



The Institute of Distance Education Newsletter is published twice a year

Inside this issue:

Foreword – Dr. K. Ferreira-Meyers, Acting Director	1
Proposed IDE-LLB Programme – Charles Osei-Abankwa	2
Preparing for exams – Dr. S. Chakanyuka	3
DEASA executive meeting – Prof. CWS Sukati	4
Conference – Prof. CWS Sukati and Papers published – Dr. K. Ferreira-Meyers	5
Blended learning design workshop – Ms N. Vilakati	6
Shanghai Open University Exchange Programme – Dr. K. Ferreira-Meyers	7-8
E-learning and e-content creation – Prof S. Rastogi + Cont. Blended Learning Design	9 10-11

Send your enquiries and comments to the IDE Interim Newsletter Editor, IDE Block. Office # 017, Private Bag 4, Kwaluseni.
Email: karenferreirameyers@gmail.com or kmeyers@unistwa.sz

Institute of Distance Education Newsletter

Issue 10 - April 2014

Institute of Distance Education

IDE Taking University and Professional Programmes to the People

Read more inside.....

Foreword—Acting Director IDE, Dr. Ferreira-Meyers

The end of the Academic Year 2014 is upon us. You have all worked hard, and we have tried our best at IDE to guide you along the way. The last hurdle, the examination session, is about to present itself to you. We wish you all the best. We hope you will find some good tips in this IDE Newsletter and we know you will take advantage of the services offered by IDE .

As Acting Director, it is my pleasure to welcome Dr. Akintola to our IDE family. With regard to staff movement, two IDE staff members are expected to retire at the end of this academic year, and these are Dr. S. Chakanyuka (who will retire at the end of her current contract) and Mrs. D. Vilakati. We, at IDE, will miss their contributions and the hard work that they have been putting into the development of our Institute. We take this opportunity to wish both of them all the best in their future endeavours.

It is an even greater honour to congratulate Prof. CWS Sukati on obtaining an award given by the Global Advisory Council of the Global Distance Learning Congress. The Award is for **Outstanding Leadership and Contribution to Education** and consists of a Trophy and a Citation. The Director is expected to receive the award in person on 27th. June 2014 in Mumbai, India. IDE and UNISWA are proud to see this honour bestowed on Prof. CWS Sukati. Thank you for putting us on the map, Professor!

The IDE continues with its mandate of converting programs that are offered full time at the University into distance education programs and of providing programs and courses that are on demand in the country. In this regard, IDE plans to restart offering the Certificate in French and the B.A. Degree with a major in French, should there be adequate numbers of students who want to enroll in these programs. In addition, the Institute also plans to offer a GEP major in the B.A. Humanities degree. Also in the pipeline is an LL.B. degree that the Institute plans to offer in the next few years. **Good luck with your examinations!**



Dr. Abiola Akintola replaces Mrs Shokahle Dlamini, who has taken study leave to pursue her studies. Welcome to IDE Dr. Akintola!

Dr. A. Abiola, Coordinator Humanities, IDE



THE CASE FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF THE LLB DEGREE PROGRAMME BY DISTANCE LEARNING

By Charles Osei-Abankwah, Coordinator Law Programmes (IDE)



A survey was undertaken in January 2014 to assess interest in the introduction of the LLB Degree Programme at IDE. The survey took the form of letters sent, initially, to past students of the IDE Diploma in Law Programme requesting them to indicate their interest in the proposed programme. The response was swift and overwhelming. The obvious implication is that the introduction of the programme is long overdue. A detailed proposal has been prepared for consideration by relevant bodies and Senate. This article will briefly attempt to make a case for the need to introduce the proposed programme, under the following headings:

How will the proposed programme advance the Mission of IDE?

