UKZN is no.1 in maths research in SA

ASHAY NATHID

UKZN has been rated as South Africa’s best university in the field of maths research by the international news and data company Thomson Reuters.

The University of Cape Town was placed second followed by Wits, the University of Pretoria and Stellenbosch University. UKZN also compared favourably with ratings given to overseas universities.

Rankings were determined by assessing the impact of the publications under review rather than the number of works produced by the universities. In addition to being the top mathematics discipline in the country, mathematics was also the top discipline at UKZN.

Professor Kesh Govinder, Dean and Head of the School of Mathematics, Statistics and Computer Science, said he was proud of the results which represented a significant achievement for the discipline.

‘What makes these results all the more important is that they measure the relative impact over a ten-year period and do not focus on a single “good” year.’

Govinder said the study would have assessed criteria such as the number of times research papers were cited and in which journals they were published.

He attributed the recognition to dedicated staff and the university’s strong research culture. The ranking was a clear indication that while UKZN was proud of its successes in providing access to previously disadvantaged people, it did not fall short in the quality of education it was delivering.

* Thomson Reuters Corporation is an internationally recognised and acclaimed business data provider that operates in more than 100 countries. Their “InCites” research analysis tool is utilised internationally to determine the impact of research production.

UKZN artists produce prints for London Olympics festivals

VICKY CROOKES

TWELVE artists, comprising lecturers and postgraduate students from UKZN’s Centre for Visual Arts (CVA), recently participated in a print swap with the Inky Cuttlefish Studios (London) and the William Morris Gallery in Waltham Forest in England - a borough that is hosting the Olympic Games.

Each artist produced an edition of four prints, three of which have been sent to Britain where they will be displayed at five exhibitions and festivals linked to the London Olympics.

The prints all reflect the central theme of the project which is: Godiva Awakes. It is inspired by the story of Lady Godiva who rode naked on her horse through the streets of Coventry to protest her husband’s taxation on his tenants.

In exchange for the UKZN-produced prints, artists from the Inky Cuttlefish Studios will send the CVA a selection of their prints which will be on the same theme. These, together with the UKZN prints, will form part of a special exhibition at the CVA’s Pietermaritzburg-based Jack Heath Gallery later this year.

The print swap was initiated and led by CVA lecturer, Mrs Faye Spencer, who wanted to showcase and sustain the energy and enthusiasm for 2D visual arts practice at the CVA. The project was made possible by a former UKZN CVA student who has her own art studio in Britain and was keen to help out.

Another important part of the initiative was an outreach project with children at Scottsville Primary School and Grade 10 art students at Russell High School. Both sets of pupils, under the guidance of UKZN lecturers and students, painted pieces of fabric, measuring two metres by two metres, with images related to the Lady Godiva theme but with an African bias. This uniquely-designed fabric will be used to make costumes in Britain for performers participating in the pageants and festivals leading up to the Games.
Maths4Stats training initiative empowers educators

UKZN Statistics lecturers (from left) Mr Knowledge Chinhamu, Professor Delia North and Mr Oliver Bodhiyera.

SALLY FROST

The University of Zululand (in partnership with Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) and the Department of Education – is offering KwaZulu-Natal teachers through Maths4Stats. Maths4Stats, first piloted at UKZN in 2010, is a training initiative for mathematics educators aimed at encouraging the development of mathematics education as an important bedrock for statistics.

The 2012 programme was launched in Pietermaritzburg in June with some 250 primary and high school teachers arriving from all corners of the province to register for the intensive skills-development course. A further 200 had registered in Durban the previous week.

‘I am looking forward to learning better methods of teaching data handling, as I find this problematical,’ said Ms Thandile Xulu, a Mathematics and English Grade 9 teacher at Smero High School in Edendale.

Now in its third year, the UKZN Maths4Stats lecture series continues to be a great success. It offers teachers in both the General (Probability and Financial Mathematics) and Financial Mathematics (Descriptive Statistics and Probability) and Financial Mathematics.

