to express a broadened view of the basics of the profession. Anxiety was mainly caused by change and adjustments that were required by the environmental effects of the Corona Vrus pandemic. Lectures were conducted online through electronic devices, which had a diminutive impact on lecture-student interaction. This required adjustments in the amount of data consumed daily to conduct and attend each lecture. Network difficulties permeated at times since data consumption for online attendance and research required unsteady data usages. Aid was enhanced by an increase in day data and decrease in night data to enable more attendance of lectures, SI sessions and University Career Expos.



Pictures and experiences of 1st year

The first year experience for our 2021 first-year students started before we had the opportunity to physically meet them. The students were forwarded a survey which asked them a series of questions; these questions would be able to identify the needs of the students, as well as assist the department in catering for the 1st year students. Before the pandemic, the department would organise face-to-face orientation sessions with the first-year students that would help them navigate through their first year. These sessions include meeting their lecturers, help in navigating the library facilities, etc. The Amazing Race is also a session that is incorporated in our orientation programme, this is what the first years look forward to every year as this activity not only helps students navigate and explore through the campus and the different services offered, but they get the opportunity to bond with their lecturers as each group is grouped with one of the lecturers in the department. Because of the pandemic, we had to transition to an online orientation. This is where we held online orientation sessions, these sessions included a quiz for the students which they thoroughly enjoyed, the winners received prizes as seen in the picture, but everyone walked away with stationery from the department!

We welcome our first year students and wish them well for the remainder of their first year as well as their studies!



Mentorship programme and AVP training experience

Ms Basetsane Selela

Mentoring overall has been a great experience due to being something that I have never done before and I'm always up for a challenge. On some days it was discouraging to get through with it due to academics, personal issues or even not getting positive response from mentees but knowing that I made a commitment to be the best mentor I can be motivated me to keep going throughout the first semester. Furthermore, the AVP training was amazing through meeting new people and experiencing them as we worked as a group as a whole and then get subdivided in each session and therefore one was not always partnered with the same people which gave me an opportunity to appreciate diversity, appreciate that we all have different perspectives of things and in life there is no right or wrong but rather a difference in how we view things. However, learning about the different ways of approaching conflict and violence was the highlight of AVP as one always thinks that their WY of approach is always the right one.

By Ms Buhle Yali

Mentoring has challenged me a bit but with training that I got before the sessions started it was smooth because we had a workshop on linguistic and AVP. It has helped me to view things in a different perspective (positive) and to work with my mentees well. I worked well with people from different cultures and backgrounds. Mentoring has developed me as a student social worker to be able to conduct groupwork and was evident in group work in my skills class.

“INDEED WE ARE ALL DESTINED FOR GREATNESS.”

By Ms Hluma Myingwa

It is my first time being a mentor. The first few weeks were challenging but I enjoyed, because above all I was excited to be a mentor. It's something I wanted since I was doing my first year. The biggest challenge for me was conducting my mentoring sessions online due to Covid-19 cases being high. I was also not satisfied with attendance of the first years, few of them showed up for each mentoring sessions. On the brighter side our coordinators of the mentoring program were very supportive and gave us a clear path to follow in our mentoring journey. It has been a roller-coaster, with high moments and low moments. Getting to know the mentees. Seeing that the mentoring programme is making a difference in their lives, academically and personally. Having to juggle my own schoolwork and the mentoring work was a struggle. I've also learnt so much through the program; I learnt to manage my time well, organize my life in a sense that I must know when to focus on my schoolwork and my side job which is the mentoring program. Overall, I have grown as an individual through the mentoring program.

By Ms Khanyisa Zibe

My experience as a mentor has been wonderful overall and has taught me so much. There were a few challenges, but I embraced them because they allowed me to recognize and appreciate the extent to which I can go as a mentor and when to seek guidance from someone more experienced or even the other mentors. What has made the experience worth so much more is the kind of mentees I have. They are keen to know more and to share what they already know and in that I have learnt so much from them. With regards to the AVP training, the experience was good. It gave me a different perspective and taught me how to approach people in different circumstances. The sessions were effective as we would actively participate. Having the opportunity to talk to someone about how they feel about forgiving someone who has done the other wrong and that they are redeemable and is there still hope.

All in all, the experience was an eye opener.

By Ms Malibongwe Junior Ntshuntshe

I would firstly like to thank the department for offering me or choosing me to be part of the mentoring team for the first years, it's really been a pleasure working with them and has helped grow more. I have a good group of students who showed me that we will work well from the first meeting as they were all present and engaging. We have all shared a lot and our norms and values have grounded us. The students were responding well to mentoring and we tried to find solutions to our short comings and conflicts. I also polished a few of my skills and learnt from the values of the department which include transparency, professionalism, integrity, respect and patience. I am more confident and passionate about helping people around me. The AVP training has helped with being able to find a non-violent approach to conflicts and other negative issues that I may or have come across.