The Mission of IDE, (stated at page 246 of the University of Swaziland Calendar 2013/2014) is to create educational and training opportunities for individuals (working, self-employed, unemployed and post high school graduates) who have been unable, for one reason or another, to undertake university education. In accordance with this mission, IDE is mandated to convert, coordinate and administer university programmes offered on-campus into distance education programmes. The proposed programme promotes this mission.

What is the educational need to be addressed by the proposed programme; how does it fulfil this need and why can this need not be met by the existing on-campus LLB Degree Programme?

The proposed programme is calculated, primarily, to meet the educational needs of past and present students in the Diploma in Law Programme. To these categories of students, the diploma is a means to an end but not an end in itself. The ultimate goal is to obtain the LLB degree. This goal has hitherto, been out of their reach because work and other commitments have made it impossible for them to study full-time for the LLB degree. The programme will also be open to members of the wider national community who wish to acquire the LLB degree. Currently, there is no local alternative to full-time study offered at the Department of Law. The proposed programme which is to be conducted by DE mode would address this problem.

What is the expected demand by prospective students?

There is a strong demand for the proposed programme, especially among Diploma in Law holders. Since the last week of January 2014, over 150 prospective students, mainly Diploma in Law holders, have indicated their interest in the programme. It is also expected that post high school graduates would be interested in the programme.

The LLB degree is a versatile degree which would stand a person in good stead, whatever the person chooses to do, whether as a lawyer or otherwise. Therefore, it is fair to expect that working people in every discipline would also be interested in the programme.

What are the resource implications of the proposed programme?

Teaching Staff

IDE has suitably qualified Lecturers in the Diploma in Law Staff database. Currently there are eight Lecturers holding an LLM degree. These are active professionals who will bring practical expertise to the classroom.

Study Materials (Modules)

In the long term IDE would develop modules for the various courses in the programme. In the short term, it is proposed that UNISWA would enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with UNISA, in terms whereof IDE would be permitted to use adapted UNISA modules for a specified number of years. This will then give IDE the necessary time to develop its own modules. E-learning will also be applied in order to provide students with continuous access to additional materials.

What are the odds that a person who obtains the LLB degree would find meaningful employment?

The LLB degree offers a variety of employment opportunities. A person who attains the degree may seek admission as an Attorney to practice law as a private legal practitioner. Alternatively, there are opportunities in the Public Service, politics, academia (after advanced legal studies), banking, business, insurance, public corporations, etc. Many of the prospective students are working people who would not need to find employment after successful completion of the programme. In any case, a person with the LLB degree stands a better chance of finding employment than a diploma holder.

It is the hope of prospective students that the programme will commence as soon as practicable.

PREPARING FOR EXAMINATIONS BY DR. S. CHAKANYUKA, COORDINATOR ACADEMIC STUDIES

Examinations are around the corner once again. You need to prepare thoroughly for them so that you succeed. Have you handed in all your coursework assignments? Make sure that you are comfortable and confident enough to tackle each examination that you will write. Consult as much as possible with colleagues and your lecturers and tutors to ensure you succeed in the end of semester examinations.

Here are a few tips borrowed from the Internet. I am picking those I think are more important than others. You can read the rest on the website below: <http://ayurveda.hubpages.com/hub/Tricks-to-tackle-exams>

Tip 1. Never fear or hate examinations and be confident. Fear does not lead to success in any area of our lives, as it destroys your confidence and self-esteem.

Tip 2: Prepare a good study time table and follow it religiously. This way you ensure that you give adequate attention to all your courses. No course benefits at the expense of all the others.

Tip 3: Find a place where you can study comfortably without disturbances or interference.

Tip 4: Make notes as you study. Writing helps you to remember what you are reading. Also take every opportunity to verbalise what you are studying; even if it means speaking to an empty chair. Practice makes perfect.

Tip 5: Sleep well and eat well. Some people think that if they spent all their time studying without eating or sleeping they are using their time profitably. No. Your body needs to be strong and refreshed. Food and sleep are therefore absolutely necessary. You may reduce the time you sleep but do sleep each night.