On 10 Saturday mornings, UKZN’s dedicated team of Statistics Lecturers, led by project originator and Statistician, Professor Delia North, will volunteer their time to run ‘train-the-trainer’ type lectures on the Pietermaritzburg and Howard College campuses in three parallel sessions. GET, FET (Data) and FET (Probability and Financial Mathematics).

North was excited about the initiative. ‘With enhanced skills transfer to educators, the abilities of school pupils will improve and their confidence in passing mathematics will develop. It’s full steam ahead!’

UKZN builds relationships in Sydney, Australia

BRUNO VAN DYK

An event for alumni and friends of UKZN was held in Sydney, Australia, recently with the aim of cultivating relationships.

At the get-together, a short talk was given by the Executive Director of the UKZN Foundation, Mr Bruno van Dyk, with questions fielded by UKZN’s Executive Director of Corporate Relations, Ms Nomonde Mbadzi.

Ms Ruth Thornton and Ms Lenore Plummer assisted with arrangements for the event, made contact with ‘lost’ alumni, and generally did all that was necessary to ensure a successful gathering.

‘We are extremely grateful for their continued interest in our work and the offer of ongoing commitment to growing the presence of UKZN among its many Australian-based graduates,’ said van Dyk.

‘The University looks forward to increasing its presence among our graduates in Australia over the next few years,’

Business science student chosen for SA U-19 cricket team

THANDWE JUMO

BACHELOR of Business Science student Mr Sumanth Sunkari has been selected for the South African team going to the 2012 ICC Under-19 Cricket World Cup in Australia in August.

Sunkari secured his place in the 25-man squad after taking part in the Cricket South Africa U19s Week – an Under-19 cricket tournament in Stellenbosch in January. After scoring an impressive three 50s and taking six wickets he was selected to attend the National Academy in Pretoria, where he is currently preparing for the World Cup.

‘I feel very privileged to be a part of the SA U19 squad and it is a great honour for me to be recognised on a national level,’ said Sunkari. ‘I am currently in the second year of my degree and it is quite tough to balance sport and studies but if you manage your time properly, make sacrifices and commit yourself to a long term process, you can definitely excel in both fields,’ said Sunkari.

Sunkari’s sporting skills are not limited to cricket – he was also a member of the South African Under 19 hockey squad last year. Although passionate about sport, completing his studies by 2014 is the top priority.

‘I am looking to go as far as possible and making the SA U19 team is a great stepping stone to bigger and better things for me. In saying that, I am definitely keeping my academic options open and will continue to study. I am interested in doing my MBA but I will re-assess my situation once I complete my undergraduate degree,’ added Sunkari.

Mr Sumanth Sunkari.
L OUNGING in the rolling green hills of the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands is at a prestigious school, sipping wine out of a frosty glass and watching塑胶 schoochoy knock themselves senseless during a game of rugby, the conversation switched to the weighty subject of their privileged offspring.

“To the University of KwaZulu-Natal, of course,” I replied.

It was a mistake. I spent the remainder of my time there defending this choice.

UKZN appears to have become the latest fashionable enemy of the privileged offspring.

“People need to separate the personality problems of the institution from the staff on the ground. And the staff are, by and large (and if you will pardon my arrogance!), brilliant. We’re a research led institution. This means immense pressure on the lecturing staff, as we’re expected to produce intellectual output constantly; as well as teaching, marking, mentoring, and furthering our own qualifications. But in essence, it also means that UKZN is one of the top three research led universities in South Africa - and considering we’re in competition with the University of Cape Town, which has nearly double the amount of staff, that’s pretty amazing.”

I’ve encouraged them to write blogs simply to get going, take photographs, make videos, produce news and feature stories, lay out new pages and feature pages, and write academic pieces and long essays, theoretise and practise. They’re growing in confidence and ready now to take on the world; they know where their strengths and weaknesses are. They have critical, enquiring minds, a healthy scepticism, skills and an education. And they’re a tight little group who respect each other’s conventions.

Dr Nicola Jones is Academic Leader of Media and Cultural Studies, the Centre for Visual Art, School of Arts at UKZN's Pietermaritzburg campus recently wrote to the Witness Newspaper (20 June 2012) to explain why UKZN is her university of choice. 

