

NEWS



Nelson Mandela
Metropolitan
University

for tomorrow

Port Elizabeth & George

FROM THE HOD



In this edition of our Departmental newsletter we pay tribute to the exceptional academic successes of both our students and staff members. A number of diploma and BTech students graduated *cum laude*, which is a testament to their commitment to their studies, as well as of the dedication of our staff members to their role in facilitating

academic excellence. In addition, two of our staff members, Mrs Nuraan Agherdien and Mrs Elaine Coetzee, obtained their MTech qualifications *cum laude*. At a recent Academic Awards evening we also recognised the achievements of the top students for all years across the under- and post-graduate programmes within the School of Industrial Psychology and Human Resources. I believe it is very important to celebrate in this manner as it represents positive reinforcement of the University's value of "Excellence". The support of our industry and other partners in sponsoring these awards is really appreciated.

At the end of 2014 we held a farewell get-together with past and present students and staff members for Dr Osmond Ngalo, as he retired from the NMMU. Dr Ngalo remains part of our team as a part-time lecturer and consultant. We welcome a new team member, Mrs Ophelia Veldkornet, who has taken up the position of our Industrial Relations champion. The cycle of life, and of change and renewal, is evidenced through these and other events within our department. These include the recent marriage of Mrs Elaine Coetzee and the placement of our student assistant, Sushil Ranchod, in a most desirable graduate-in-training programme at Coca Cola Fortune.

It is nearly time for the mid-year academic recess. There are still a number of challenges to overcome before we all take a well-deserved break. Whether it is projects to be finalised, tests to be written or planning for the second semester, I encourage all students to keep in mind their main purpose for being here. This is to work to the best of their ability and seize every opportunity to succeed academically. To my colleagues, thank you for your time, dedication and commitment to Team HRM. It is greatly appreciated.

Yours in HRM

Amanda Werner

Graduates do us proud



MTech graduates Mrs Elaine Coetzee and Mrs Nuraan Agherdien

Almost 150 students received HRM qualifications at the 2015 graduation ceremony. Ten Diploma students graduated *cum laude*, these being Jolandie Conradie, Gerain David, Sakhumzi Manyisana, Busisiwe Mjo, Banele Ndarala, Sushil Ranchod, Chermondeley Rinqest, Yvette Stroebe, Thulani Tsubulane and Sindile Vena. We congratulate these students on their outstanding results.

Thirty five students were awarded the Bachelor of Technology degree. This is a wonderful achievement for the Department, understanding the personal commitment, sacrifice and hours of hard work demanded by this rigorous programme. Two students, Nabeela Abrahams and Sive Brakfesi, obtained their qualifications *cum laude*.

The degree Master of Technology was conferred, *cum laude*, on our colleagues, Mrs Nuraan Agherdien and Mrs Elaine Coetzee. We are exceptionally proud of their achievements and welcome the value that it will add to our Department in terms of enhancing our research capacity. When asked to reflect on what led to their success they highlighted the importance of working hard, personal dedication to the process, as well as the constant support of family, friends and colleagues. Both expressed gratitude to their promoters, Drs Mey and Werner, for their continuous support, encouragement and guidance throughout the MTech journey. They described this journey as one of many ups and downs, but with a worthwhile end result.

Loadshedding on Second Avenue Campus

Load shedding has become a challenge for the staff and students at the 2nd Avenue Campus. As a result, various initiatives have been put in place in our department to alleviate the problem. These include the use of flood lights, cellphones, torches and other lighting mechanisms. With the patience and persistence of staff and students alike, not one evening lecture or test session has been cancelled as a result of load shedding.



From left a BTEch lecturer going forward with the lecture during loadshedding. The picture on the right displays the 2nd Avenue campus in darkness

Congratulations

Excellence tea recipients for the first semester are...

- **Randall Borchers**
- **Ashley Higman**
- **Steven Hodgson**
- **Wayne Macpherson**
- **Telamisile Mdluli**
- **Simamkele Ngqeza**
- **Siyasanga Tenge**

The HRM department is proud of you!

3rd year IR role plays

After the block session which runs over a 6 week period, students are required to put this theory into practice. One of the goals of our Department is to deliver students to industry who are well prepared and ready to add value to the workplace. This is partly achieved through the inclusion of a practical component in the syllabus. These IR students need to draw from experiences gained from visits to the CCMA. During these visits they observe real dispute resolution sessions in action. Armed with this knowledge and after conducting some further research, the students are then in a position to create and play out similar scenarios.

Students explore, and are creative in their thinking, during the development phase of this assignment and really come alive in their respective roles during the role plays. At these sessions students demonstrate various emotions that are associated with dispute resolution. These exercises create a learning experience that remains with them for eternity.



3rd year students presenting their roles plays

Mrs Bridget de Villiers special award

Congratulations to Bridget de Villiers; who was awarded the NMMU Council MTech Award for 2014 (Social Sciences and Humanities) for her dissertation entitled **The influence of student engagement on the academic success of first-Year Human Resource Management diploma students**. In her study she considered the declining quality of undergraduate students and the pressure that this creates on academics to find strategies to improve pass rates. Re-educating students is expensive and can be prevented through increasing the engagement levels of students. The aim of the study was to identify student behaviours and institutional conditions that influence the engagement and academic success of first-year university students at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. A quantitative analysis, using a structured questionnaire, was conducted among first-year Human Resource Management diploma

students. Student-staff interaction emerged as a significant indicator of student success. Practical strategies for promoting student engagement were recommended.