Tip 6: No cheating in the exam room: Cheating is never good. There is always the danger of being caught. Prepare thoroughly so that you won't have the urge to cheat.

Tip 7: Believe in God, and also in yourself and your ability to pass. Prayer to God always gives you confidence and peace. Trust in God and He will guide you. Tell yourself over and over again that you can do it.

God bless you and give you success in the forthcoming examinations.

*Dr S Chakanyuka, IDE Coordinator,
Academic Studies*



Distance Education association of Southern Africa (DEASA) Executive Committee Meeting, report by Prof. CWS Sukati

The DEASA Executive Committee held its meeting at the Open University of Mauritius, in Reduit, Mauritius on the 18th. March, 2014. This meeting was attended by the Director of IDE, Professor C.W. S. Sukati, and 11 other Committee members from the SADC countries. Three members submitted apologies, and these were: Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Various items were discussed at this meeting, and the most important items were:

1. DEASA Financial Statement & Report

A report on the membership fees was circulated and it was noticed that some Institutions had fallen behind with their payments of the membership dues. A resolution was taken that the Constitution should be followed in dealing with these Institutions. It was also resolved that as Dr. Gatsha was leaving SADC CDE, Dr. Delvine Mowes should replace him as signatory of the DEASA account until a substantive replacement of Dr. Gatsha has been appointed. It was also resolved that Prof. Mphine Makoe be the second signatory to Dr. Molapo Qhobela.

2. Membership of UNISWA in DEASA

It was noted that Emlaladini Development Centre (EDC) and the Department of Adult Education (EDC) at UNISWA had not paid their dues now for some time. The Swaziland Committee member was to follow this matter up with EDC. As concerns the DAE, the Swaziland member argued that as EDC was a UNISWA Dept. and another UNISWA Dept. i.e. IDE had paid up, it was not necessary that EDC pay up also. Agreement was reached that this was true, but UNISWA was asked to formally write a letter to DEASA on this.

3. DEASA 2014 Conference and AGM

The Committee meeting was informed that the DEASA Conference and AGM for 2014 was scheduled to be held in Mauritius on the 18th. September 2014. The Committee noted that the Call for Papers had been delayed, and resolved that the usual DEASA procedure of calling for Abstracts and Papers before the Conference was not possible this time. It was therefore suggested that instead, this year the requirement should be for Extended Abstracts. DEASA members were to submit these by 31 May 2014.

An Honour to Professor Satish Rastogi, Coordinator (Research & Evaluation)

IDE is pleased and honoured to announce that Professor Satish Rastogi has been invited to deliver a Keynote Address in a conference organised by the African Council of Distance Education (ACDE), hosted by the Zimbabwe Open University, Harare, Zimbabwe between 6 and 9 June 2014 at Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.



Report on the Seventh Pan-Commonwealth Forum (PCF7)

By Prof. CWS Sukati

The Seventh Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF7) was held in Abuja, Nigeria from 2 to 6 December 2013. PCF7 was hosted in partnership with the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education and the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN). The IDE was represented by two staff members at this Forum, and these were Prof. C.W.S. Sukati and Prof. S. Rastogi. This Forum brought together over 600 policy makers and practitioners from 42 countries and had the Main Theme as “**Open Learning and Development: Towards Empowerment and Transformation**”. There were five sub-themes which were:

- Skills Development,
- Girl’s and Women’s Education,
- Promoting Open Educational Resources (OER),
- Innovation and Technology, and
- Institutional Development.

Several thought provoking papers (over 200) were presented by the Keynote Speakers and also in the many parallel sessions that were held. Prof. Rastogi also presented a paper that was well received, at this Forum. The Asa Briggs Lecture was presented by Professor Alan Tait of the UK Open University

Papers Published (Dr. Karen Ferreira-Meyers)

Chapters in book:

2013 Femmes désirantes – Art, littérature, représentations, edited by Isabelle Boisclair and Catherine Dussault Frenette, Editions du remue-ménage, Canada : Montréal, 2013, ISBN 978-2-89091-471-1, 324 p. ; FERREIRA-MEYERS, K. Chapter entitled : Femmes, désir(s) et autofictions, pp. 261-282.