Fourth year Architecture students Mr Lucien Glass and Ms Chantelle Muller displaying their models.

**WHY UKZN?**

**Dr Nicola Jones, Academic Leader: Media and Cultural Studies**

Drama, and Centre for Visual Art, School of Arts at UKZN’s Pietermaritzburg campus recently wrote to the Witness Newspaper (20 June 2012) to explain why UKZN is her university of choice.

“Last year, we had 231 NRF-rated researchers of whom four are A-rated and 46 B-rated. At the moment, I have seven PhD students: one (white) American academic who has just graduated, two (black) Johannesburg professionals, one (white) former newspaper editor; one (black) Cape Town online editor; one (white) renowned human rights activist, and one (white) ‘regular’ student who keeps getting international offers in the academic field, but fortunately for us remains here. Students of excellence at the postgraduate level actively seek us out.

And the benefits of the current reconfiguration are beginning to show. Take the Centre for Communication, Media and Society (CCMS) at Howard College, for example. Located in the new School of Applied Human Sciences, in a well-supported interdisciplinary research environment, it attracts top students from all over the world.

CCMS's Global Strategic partnerships feed huge intellectual and financial resources into the university and its students. The Centre offers international exposure through intercontinental collaborative networks managed by some of the world’s top scholars.

Also, in July UKZN is hosting the International Association for Communication and Media Research conference. The pressure on UKZN to host this massive event is a mark of the recognition of UKZN as a site of media, communication and cultural studies research, led by luminaries such as Professor Ruth Teer-Tomselli, two-time SAIC board member; holder of a UNESCO Chair in Communication, and a Vice-President of the Association.

The lesson where top management provides an efficient operating environment, the University’s effectiveness is best measured by the work of its educational and research staff, the quality of its graduates and the difference they make in the world. CCMS is just one such centre located at UKZN, and many programmes which constitute the bulk of UKZN’s divisions, are rising to the task in their own creative ways.

Space constraints allow me to elaborate only briefly, but take Drama and Performance Studies in Pietermaritzburg. Started in the early 1970s, its facilities remain some of the best in the country, including three theatre venues - the Hexagon Main Theatre, the Studio Theatre and the Peacock Theatre - as well as recording and dance studios. In the past four years, four of their students have been awarded the prestigious Goodman Scholarships to pursue their studies in America, and Erin Fourie and Berthe Lomas are both UKZN graduates.

Agriculture in Pietermaritzburg offers the widest range of agricultural disciplines at any one South African institution, and is a leader on the African continent in Food Security Geography remains at the top of its field. Our mathematics is brilliant and we have many prestigious programmes and centres in Science. We are renowned for our medical research especially in the field of HIV and AIDS.

We boast the Centre for Visual Arts - where do you think many of South Africa’s leading artists (and art lecturers) got their degree? We offer world renowned ceramics courses, painting, print making, a gallery, archives, and a leading digital arts programme recently started by the renowned Professor Anton van der Hoven. Our media courses offer superb film making, led by a multiple award winning instructor and New York Filmm School graduate, Mike Hatton.

Psychology, Law and Religion and Theology are our fields; two centres that enjoy international recognition are the UJamaa Centre for Community Development and Research and the Sinolimando Centre for Oral History and Memory Studies.

Now let me tell you about the Amazing Eight, my current honours journalism students. (http://klinesmithmecs707.wordpress.com/). They range from a dachsholded writer, adhesive to an idealist who wants to change the world.

I’ve encouraged them to write blogs simply to get going, take photographs, make videos, produce news and feature stories, lay out new pages and feature pages, and write academic pieces and long essays, theoretise and practise. They’re growing in confidence and ready now to take on the world; they know where their strengths and weaknesses are. They have critical, enquiring minds, a healthy scepticism, skills and an education. And they’re a tight little group who respect each other’s conventions.

They’re going to be a dachsholded writer, zodiac to an idealist who wants to change the world.

I’ve chosen not to send my boys to a boring secondary school, but to my university.