By Ms Nikita Gelandt

My mentoring experience has not only been rewarding, but it has also helped me in developing leadership and problem-solving skills. The experience I have gained from my mentoring journey thus far has made me grow both personally and professionally as a future social worker. It has been refreshing to meet new people and I treasure the relationships that have been formed with my mentees. I look forward to the second semester with them. The AVP training program was very fruitful as I gained knowledge and skills to help me healthily solve conflict as well as to teach others how to do so. Overall, it was a positive experience.

By Ms Nobuhle Charles

Mentoring in the first semester was quite a great experience, even though the Covid-19 regulations have disrupted a bit. The sessions had to be moved to an online setting and we had to adjust to the challenges that came with that. I am proud of how the mentees can now work on their own and assist each with me having to facilitating their interaction. The experience I had with the AVP training was very informative and has helped me on how I view and respond to certain things.

By Ms Roseanne Richardson

The first semester mentoring experience was quite an interesting one filled with its fair share of challenges and opportunities for growth. There were many awesome initiatives that enhanced my knowledge through the program, such as the AVP workshop. It taught me how to use alternative methods to approach a situation as opposed to using violence. I have learnt a great deal while working alongside the first years (who are an exceptional group, might I add). They have taught me patience, resilience and the epitome of "Ubuntu". I have lived the saying "you reap what you sow" with my groups because in as much as I have walked alongside and assisted them, so have they with me.

I am looking forward to continuing the mentoring program with my mentees in the next semester.

2021 Mentors



Basetsane Selela



Hluma Myingwa



Khanyisa Zibe



Malibongwe
Ntshuntshe



Nikita Gelandt



Buhle Yali



Nobuhle Charles



Roseanne Richardson



SOWP302 Practical Module: 2021

By Mrs Aneesa Lagerdien

The SOWP302 Practical Module comprised of students completing their practicum in the Group-work and Casework components. For 2021 the practicum was geared towards providing online support to 1st year students. The reasoning behind using this target-group was that the 1st year students indicated in a survey that they were encountering challenges with online learning, and might require further support in addition to those already put in place.

Some challenges in procuring group-work members and clients for the SOWP302 practicum were:

The high number of 1st year students required, due to the high volume of 3rd year students completing their practicum in the 1st semester. The 3rd year students worked in pairs for group-work, and there were 47 pairs. If every pair had a minimum of 4 group-members, they required 188 group-members. Even if it was compulsory for every 1st year Social Work (SW) student to attend the group-work, there would not have been enough 1st year students. As such the invitation for 1st year students had to be extended to other departments. Seeking contact numbers on an online platform was quite challenging, and many lecturers and class-reps did not respond to emails and our requests.

Every student also required at least 2 clients for casework (188 clients). It was envisaged that the students would be able to approach 2 group-members and offer them an individual intervention service. Many of the 1st year students who had initially volunteered for this service seemed to lose interest by the time the actual practicum started, and they did not respond to messages and calls from the 3rd year students. Due to not having enough group-work members, the invitation was then extended to the 2nd year SW students. The response in general was that they would not mind volunteering but they did not have sufficient data to do so.

Many students who volunteered dropped out as the practicum was starting, which meant that some pairs did not have enough members to begin their sessions, which caused much frustration amongst the students. Two local high schools, one primary school and a community programme were approached, to various degrees of success. The learners who seemed to need it the most were not equipped with digital devices. The majority of the group-members were not willing to be available for individual intervention too, which meant that many students had to resort to simulated interviews to complete the individual casework component of the module. The students struggled with completing their group-work programmes as the practical was ahead of the skills module, which meant that the students were applying skills they have not yet learned. Due to the delay in finding substitute members for those who had dropped out, the skills module caught up with the practical module towards the end of the semester.

Some positives for the 3rd year practicum were:

Once the students started their Group-work sessions, most enjoyed the facilitation and fed back that it was much easier/ nicer/ more rewarding than they had envisaged. The students were resilient in finding ways that worked for their group-work members and casework clients. There was a good improvement in the quality of the reports, and the latter reports evidenced learning from prior reports. The Education department seemed to really value and appreciate the support and input received, and could be a good resource in future.

The practicum was a very fluid process and required much flexibility from the students as well as the supervisors. This was mainly due to not having enough group-work members and clients as placements. The students did not seem willing to be flexible, and would have liked a more clear-cut process. Their experiences differed, based on their members, and the students ultimately preferred a mask-to-mask placement.

By Ms Nozipho Hokonya

2021 marked the first year that the New Curriculum 4th Year Practicum was presented to students. The practicum will run from April 2021 to the end of November 2021. Students are in practicum twice a week on a Wednesday and Thursday.

Unlike in the old curriculum where the second semester is reserved exclusively for practicum, students in the new curriculum attend practicum as well as theory lectures simultaneously. This proved to be quite an adjustment for students as they had to balance a very demanding practicum as well as their last year of theoretical engagement. This was evidenced by frequent requests for extension of assessment submissions, etc.