2013 Popular Culture and Representations in Cameroon/*Cultures populaires et Représentations au Cameroun*, edited by Prof. Pierre Fandio, Groupe de Recherches sur l’Afrique et la Diaspora, Université de Buea, Kansas City (USA) : MAP, ISBN-13: 978-0615873374 / ISBN-10: 0615873375 ; FERREIRA-MEYERS, K. Chapter entitled : Chapitre 14: La BD africaine contemporaine en Côte d’Ivoire et au Cameroun: esquisse de comparaison historique et thématique, pp. 249-265.

Articles:

2013 FERREIRA-MEYERS, K, « Le roman policier et les arts de l’oralité en Afrique : deux mondes parallèles ? », in De Meyer, B., Halen, P. et Mbondobari, S. (éds), *Le polar africain*, Centre de Recherches « Ecritures », Littératures des mondes contemporains, Série Afriques, numéro 8, pp. 217-234.

2013 FERREIRA-MEYERS, K. « Polar noir », in *Alternatives Internationales*, numéro 61, décembre 2013, pp.68-71.

2013 FERREIRA-MEYERS, K. « African masks as memories of culture in selected African crime novels », in *TricTrac, Journal of World Mythology and Folklore*, Volume 5, 2012, pp.40-46, ISSN print 1996-7330

2013 FERREIRA- MEYERS, K. « Femmes, désir(s) et autofictions », in *Femmes désirantes. Art, littérature, représentations*, sous la direction d’Isabelle Boisclair et Catherine Dussault Frenette, Montréal : Editions du Remue-ménage, 978-2-89091-471-1 • 326 pages , pp. 261-282.

2013 FERREIRA-MEYERS, K. « Historical overview of a new literary genre: autofiction », in *Auto/fiction*, Vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 14-33, www.autofiction.org.in

2013 FERREIRA-MEYERS, K. « Les Belges et la Belgitude dans *Patrick et les Belges* (2004) », in Joséphine Mulumba Tumba (dir.), in *Des rives du Congo à la Meuse - La transnationalité dans le cycle belge de José Tshisungu wa Tshisungu*, Paris : L’Harmattan, 2013.

2013 FERREIRA-MEYERS, K. « Les TICE : outils de lutte contre l’analphabétisme académique à l’université du Swaziland? Démarches et stratégies de mise en œuvre d’un programme de qualité », Actes du Colloque scientifique international portant sur les TIC en éducation : bilan, enjeux actuels et perspectives futures, <http://2012.ticeducation.org/pages/actes>; 8 pages to be found at <http://2012.ticeducation.org/files/actes/59.pdf>.

2013 FERREIRA-MEYERS, K. « L’autofiction artistique : l’écriture et les arts visuels », in *Nouvelles Francographies*, New York, Vol. 3, no. 1, 2012, pp.27-48, ISSN 2167-0498.