**Dr Nicola Jones is Academic Leader of Media and Cultural Studies, the Centre for Visual Art, School of Arts at UKZN’s Pietermaritzburg. She writes in her personal capacity.**
Student leaders honoured for academic achievements

SITHEMBILE SHABANGU

UKZN student leaders who graduated in April were honoured for their achievements during an inaugural UKZN student leadership graduation celebration on the Westville campus.

Master of Ceremonies and one of the achievers, Mr Mnileni Phakathi, reminded the audience of the objectives of student leadership. Executive Director: Student Services, Dr Sibusiso Chaluftu, was impressed by the high standard of the event, telling students they had set the tone for future ceremonies. Chaluftu said the University had a rich history in terms of student leadership with a number of former student leaders excelling in society. He was happy to see leaders were not only assisting students, but excelling academically as well, adding that the importance of student leaders needed to be highlighted so the University produced leaders who were innovative and socially responsible.

UKZN Registrar, Professor Jane Meyerowitz, said a highlight for her at Graduation was seeing student leaders receive their degrees. She said success needed to be acknowledged and she wished the students well in their achievements expressing the hope they contributed to the knowledge and economy of the country.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning, Professor Remuva Vilhal, said the event was a wonderful and long overdue idea. She thanked the leaders for providing their leadership skills to follow students, saying the University acknowledges the sacrifices student leaders make.

Central SRC President, Mr Thembani Khumalo – one of the graduates – thanked the office of student services for the event. He urged other leaders to further their studies and to contribute to the University.

Best final year student in Civil Engineering

SITHEMBILE SHABANGU

UKZN Civil Engineering student and cum laude graduate, Mr Bongani Dladla, has topped his class scooping three awards for his achievements. He also obtained a 100 percent pass mark for his dissertation.

This was announced during the prize-giving ceremony held in honour of final year Civil Engineering students – many of whom have already begun their professional careers. A total of 14 prizes were awarded to students who excelled in various categories.

Dladla received the J R Raymond Prize, for the highest academic merit in water and environmental engineering, and the Walter Morgan Thomas Prize, for the overall highest academic merit in final year. The title of his dissertation was: The qMol/o! / St Lucia Tidal Network Sediment Dynamics.

Mr Bongani Dladla

Dladla, from Edendale in Pietermaritzburg, said he was happy and proud to have obtained the awards. He is currently working at Umgeni Water as a graduate Civil Engineer and is completing his studies, part-time, towards a Masters in Civil Engineering.

His advice to other students is to love what they are doing so their studies become easy and enjoyable. He said his inspiration to study Civil Engineering came from his high school teachers who were dedicated to making sure he succeeded. Dladla also thanked his parents who gave him a good education.

“My stay at UKZN was made especially enjoyable by the dedicated staff in the Civil Engineering programme, especially Professor Derek Stretch and Professor Cristina Trois, who are heavily involved in new knowledge generation with their research. I look up to them,” said Dladla.

Department of Public Health Medicine hosts NRF partners from India

LUNGA MEMEJA

THE Department of Public Health Medicine in the College of Health Sciences recently hosted Professor Kasturi Sen Ray and Dr Mahuja Banerjee, nutrition experts from India.

Their visit was as part of an India South Africa collaboration funded by the National Research Foundation (NRF) which aims to reduce malnutrition in the countries.

Ray is from the Tata Institute of Nutrition in Mumbai where her interest is in community nutrition, while Banerjee works with rural communities in India towards improving their nutrition.

Professor Myra Taylor, Senior Researcher at UKZN’s Department of Public Health Medicine, interacted with the visitors over two weeks to share ideas and speak about the similarities and differences in the challenges faced by the countries regarding malnutrition, especially at grassroots level in rural communities.

The World Health Organisation identifies good nutrition – an adequate, well balanced diet combined with regular physical activity – as a cornerstone of good health. Poor nutrition can lead to reduced immunity, increased susceptibility to disease, impaired physical and mental development, and reduced productivity. It is also a major contributor to disease and early deaths for mothers and children.