Students are predominantly placed in the Nelson Mandela Bay, however, there are a few students who are conducting practicum in organisations across the country. All contact is Mask2Mask, however we often employ a hybrid approach when the circumstances imposed by COVID-19 dictate so. The placement settings in which students are conducting their practicum offer services that range from Mental Health, Child Protection to End of Life and Palliative Care.

Students are assigned a variety of cases that range from grief / bereavement counselling, family therapy to youth in conflict with the law. Cases are of both a short and long term nature, and students work with a case from intake to completion or referral for further services. At any given time students are required to have no less than 5 active cases, but students are not limited to these cases as new cases are assigned on a regular basis.

COVID-19 has imposed several challenges on the practicum as we have had to suspend Mask2Mask practicum in some instances in order to minimize students' risk to exposure, but these periods of pausing or remote working seem to interrupt the momentum of students who seem to struggle to return to optimal levels of functioning when the Mask2Mask practicum resumes. The unpredictability of the virus has also resulted in us having to make swift and often very drastic decisions at very short notice which is not always easy for students and staff alike. There are 6 campus supervisors and 2 field supervisors who provide academic and field support to the students.

On the whole, we are confident that students will render the much needed social services to the communities that they serve during practicum, whilst also successfully completing the academic outcomes of their practicum.

RESEARCH

List of staff published articles

Prof Annaline Keet:

A Revision of Social Work Practice: Conceptualising Cultural Trauma and the Role of Social Workers in South African Under-Resourced Communities. Southern African Journal of Social Work and Social Development Volume 33 | Number 1 | 2021 | 18 pages © Unisa Press 2021

Dr Razia Lagardien:

Nordien-Lagardien, R.; Pretorius, B.; Terblanche, S. 2021. Family Mediation: The perceptions and experiences of unmarried parents and mediators. Social Work/Maatskaplike Werk, Vol 57 No 2; Issue 2.

Nordien-Lagardien, R.; Pretorius, B.; Terblanche, S. 2021. The Need for Culturally Responsive Mediation Practices to Enhance the Process and Outcomes of Mediation for Unmarried Fathers. Southern African Journal of Social Work and Social Development, Vol 33, No 1.

Titles of M&D studies currently registered and underway

Prof Annaline Keet students:

- 1) T. Maasdorp: Parenting the traumatised child. Views from Foster Parents
- 2) T Angel: Exploring the perceptions on community attachment of parents of adolescents using substances from a rural South African community.
- 3) V. Diko: Expanding social work history in South Africa through a biographical study of Winnie Madikizela Mandela as social worker and political activist
- 4) S. Tshetu: Older persons' perceptions of services that support ageing in the Western Cape.
- 5) T. Chikohora: Coping strategies and resilience factors of children living in foster homes. Co-supervisor Dr. Abdulla.
- 6) A. Mngeni. Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence perspective on the impact of psychosocial support interventions.
- 7) B. Tshupa. Social workers' perceptions of their role in multidisciplinary health teams when working with patients who do not adhere to treatment.
PhD supervision:
- 8) Z. Gwam: Narrative investigation into the strategies employed by SA rural women for successful and sustainable small businesses. Guidelines for social work practice.

Dr Nevashnee Perumal students:

- 1) Aphiwe Nkqubela: CO-CONSTRUCTING AN AFROCENTRIC APPROACH TO SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE IN SOUTH AFRICA
- 2) Musa Khambule: Psychosocial wellbeing: The experiences of Eskom frontline technicians in Zululand, KwaZulu-Natal
- 3) Mandisa Thundzi: CARING FOR NON-BIOLOGICAL CHILDREN WITHOUT STATUTORY INTERVENTION: EXPLORING THE EXPERIENCES OF ELDERS IN THE VILLAGES OF BUTTERWORTH IN THE EASTERN CAPE.

Prof Veonna Goliath students:

MSW (Clinical Social Work)

- 1) Mary Ann Meyers: THE EXPERIENCES AND SUPPORT NEEDS OF PARENTS IN THE NELSON MANDELA METROPOLE SEEKING TREATMENT FOR YOUTH WITH A SUBSTANCE-INDUCED PSYCHOSIS
- 2) Olwethu Paul Deliwe: EXPLORING RESILIENCE OF SOCIAL WORKERS WORKING WITHIN THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM IN THE NELSON MANDELA METROPOLE, SOUTH AFRICA
- 3) Makaita Madzimbamuto: PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL AND COPING MECHANISMS OF FRONTLINE SOCIAL WORKERS FROM THE NPO SECTOR IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE RESPONDING TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

MSW (Research)

- 4) Roslyn Johanna Mc Gregor: AN EVALUATIVE PERSPECTIVE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR THE PLACEMENT OF SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS IN SCHOOLS WITHIN THE EASTERN CAPE
- 5) Thandiwe Veronica Mathobela: UNDERSTANDING BINGE DRINKING AT NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY STUDENT RESIDENCE COMMUNITIES.
- 6) Luvuyo Teko: THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY LED SUPPORT GROUPS IN FACILITATING RELAPSE PREVENTION TO YOUNG ADULTS WITH A SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER

PhD (Social Development Professions)

- 7) Thomani Freddy Ndwammbi: EXPERIENCES AND COPING STRATEGIES OF PROBATION OFFICERS IN FULLFILLING THEIR ROLE WITHIN THE MULTI-STAKEHOLDER CHILD JUSTICE SYSTEM

Co-supervisor them with Dr Bruce Damons from Faculty of Education

Transdisciplinary studies (with Faculty of Education)

- 8) Xola Quvile Med: Co-generated learnings from HOPES- an NRF grant funded university engagement project.Co-generated learnings from HOPES- an NRF grant funded university engagement project.
- 9) Silindile Malangeni Phd Ed: COMMUNITY SCHOOL MODEL TO RECONCEPTUALIZE BASIC SCHOOL FUNCTIONALITY AND QUALITY EDUCATION IN LOW-INCOME SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITIES

Dr Zurina Abdulla students:

- 1) Mzoli Mavimbela: THE VIEWS OF AMAKRWALA ON THE MEANING OF UMQOMBOTHI AND COMMERCIAL ALCOHOL USE DURING THE INITIATION CEREMONIES
- 2) Sandile Ndamase: BICULTURAL YOUNG AFRICAN ADULTS REUNITING WITH THEIR ABSENT FATHERS DURING ADOLESCENCE: EXPERIENCES AND COPING STRATEGIES USED WHEN NEGOTIATING AND INTEGRATING THEIR BICULTURAL IDENTITY
- 3) Delores Kleinbooi: Xhosa Social workers' perceptions on the cultural inclusivity of the diversion programmes facilitated with Xhosa children in conflict with the law
- 4) Lumka Time: Perceptions on the Role of Social Development towards sustainable support to Non-Profit Organisations in Gqeberha.

Dr Abdulla's MSW Research graduate Adelette Phillips –study entitled:

Judicial officers' experiences of including victim impact reports during the criminal justice process

Brief summary of the research

Judicial officers have a responsibility to bring about a victim-centred approach within the criminal justice system. Victims' participation is promoted through inclusion of victim impact evidence; however, challenges are experienced in the criminal justice system. Victim impact reports, as an option to provide this evidence, are selectively requested by judicial officers. This study contributed to a greater understanding of the internal and external factors that motivate judicial officers to include victim impact reports during the criminal justice process. The findings revealed that the lack of specialised victim services and victim service social workers are barriers to judicial officers embracing a victim-centred approach through the inclusion of victim impact reports. Victim services legislation must address the lack of victim services providers and acknowledge the statutory obligation of victim service social workers.

Veonna Goliath MSW Research graduate - Tankiso Phakane –study entitled

AFRICAN NARRATIVES OF CUSTOMARY MARRIAGE, MARITAL STRESSORS, STRENGTHS AND THE VALUE OF INDIGENOUS MARITAL COUNSELLING

The knowledge base of the social sciences and helping professions is characterised by paradigms and theories that have stemmed from a Western intellectual perspective. This has produced many challenges; the main one being that the people of African origin unconsciously embrace the Western worldview leading to the marginalisation of their own view of the world which was a motivation for this study. Data was generated through two separate focus group interviews for males and females, respectively, each of whom were in customary marriages for a period of twenty years and more. Key findings were that: Marriage unifies the families through the strengthening of family life, maintains generational clans and solidifies the community foundation through the stabilising of the possibility of any conflict in the community. In addition, the community guards against adultery. Cultural values are the basis of every form of counselling. Marital problems are dealt with by the elders. Traditional healers are called in to communicate with the ancestors. It fosters the spirit of solidarity, which maintains connectedness with the extended family and the larger community. It creates a sense of belonging and provides shared support, which enables the couple to overcome their marital concerns. It serves as a socialisation environment and offers social support. It provides a shared helping opportunity to settle the encountered marital differences and focuses on promoting and nurturing the wellbeing of the couple through community acceptance, companionship and solidarity

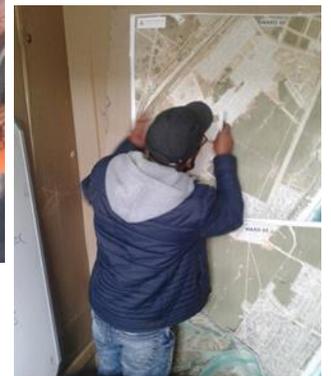


Dr Busisiwe Lujabe

Dr Busisiwe Lujabe (who graduated with her PHD in Social work in 2018, is the first post-doctoral fellow, hosted by the Department. Part of the hosting committee is Prof Blanche Pretorius who was her research supervisor, and is currently a Research Associate of the Faculty. Dr Lujabe is funded by the NRF and doing an Action research study focusing on how to establish a sustainable livelihood approach to food insecurity in Wells Estate (Ward 60-a township adjacent to Bluewater Bay). Dr Lujabe's research approach was inspired by James Yen, who said:

“Go to the people, live among them, learn from them; love them, serve them, plan with them, start with what they know, build on what they have.