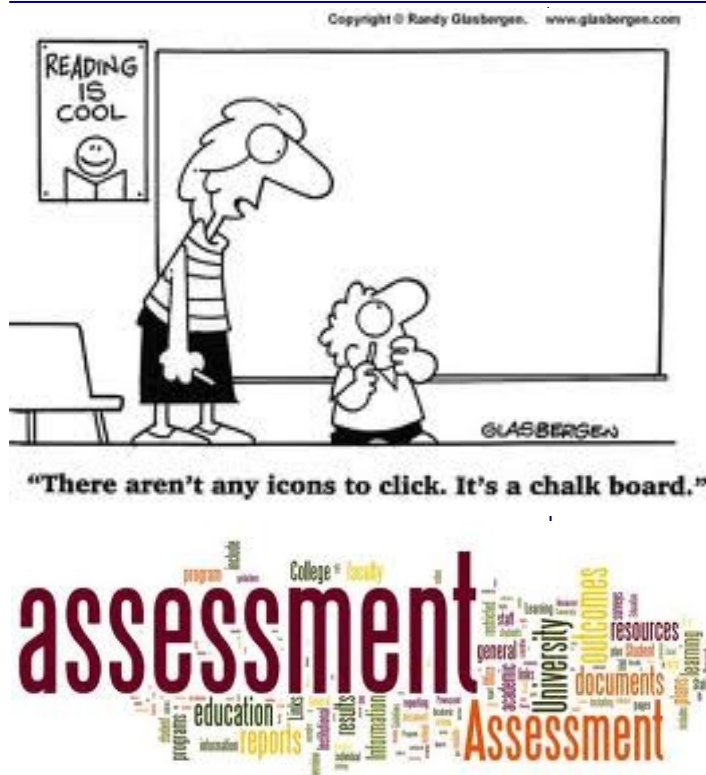
BLENDING LEARNING DESIGN WORKSHOP FOR THE PROPOSED BACHELOR OF NURSING SCIENCE DEGREE, TO BE OFFERED THROUGH DISTANCE EDUCATION by Nokuthula Vilakati (continued on page 10)

HELD ON 10-15 MARCH, 2014 at MAGUGA LODGE



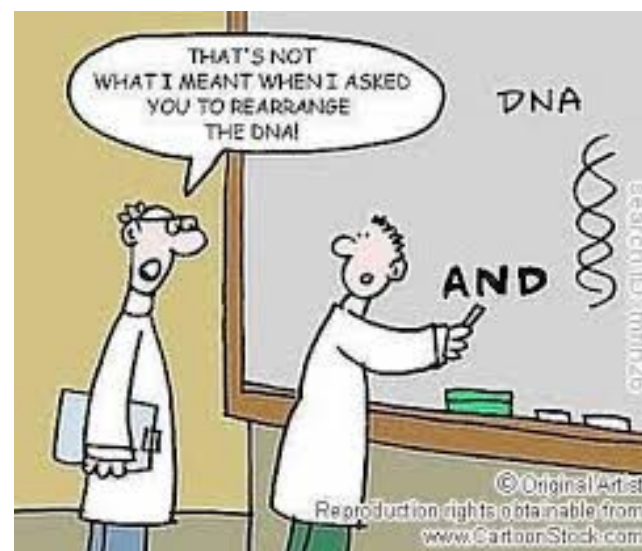
Participants and session presenters

The IDE Unit for Instructional Design and Development coordinated and facilitated a workshop for course teams from the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS), UNISWA. The workshop was a follow-up to the one held in October, 2013, on creating blended learning materials. The main purpose of the workshop was to complete the development of print and online learning materials, for courses to be offered as part of the proposed Bachelor of Nursing Science degree, by distance education. The workshop was scheduled during the week of 10 to 15 March, 2014, at Maguga Lodge. The Faculty of Health Sciences secured its own funding from the Health, HIV/AIDS and TB Project, to cover expenses for accommodation and meals. (continued on page 10)



www2.acs.ncsu.edu

IT'S THAT TIME OF THE YEAR AGAIN: OH, NO, EXAMS!!



REPORT ON SHANGHAI OPEN UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL STAFF EXCHANGE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME (25 November – 6 December 2013, Shanghai Open University, Shanghai, China)

Report by Dr. Karen Ferreira-Meyers (IDE)



Picture on the left: visiting African scholars, Mrs Rose Njuki (Kenya), Dr. Leona Ungerer (South Africa), Dr. Kester Ojokheta (Nigeria), Dr. Karen Ferreira-Meyers (Swaziland), Dr. Joyce Agalo (Kenya) and Mr Straton Ruhinda (Tanzania).