Taylor spoke about one of the projects run by the Department of Public Health Medicine in Vulamehlo, Ugu District, which aims to improve nutrition locally. The project reaches out to households in the community, promoting food gardens and the planting of food which is indigenous to the area.
Dr Bernard Gaede, Director for the Centre for Rural Development (CRD) at UKZN, was one of the respondents at the forum. Gaede said the Rural Doctors Association of South Africa and the CRD looked forward to ways in which the NHIP would improve access to appropriate health services, increase human resources, foster good governance and ensure the quality of care even for rural communities burdened with disease. Registrars and other postgraduate students from CHS engaged in critical dialogue exploring the efficacy of an NHIP to transform the country’s healthcare system.

The provincial Minister for Health, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo addressing stakeholders.

"The driving force is the assertion of ordinary people to be the creators of their own health," said Sibongiseni Dhlomo, who said: "Our driving force is the assertion that health is a public good." Dhlomo explained that until South Africa sorted out the HIV/TB pandemic, it would be difficult to win against maternal, newborn and child health issues. He said the DoH was apologetic about introducing the NHIP but there was a lot that government still needed to do before its implementation.

The seven principles of the NHIP were: the right to access healthcare, social solidarity, effectiveness, appropriateness, efficacy, accessibility and efficiency. Dhlomo said the quality of healthcare in the public sector had improved dramatically. He stressed that health regulations should be in line with the country’s constitution, and therefore public participation in policy making was an integral part of democratic processes.

Mr Mark O’Flaherty, an Independent Financial Planner and CEO of the Proper Group, said although the private healthcare sector was recognised as world class, the inflation rate of medical aid was unsustainable. He shed light on the world-class, the inflation rate of medical aid and therefore public participation in that health regulations should be in line with the country’s constitution, and therefore public participation in policy making was an integral part of democratic processes.

The ISPP is an international organisation with members from all regions of the world. It represents all federations of inquiry concerned with exploring the relationships between political and psychological processes.

One of the main criteria for the award is that ‘discussions should represent an independent piece of research that is the sole work of the author and which gains the highest degree at the author’s university.’ Quayle, whose thesis focused on: Situated Identity Performance: Understanding Stereotype Threat as a Social Identity Phenomenon, received rave reviews from his examiners.

One examiner described his work, which provides new ways for understanding and reducing stereotype threat, as ‘groundbreaking’ while another examiner suggested that his research ‘will undoubtedly be among the best pieces produced in social psychology in 2011’. Quayle, who graduated with his PhD in April 2011, credits his supervisor, Professor Kevin Durheim, for his success. "This occurs due to Kevin Durheim’s exacting supervision as much as any qualities of my own,” said Quayle.

Professor Kevin Durheim (left) and Dr Michael Quayle discuss his award-winning thesis.

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The answer lies in the soil!

SALLY FROST

With 112 students in her third year Soil Erosion and Land Degradation module, logistical challenges forced Senior Lecturer in Environmental Science and Distinguished Teacher award holder, Dr Helen Watson, to replace the traditional field excursion with a new project.

So instead of visits to the Valley of 1000 Hills and the South African Sugar Research Institute, the students were given a soil erosion project. ‘My students were required to work in groups of five and select an area where erosion is evident,’ said Watson. ‘They were required to identify the forms, causes and effects of the soil erosion, and make recommendations on how to arrest the situation.’

Most students chose sites on campus. The groups were then asked to report their findings in a ten-minute PowerPoint presentation and in a written report. ‘The presentations knocked my socks off,’ said Watson. ‘Without exception, the structure, lay out, graphics and time management of the presentations were excellent.’

Watson said the students took the project seriously, estimating rates of erosion and predicting consequences if mitigation measures were not taken. ‘Competition was very stiff and choosing the best female and male presenter proved difficult but we finally identified two.’

The winners received Westwood gift vouchers for their efforts.

UKZN and new Paediatric Centre closely aligned

Dr Shashi Ramji and Dr Nokololo Mbadlisi step into the all new resuscitation room with state-of-the-art facilities.