Dr Amanda Werner and Mrs Bridget de Villiers at the HELTASA conference

HR Universities' Forum

In August 2014 Drs Mey and Werner, together with Mrs Agherdien, attended an HR Universities Forum meeting at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology in Cape Town. The HR Forum is a platform for the sharing of ideas and initiatives with regard to the teaching and development of HR students. Issues discussed at this meeting included the accreditation of HR courses with the South African Board for People Practices (SABPP), the national qualification framework, external moderation of examination papers, the Advanced Diploma, and the HR standards and competency model developed by the SABPP. The meeting was attended by about 30 HRM lecturers from various universities in South Africa.



From left: Dr Michelle Mey, Mrs Nuraan Agherdien and Mr Spuds Horne for WSU at the HR Universities Forum

Open day 2015



GET YOUR FUTURE INTO FOCUS! This was the theme for the 2015 Open Day held in May. The School and Department were represented by the HRM student assistants, as well as the School's PR and Marketing intern. Over the two days the Sports Centre came alive as youngsters discussed their future study prospects.

Open Day can be considered a success as we reached our goal of informing students and parents by providing clarity on what we offer and what HRM is. Many parents and learners walked away with better knowledge of our programmes.



Staff who helped to make Open Day a success

Having student assistants who are currently studying towards a BTech involved at Open Day ensured that the learners and their parents could receive first hand knowledge of our programmes. Those who approached the stall with questions left with knowledge (and sweets).

Open Day is beneficial because we get to interact with prospective students and create awareness of the field of Human Resource Management. It is a very fulfilling event to be a part of.

Orientation programme for first years

It's a new year bringing new students. We welcomed our 2015 students at this year's Meet and Greet where they were introduced to some of the Department's staff. The day was led by our Head of Department, Dr. Werner as well as the new student assistants.

The students were provided with tips to success, important information such as the university's rules on plagiarism, as well as their booklists for the year. An interactive discussion was held regarding social media.

Fun and games formed part of the day. The new students had to guess which baby photo belonged to which staff member. Many of the students had not seen any of the staff before. We were also joined by the HR Society who got the students singing and clapping, a good way to end off a great session.



1st Year students at orientation

Our Academic Advisor

I am the academic advisor for the Department. As part of my duties I assist the lecturers in identifying and assisting students with their academic and developmental needs. This is done by providing interventions such as workshops, tutorials and one-on-one meetings with students.

academic lives. I help them in identifying their academic goals, spotting potential barriers and coming up with possible solutions. I meet with the students on a regular basis, either for follow-up sessions, or when they have general concerns which they choose to discuss with me.

During the first term, Student Counselling provided workshops on time management and learning styles. In the second term the Centre of Teaching, Learning and Media (CTLM) provided workshops on goal setting and study skills for the students.

As the academic advisor I also assist students in establishing a balance between their personal and



Our Academic Advisor,
Busisiwe Mjo

Student progress

Sushil Ranchod, who was appointed as a student assistant at the beginning of the year, recently secured placement on the Coca-Cola SABCO graduate-in-training programme. He has been appointed as a trainee Human Resource Officer in Manufacturing at Coca-Cola Fortune, a subsidiary company of Coca-Cola SABCO. Coca-Cola Fortune is a bottler for Coca-Cola and other drinks such as Sprite and Fanta. We recently caught up with Sushil to find out more about his work. He mentioned that his role started with him being taught and observing to becoming more independent and autonomous. His current job comprises of, but is not limited to, the following:

- Administration, such as capturing training records, submitting employee leave forms and filing records
- Creating recruitment requests and conducting the entire recruitment process, which includes interviewing and preparing the necessary documentation
- Attending to staff grievances



Mr Sushil Ranchod dressed for success

- Attending disciplinary hearings
- Dealing with employee queries, such as advice on leave and other queries pertaining to basic conditions of employment and the BCEA provisions

Sushil states that it is envisaged that he will eventually chair disciplinary hearings, and so forth. Upon reflection he says that the greatest lesson that he has learnt so far is that "time is of the essence". We wish Sushil well with his current and future career endeavours and hope that he will return to share his wisdom and knowledge with our students.

Welcome to team HRM

What did you study?

BA Psychology (2004), BA Honours Labour Relations and Human Resource Management (2005), and MA Sociology (2009).



Mrs Ophelia Veldkornet

Where did you study and for how long?

I studied at the NMMU, previously known as UPE, in 2004, 2005 and 2009.

What do you specialise in?

I specialise in Employee/Industrial Relations. That's where my passion lies, it is challenging and very interesting.

How long have you been in the industry?

I started to practice Human Resources in 2007 as a Human Resource Consultant at Edcon and was promoted to Human Resource Manager within 1 year. I was offered a position as Human Resource Officer at Coca Cola fortune in 2010 and have over 7 years' experience as a Human Resource Practitioner.

If you could give the students one tip towards their studies; what would it be?

It is important to have a vision and to know where your ultimate destination is and to always give of your best. I love the following quote: "The price of success is hard work, dedication to the job at hand and determination that whether we win or lose we have applied the best of ourselves to the task at hand" Vince Lombardi.

Do you have any hobbies?

Spending time with my hubby and kids.

Like our Facebook page

https://www.facebook.com/pages/NMMU-Department-of-Human-Resource-Management/281766635282278?notif_t=page_new_likes



Gallery



NOTE FROM THE EDITORS...

We thank everyone who has contributed towards making this edition a success.

Yours in HRM

Elaine & Bridget