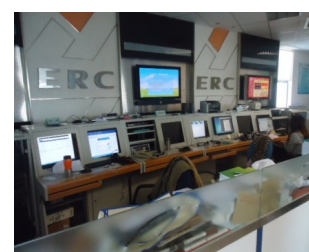
The **Shanghai Open University** (SOU), formerly known as Shanghai Television University, is an open university conducting distance education based on telecommunication, broadcasting & television, and computer and other technology based subject courses. SOU caters for citizens of Shanghai, a world city with more than 27 million inhabitants. It has its headquarters on Guoshun Road and 41 'branch schools' spread all over Shanghai. Because of that, the **SOU mission** is thus: SOU serves the lifelong learning of citizens and the construction of a learning society, and has a close relationship with the development of Shanghai and the wellbeing of its citizens.

Rationale for the exchange programme

The main reason for the existence of the exchange programme is the exchange opportunity where scholars from various parts of the world (in this case Africa and China) share information, experiences, best practices in view of possible scholarly and scientific collaboration. It must be said that this was achieved during the close to two weeks session, as various collaborative projects are in the process of being set up.

Visiting African scholars

After a welcome ceremony in which the delegates were warmly welcomed by the Vice President of the SOU, Prof. Gu Xiaomin and the Dean of the International Affairs Department, Prof. Wenfu Liu, the programme continued with a visit to the Shanghai Educational Resource Center.



Group picture and Visit of Shanghai Educational Resource Center

Web-based assessment: The Foreign Language Department has made great strides in the area of online assessment. The department has designed a web-based summative assessment for one of the course (Cambridge Business English) to reduce the burden of large scale exams, reduce workload of producing exam papers and grading as well as enable learners take exams anytime and anywhere gradually. The scholars were taken through the process of creating a test bank which is a database of examination questions created by teachers. Web-based formative assessment plan for each course is also put online where the system assigns online homework.



African scholars with the Faculty members from Foreign Language Department; Scholars and contact staff from SOU at the Science and Engineering Museum

Visiting scholars had an opportunity to exchange idea with the representatives from the TEACH-ING AFFFAIRS OFFICE whose main function includes the formulation of the new programmes and putting the teaching plan and management in place. It also develops curriculum and enhances teaching resources and administers the examinations.

VISIT OF SHANGHAI OPEN UNIVERSITY, QINGPU BRANCH SCHOOL

In taking education closer to the people, Shanghai Open University, whose headquarters is at Guoshun Road, Yangpu district, delivers its programmes and services through a network of 41 Branch Schools spread across the 18 Districts of Shanghai. Qingpu is one of the districts located to the western part of Shanghai. It is fondly referred to as the Garden of Shanghai, the cradle of cul- ture, watertank of China and a gate linking other provinces, hence the focus on Tourism.



Institute of Distance Education
Taking University Education and Professional Programmes to the People rather than the People coming to the University.

University of Swaziland

Phone: (268) 25170004
Fax: 268- 5187083

E-Learning and E-content creation – Some Issues - Prof. Satish Rastogi

The Government of Swaziland has very rightly established a Ministry of Information Communication Technology (ICT). This Ministry can play a vital role in knowledge dissemination, teaching quality, methodology and in learning too. In knowledge driven society, the growth of higher education and research is becoming increasingly dependent on the ability to create, distribute, and, exploit knowledge quickly and thoroughly. ICT for Education and eLearning related infrastructure plays a very important role in this regard. To build a well-developed Educational infrastructure is an important responsibility of the Govt. of Swaziland. The Libraries at the University of Swaziland have done wonderful work in this matter by making available to teachers and students a wide variety of knowledge resources in the form of e-content. The e-Learning can provide an opportunity to access literature/ information/ knowledge related to the curricular areas with a fair degree of mobility. A systematic, sustainable system for development related to the adoption of e-learning is needed among the teachers, educators, instructors, content creators.