In congruence with this inspiration, she physically moved to Wells Estate where she lived for over a year; establishing meaningful relationships of trust with the community; and joining in the communities spontaneous sharing of resources amongst each other, as they fought daily food insecurity. Community members were trained as field workers to administer a baseline survey, which established the nature and level of food security. The second phase of the study, involves having interdisciplinary and multi-stakeholder collaborations to explore (alongside the community) how best to address food insecurity.



NRF incubators project

AFRICAN KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION INCUBATORS NRF FUNDED RESEARCH PROJECT

NEVASHNEE PERUMAL, THANDO NOMNGCOYIYA, PRISCALIA KHOSA, VEONNA GOLIATH, MOTLAEPULE NATHANE, MBONGENI SITHOLE

For many years the academic environment has grappled with the (un)justness of the Eurocentric and Western curriculum content and knowledge systems used in higher education. We therefore thought a lot about how to give effect to a decolonised and indigenised curriculum in social work. Our department had attempted to develop an umbrella project to try and lead research in this area within our university. However, the large scale on which we pitched it rendered it unsuccessful.

The thinking and passion to drive this agenda did not die. The African Knowledge Production Incubators (AKPI) project was born of a desire to take action. Hence, based on the Participatory Action Learning Action Research (PALAR) approach a proposal was successfully made to the NRF as part of the Competitive Support for Unrated Researchers (CSUR) call. The AKPI project is based on a collective co creation of African lived experiences from six social work academics across five South African Universities (Nelson Mandela, WITS, Stellenbosch, UFH and UKZN). This project is designed on the concept of incubating. We spend time in a “warm, safe space” nourishing ourselves by placing our experiences of being raised as African children under the spotlight. We also read, appreciate and interrogate the works of decolonial and indigenous writers during the incubations. The project plans to document African knowledge, that has always existed, from our African experiences. We see this as preliminary work that will enable us to develop specific research foci pertaining to the curriculum, going forward. In this way, we lay the foundation for content generation across the social work curriculum and across universities. The core research team will set up secondary incubators in each of our universities. All academics will be able to join, replicate and expand the work of the core group. Postgraduate students will be encouraged to research in the area of African knowledge under the supervision of the core group.

To sum up, the main thrust of the AKPI project is to raise consciousness which is what Steve Biko and Frantz Fanon implored us to do as African and marginalised people.

The core group convened for our first incubation in Gqeberha from 22-25 June 2021 just before the level 4 lockdown took effect. Here are some visuals of the incubation.



Dr Nathane, Dr Sithole, Mrs Khosa and Prof Goliath at the workshop watching Dr Nomngcoyiya presenting.



Dr Nomngcoyiya presenting the many meanings of the song “She believes in me”



L to R: Prof Goliath (NMU), Dr Nathane (Wits), Mrs Khosa (SU), Dr Sithole (UKZN), Dr Nomngcoyiya (UFH) and Dr Perumal (NMU)



Body words exercise: HAPPY

ENGAGEMENT

Hopes Project

Responding to the Faculty's mission to foreground inter and transdisciplinary research, Prof Goliath is a member of an NRF Engagement grant project (called the HOPES project), located in the Faculty of Education. The grant project leader is Dr Bruce Damons who is the Manager of NMUs Hubs of Convergence; and the Centre of Community Schools in the Faculty of Education. The Hopes Project is focused on exploring how community schools can become beacons of Hope in their respective communities; especially against the backdrop of dire resource constraints in public schools – the latter of which was laid bare by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The picture (attached) was taken earlier in the year during the HOPES teams' visit to two community schools; Sapphire Primary School in Booyens Park and Charles Duna Primary in New Brighton. Both schools have also been practice partners of SDP for many years, hosting social work students for their practical training.

Prof Goliath co-supervises a doctoral student (Silindile Malangeni) and Masters student (Xola Quvile) in the project. Both students are social work graduates, who are making valuable contributions in the project. The project will deliver 2 Phd and 3 Masters students in total. This research is conducted in more than 10 schools across the Gqeberha and Kariega areas. Key findings to date is that Hope is embodied through activism (as opposed to passive acceptance) by key stakeholders in community schools. The agency and collective voice of learners; parents; educators; community volunteers and various multi-stakeholder partners, is vital in making quality education and basic school functionality a living reality in community schools. Equating low-income communities to disadvantaged communities have been vigorously challenged. Consistent with the action research method guiding all six research studies in the project, students are working with Action learning sets comprising school principals, educators, parents and community volunteers as co-researchers on the project.



Charles Duna vision



Clinic at Sapphire



Sapphire Road Primary value pictures



Prof Veonna Goliath and Dr Bruce Damons with postgrad students



Sapphire with the school team and Hopes

SWAN-SA (Social Work Action Network – South Africa)

SWAN South Africa (SWAN-SA) was established in May 2020 at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa. The network was responding to a dire need to hold structures accountable for the systemic injustices that exist in South Africa. These human injustices were magnified by COVID-19.

Who is SWAN-SA

SWAN-SA is a network of critical and radical social work and social service practitioners, students, academics and those involved in social services. We are united by our commitment to advocacy, activism and campaigning for social and structural change; and to develop and strengthen social work practice for the benefit of all. Our critical perspective analyses socio-economic structures of power and inequality at every level. We believe that the ongoing effects of south Africa's history of colonisation and apartheid together with current structural socioeconomic arrangements have a severe impact on South African society, producing severe structural inequality and poverty, ongoing racism and oppressive power relationships. We are affiliated to SWAN- International, along with 25 other countries.

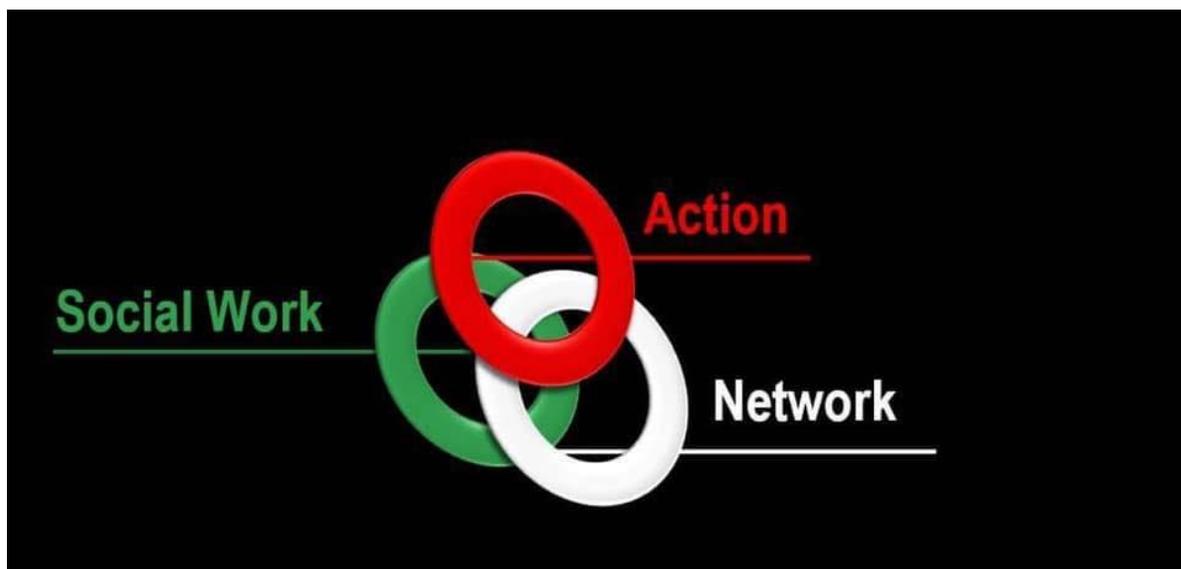
Our year in review

We have held several webinars over the past year. These constituted panels of social workers and other experts who spoke on some topics related to COVID-19 and social work, racism and Black lives matter. We have formed task teams to engage the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP) on service delivery, to write statements on the injustices perpetuated by government during COVID-19, the need for the urgent implementation of the Basic Income Grant. We have also written and raised our voices on the Palestine-Israel apartheid and the situation of autocratic rule by the monarchy in Eswatini.

How can you get involved

You are welcome to follow us on Facebook and request to join our Whats App group. The Whats App group is the main form of communication and mobilisation at the moment.

We have a working group consisting of the following people: Jessie Turton, Linda Smith, Nevashnee Perumal, Zibonele Zimba (national convenor), Thandoxolo Nomngcoyiya, Zakariya Baker, Kelsey Jooste, Lindi Chacho and Keitumetsi Moutlaoutse. We encourage you to join our working group and to grow SWAN-SA.



Our department partnered with one of our longstanding practice training partners, Masifunde Changemaker Academy, and Babalwa Desi, an industrial psychologist in presenting a four hour workshop on HR training and Wellness and Ethics for social work employers.

Babalwa Desi, facilitated the HR component relating to policies and procedures that can facilitate the sound management and support of Ethical conduct. Prof Veonna Goliath from SDP facilitated a 45 minute discussion on wellness and colleagues welcomed the opportunity for networking and exchange of valuable learnings.

The need for the training was birthed from an increasing concern about the wellness of social workers and an awareness of the tremendous multi-systemic pressures under which social workers and NPOs are having to fulfil their core mandate. We are excited that colleagues from 20 different organisations attended this workshop and remarked that it provided them valuable insights into HR procedures and structures that need to be in place as both a protection and support to the organisation and to the social workers' wellness and sound ethical conduct.