Issues related to e-Education, e-Learning development and e-content creation.

In spite of the efforts and initiatives made by ICT Ministry and followed by various Higher Education Institutes in Swaziland, there are many problems being important issues:

- Lack of Awareness, acceptance and motivation towards use of e-learning in Higher Education system.
- Swaziland needs to develop a national policy on e-learning acceptable to all those involved in higher education sector.
- Networking with neighbouring countries of Southern African region and share the experiences among all these countries.
- Necessary infrastructure with various Colleges of University of Swaziland to create an environment for the same. The Institute of distance education has shown interest here. In fact, managing the monetary requirements is a big challenge.
- The application and role of ICT need to be explored in all subjects. Long-term planning and well implemented strategy have to be taken up for the quality and quantity of such infrastructure.
- Courses have to be designed and redesigned according to emerging needs and based on research.
- A national central repository system related to e-content for all subjects needs to be developed. Local content developed by the academics has to be combined with that in National Central Repository System.
- Budget or finance is an important component to implement major changes in teaching and learning systems. It requires a major change in communication style between the teacher and the learner. Both parties are to be oriented about their role and responsibilities in this new system.
- An academic revolution is essential to create a favourable positive Attitude among the academic fraternity and students too about this new system. Otherwise, people may not like to be involved in this new system.
- There is need for a paradigm shift in teacher education programmes. Inclusion of innovative methodologies for e-content creation and development.
- Collaborative and coordinated efforts need to be promoted among the all stakeholders participating in e-content creation and development. Self-evaluation, accountability, autonomy, transparency, quality assurance and innovation are required.
- The United Nation Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) may play its role in deciding global standards at international level regarding setting of institutions which will have e-learning using e-content. This is urgently required especially in the field of higher distance learning covering e-learning. It may help for making decisions on the equivalence of educational standards at the global level.

Conclusion

This may be a responsibility of Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Ministry of ICT in Swaziland to create an environment of e-learning using e-content first at Higher Education level and after that at High School level. ICT in education and e-Learning can help us to solve many issues of traditional as well as Distance Educational System. This is a present need and future demand. This is a new trend toward a new culture in the area of teaching and learning. Lack of technology and ICT use in education delivery may make an education system less productive. Integrated learning systems with web-based notes, video lectures, contents, animations, interactive simulations, glossaries, quizzes, assignments, solutions, online feedback and online discussions can enhance the quality of content dissemination. An integrated policy is needed to deal with development and changes related to the existing teaching learning practice. Effort, coordination and collaboration are very much essential among various countries of the Southern African Region. Some degrees of central planning, integration in various policies, programmes are also desirable for ICT implementation and e-Learning development. Based on the above it can be stated that e-Learning is important as it can fulfil the gap of availability of printed resources. All the stakeholders need to be involved for development of the national system in Swaziland. At national level duplication of efforts needs to be avoided. Networking among Southern African countries may avoid duplication and these countries may share materials with each other, which may reduce cost and time in developing e-content.

*Continued: **BLENDED LEARNING DESIGN WORKSHOP** by Nokuthula Vilakati*

The highlights of some of the workshop sessions were as follows:

Professor Sukati defined **Blended e-Learning** as a pedagogical approach in which students have some control over their learning; and the teaching is through online delivery, combined with the use of online learning tools (e.g. discussion boards, online collaboration, blogs, etc.), and technology tools (computers, digital white boards, cameras, etc.) so that instruction and learning can be accessed at any time by the student through multiple electronic devices”.

- Perceived benefits of blended e-learning for IDE were discussed as follows:
- A course put online can be accessed by an unlimited number of learners hence IDE can increase its enrolments and cater for all students who want to study through the Institute.
- The IDE learners can access their courses and lessons at any time and place.
- Students can also interact with their Lecturers, Tutors and fellow students in real time (synchronous) or delayed time (asynchronous) whenever they meet problems, wherever they are.
- Student achievement could be improved and accelerated through the affordances of e-learning, and effective learning communities are fostered and supported.
- Students would have regular interaction (tutoring) on line with the course leaders and fellow students. This enables them to discuss and clarify anything that they could not understand from the teaching materials.