HR TRAINING ON WELLNESS AND ETHICS FOR NPO'S EMPLOYING SOCIAL WORKERS

Training On



MASIFUNDE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH NELSON
MANDELA UNIVERSITY AND BABALWA DESI INVITE
NPO'S TO A TRAINING SESSION

MASIFUNDE @ 23 WITBOOI STREET, WALMER
TOWNSHIP

18.05.21 | 8:30 - 13:00
(INCL. LUNCH AT 13:00. ATTENDEES TO KINDLY
CONTRIBUTE R100 TOWARDS LUNCH)

WORKSHOP SPONSORED BY MASIFUNDE



Social Work student society colloquium

On the 30th of June 2021 the newly appointed Social Work Society executive held, as their first major event, a virtual student dialogue titled "How Social Work can work for LGBTQIA+ youth?". The event was open to the Nelson Mandela University Social Development Professions department student body and staff as well as the general university population. As the month of June is designated as both Youth and Pride month, the Society felt this provided an excellent opportunity to conscientize the social work student body and the wider student community of the diversity of social work practice. The Social Work Society had noted the general lack of advocacy from social work practitioners for youth who not only have to navigate the typical challenges faced by South African youth, but must also contend with fear, danger, isolation and rejection associated with belonging to the LGBTQIA spectrum. The dialogue, therefore, aimed through its theme to serve as an eye opener for future social work practitioners, drawing their attention to the range of advocacy work they would have to engage in.

Dr Nevashnee Perumal was invited to speak as a social work practitioner while Mr Lwandile Lumko as guest speaker shared his experiences as a queer youth. Dr Perumal provided valuable insights on the major issues that the youth of South Africa and particularly those within the LGBTQIA+ faced and how the social work profession could best address them. She called upon social workers in training and indeed on all social work professionals to be guided by social work values and principles that enshrined social justice, equity, social change and self-determination in their interventions with LGBTQIA individuals. The need for social workers to reflect and begin working on the personal, cultural and religious biases that may prevent them from effectively advocating for this vulnerable group was strongly emphasized. Mr Lumko courageously and admirably gave an account of his lived experiences as a queer youth. His brave testimony provided many teachable moments, going a long way in sensitizing the audience to the levels of discrimination, isolation and rejection LGBTQIA individuals have to contend with.

The society managed to host a rather successful event despite attendance not being at the expected optimum, primarily due to various factors such as lack of data and poor network connectivity. The dialogue met its intended aims of stimulating awareness in this often-neglected branch of social work advocacy. It served as a clarion call for student social workers to commit themselves to challenge all manifestations of social injustices, strive for equality and equity, and advocate for the vulnerable and disenfranchised.

Social Work student society executive members



Chairperson: Monyane Mohlomi



Deputy chair: Sive Mthi



Communications and operations officer: Getrude Chaoke



Treasurer: Mnyela Mnyela



Secretary: Thina Mathomela

ASASWEI(The Association of South African Social Work Education Institutions):

Prof Keet is the international representative of ASASWEI (Association of South African Social Work Education Institutions) to the IASSW (International Association of Schools of Social Work). This year ASASWEI, together with local and international partners had its conference from the 1st to the 3rd September 2021. The conference was online, free and open to students to attend. In 2017, ASASWEI for the first time opened its conferences for student participation and this was a positive experience for students, academics and practitioners. A successful colloquium was held in 2020, with the title “PANDEMICS, POVERTY AND INEQUALITY: INTERROGATING THE SOCIAL WORK RESPONSE”. The 2021 conference theme “PANDEMICS, POVERTY AND INEQUALITY: SOCIAL WORK IN THE 21ST CENTURY” stems from the rich engagements that took place at the colloquium the previous year. We hope that the student footprint continues to grow in the organization.



PAYMENT:

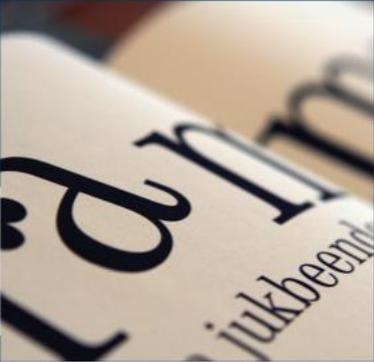
- Learners are required to pay before they are admitted to the course.
- When paying at the Nelson Mandela University cashiers:
Quote this reference:
0000 - 4120 (your surname)
CASHIERS CLOSES AT 16H00.
- When making ACB or direct deposits:
email deposit slip with Application Form & Identity Document to
joanne.coetzee@mandela.ac.za

CANCELLATIONS/REFUNDS
Course fees are not refundable unless cancellation has been made at least seven days prior to course commencement.

A 30% admin/cancellation fee is levied.
If the course is fully booked or cancelled by the Nelson Mandela University, a full refund of fees will be made.



Unit for Continuing Education



Change the World

For more information contact:
Joanne Coetzee
041-504 2353
joanne.coetzee@mandela.ac.za
Visit our website:
www.mandela.ac.za/continuingeducation


mandela.ac.za

**Clinical Social Work
Intervention with Families**

Clinical Social Work Intervention with Families

COURSE FEE

R5000 (per participant)

DATE:

Block one: 8, 9 and 10 September (2½ days)
Block two: 27, 28 and 29 October (2½ days)

Closing date: 20 August 2021

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

The SLP is open to applicants with a Bachelor Degree in Social Work; and Registered Counsellors with a BPsych qualification who wish to enhance their knowledge and skill in critical intervention with families.

COURSE INFORMATION

Purpose of the SLP

The purpose of this SLP is to equip participants with specialist knowledge and skills in the following areas:

- Structural therapy for working with blended families
- Narrative therapy for working with families who are dealing with addictions (Substance use disorder and behavioural addictions)
- Divorce mediation and parenting plans.

Format and learning platform:

- A Hybrid model will be adopted with a combination of Mask to Mask and online presentation on MsTeams.
- The workshops will take the format of lecturing; live class discussions; role plays; and case analysis.

Assessment:

3 assessments (with final date for submission 10 December 2021)

This is a credit bearing SLP (20cr) and successful completion will grant participants who are accepted for the MSW Clinical programme, exemption from this module in the degree programme

**Full payment before
course commences
confirms your
booking**

**Cheques are made payable to Nelson
Mandela University, payment can be
made at Cashiers**

Or

Direct Bank Deposit
Standard Bank - Port Elizabeth
Branch Code: 050417
Account No: 080263011
Reference No: 0000 - 4120 (your surname)

**Nelson Mandela University students applying
for this course must ensure that their student
account is settled.**

In memory of Dr Aldene Luck

Dr Aldene Luck was in the employ of the university for close to 13 years (as contract staff member initially and later permanent member of staff). She was medically boarded in March 2021 and sadly passed on 24 July 2021. The Dept had a memorial service for Dr Luck on 05 August 2021 and have been inundated with messages of support and expression of the value Dr Luck added to the lives of her colleagues, students and graduates. She will forever be remembered for her authentic spirit; her deep desire to advance opportunities for our students and connecting them to potential places of employment. Our thoughts are with her mom who also had to say goodbye to her husband and daughter, less than 6 months apart.

Rest well Aldene, your memories are etched in the hearts of all you embraced with such love and care.



I was shaken by Dr Luck's passing 🙏, may her friends and loved ones find comfort in this difficult time, iyhoo Nkosi yam.

Ma'am, I'm sure you remember when I had chicken pox.

This is my memory of her:

I remember her texting me on the day of my admission to the sick bay, just when I was about to reply, the phone rang - she was calling to find out how I was doing.

I don't think she even knew me face-to-face but she took her time to check on a student who wasn't even popular 😊.

That shows the compassionate and kind person that she was to other people.

Luxolo

An incredible loss to the SW profession and society 💔

You have left an indelible impression on me since I met you and during my interactions with. I thank you for taking a chance on me and helping to capacitate me further post graduate - to benefit this noble profession. 🙏 Your kindness and compassion will forever be remembered Dr Aldene Luck 🙏

May you rest in peace and rise in glory when the Trumpet shall sound. 🙏 Love, Tracy Le Vack - MIET AFRICA, Safe Space Manager



By Dr Natalie Mansvelt

“Ma’am, you said to us that you would never do a PhD!” This was the response of former students and graduates from our department whenever we happened to meet, reminding me of my previous stance towards doctoral studies. This stance was motivated by the demands of my role of mother to young children and general contentment with my job. However gradually something had changed, especially when I became curious and passionate about the issue I wanted to study and excited about the research design to apply – I honestly never thought I could become excited about a research design!

My curiosity towards addressing student hunger was stimulated a few years ago when the then dean of students approached our department with a request to become involved in the food parcel programme for hungry students. Our department did not want to promote the welfarist model and therefore suggested the need to consider a unique way of addressing the issue. While the suggestion was not pursued at the time, it left me wondering what the alternative is and what social work has to offer. Furthermore, in line with the practice of people-centred development, I was driven to listen to students – as the ones who are experiencing student hunger – and to co-research student hunger with them, take collective action and learning from the process together.

A group of students from different disciplines volunteered to participate in the journey. We started off clarifying what student hunger means and then verified our understanding with a community self-survey. Guided by the conscientisation framework, the group organized several dialogues – with the existing initiatives who are addressing student hunger, with the general student population and with off-campus students. Of the many learnings that was generated throughout the research process, we all agreed that transformation occurred for us as a group in the manner that we conceptualize student hunger and our views of ways to address the issue. In addition, my belief in people’s ability to address their own issues in new and creative ways have been confirmed.

Of course, no journey worth traveling comes without hardship. Physical and emotional trauma, bereavement and covid-19 each brought a moment where I had to pause and ask myself whether I wanted to continue with this research. Yet it was the emotional and time investments and commitment of the student co-researchers that pushed me to complete what we had started.

While I was privileged to be guided by wise, deeply critical and supportive supervisors – Prof Schenck and Prof Soji - I am deeply grateful to my SDP colleagues. Apart from shaping my thoughts with ideas, feedback and suggestions, they allowed me to take a year of sabbatical during arguably the most difficult time of teaching in recent history. Thank you!

Students at their Pledge Ceremony



Students at their Pledge Ceremony



CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2020!!