A presentation by Dr SS Shongwe on **Embedding Assignment and Assessments Methods/Activities** during Open and Distance Learning (ODL) Materials Development

Dr Shongwe outlined the compelling reasons for embedding assessment and learning activities in modules as follows:

- To keep learners purposely engaged with the material. Without such activities, our learners might assume that the only objective was to memorise the information we set before them;
- To provide learners with summative feedback on their learning of a specific section;
- To help learners identify any errors, misunderstandings or misconceptions that they may be experiencing;
- To provide learners with remedial strategies to deal with the errors.

He then highlighted key ODL assessment issues as follows: How to meet learners' needs as they prepare different modes of assessment? How to ensure a high degree of validity of assessment results What should be the balance between continuous and final assessment?



The **Content Review Phase** in Draft Courseware (Day 3) by Ms JN Vilakati: in her presentation, Ms Vilakati outlined rationale for content review of learning materials as follows: for quality assurance purposes, a trait of scholarship at Higher education level, which has a bearing on institutional strategic issues (UNISWA's reputation and competitiveness). Ms Vilakati then emphasised the importance of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) in the module as follows: The content framework should be such that there is a fit between course description and syllabus (Is what is promised in the course description contained in the syllabus, scope and sequence, as well as to relate to the title of the module?) and The module is also reviewed for discipline specifics which include content relevance: in the selection of topics, concepts, key terminology. Therefore the topics and sub-topics must be informatively formulated. Additional considerations include accuracy of content, that is, the factuality and credibility of sources. Currency of knowledge is also important but with due recognition to classic knowledge given. The content must be pitched to the level of learners.

Key issues yet to be debated and resolved include the following:

- Do all parties realise that production of distance learning materials is labour intensive?*
- Is content review as conducted, value adding or a formality?*
- Is it conceived as part of a shared professional responsibility?*
- Do we care enough about our scholarly reputations, the profile of the graduate we want to help produce and the UNISWA brand?*

A presentation by Mrs JH Nkosi on **Development and Production Considerations for Online ODL** emphasized the importance of ongoing pedagogical evaluation of online courses throughout all course development phases. She proposed the following criteria as a basis for evaluating an online course:

Instructional design elements which include student needs analysis, the outcome of which will inform the course terminal outcomes, the choice of learning activities; assessment and course evaluation as well as teaching strategies.

Interaction and feedback through interaction at various levels as follows: among students, between learners and instructors, between students and learning materials. There is also need to evaluate the course for collaboration as well as the pace.

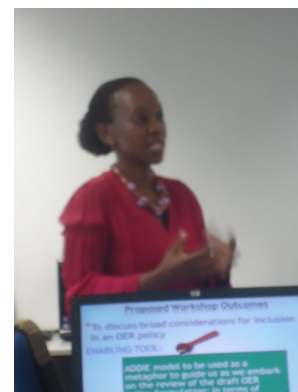
There are also course management issues to be evaluated which include time requirements, progression through the course, measures for evaluating student progress as well as for providing adequate feedback.

The last concern is with technical level support, such as through guidelines on where students can get technical support.

In another presentation, N Vilakati highlighted how educators can benefit from **open educational resources** (OER) that could be used to support the creation of their selected learning materials.

Some of the OER that are relevant to Health Science include the following:

- The Health OER Inter-Institutional Project accessible at: <http://www.oerafrica.org>
- The John Hopkins University Creative Commons accessible at: <http://www.jhsph.edu/>



Conclusion

The course teams were able to achieve their goal of working towards the completion of various course units of instruction and supporting learning materials. The draft units were submitted to the workshop facilitators for review and feedback.