Students excited to begin Exchange Programme

Sixteen UKZN students have been accepted to study abroad as part of the University’s international student exchange programme.

MELISSA MUNGROO

SIXTH RN students leave for overseas soon to study for a semester as members of UKZN’s international student exchange programme.

The programme allows students to move beyond an academic exchange and embrace a new culture and a different lifestyle.

The students have been accepted to study in institutions in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Germany and Finland.

They recently attended a pre-departure orientation on the Howard College campus to assist them prepare for their semester abroad.

UKZN’s Student Exchange Co-ordinator, Ms Preshantha Reddy, said students would stay for an average of four months. They leave in mid-August or early September and return towards the end of December.

Reddy advised the students to make the most of their experience abroad and to learn as much as they could.

Second year psychology student Mr Dale Green has always wanted to study overseas and saw this as a once in a life-time opportunity to fulfil his dream. He will be studying at the Trent University in Peterborough, Canada.

Media and Cultural studies student, Ms Qiniso Zungu, is also overjoyed to be a part of the exchange programme and is looking forward to making the most of her stay at Roosevelt University in Chicago.

LUNGA MIMELA

THE new BHP Billiton Paediatric Centre of Excellence at King Edward VIII Hospital in Durban is closely aligned to the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health at the Nelson Mandela School of Medicine.

The partnership allows for the teaching and training of undergraduate and postgraduate students in paediatrics as well as training for nurses, paramedics and other staff. Most of this teaching is done by honorary lecturers aligned to the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health.

The Paediatric Centre is home to state-of-the-art facilities providing quality care for acute paediatrics and ambulatory paediatrics (outpatient care).

Dr Olaf Baloyi, acting CEO for King Edward VIII Hospital, worked with the hospital’s Paediatric Department to ensure the success of the project while the Department of Health gave its full co-operation.

Among the facilities are two ICU units.

Dr Shashi Ramji, Clinical Manager for Paediatrics at King Edward VIII Hospital, said: ‘Ambulances now have easy access to the hospital. Staff morale has improved and the building itself is conducive to the wellbeing of patients and parents.’

Collaborative efforts by the hospital’s Paediatric Unit contribute to the large-scale reduction of mortality of young children as stipulated in the United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goal 4. The UN states that pneumonia, diarrhoea, measles, HIV and AIDS, and malnutrition are major causes for childhood deaths globally.

Professor Miriam Adhikari, Research Co-ordinator and former Head of Paediatrics and Child Health at UKZN, said: ‘Children are the future we depend on… in order to have the child at optimal level you also need to have the mother and the guardian/family members at optimal level.’

This is taught to registrars specialising in the field by dedicated professionals such as Dr Kimesh Naidoo, who is Clinical Head of the Paediatrics unit at King Edward VIII Hospital.

UKZN involved in groundbreaking LIDAR research

LIDAR Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) is a remote-sensing technology which can measure the distance to a target by illuminating the object with light, often using laser pulses – being actively championed at UKZN by Professor Sivakumar Venkataraman of the School of Chemistry and Physics.

The programme allows students to move beyond an academic exchange and embrace a new culture and a different lifestyle.

Dr Enock Chekure.

The programme allows students to move beyond an academic exchange and embrace a new culture and a different lifestyle.

Professor Venkataraman championed at UKZN by Professor Sivakumar Venkataraman of the School of Chemistry and Physics on the Westville campus.

Venkataraman said LIDAR was used predominantly for measuring atmospheric parameters such as composition, wind, temperature, pollutants’ trace gases, and aerosol and cloud properties.

UKZN recently played host to a visiting delegation of Algerian LIDAR researchers, as part of a National Research Foundation-funded bilateral research project between South Africa and Algeria, titled: ‘LIDAR developments for atmospheric studies in South Africa and Algeria (LSAA)’.

Apart from giving a series of seminars on Algerian LIDAR technology which is currently used for forest fire detection, the visitors learned about UKZN’s LIDAR technology, which consists of a Nd:YAG laser operating at 532nm with a pulse width of ~8 ns and 0.5 J per pulse.

Venkataraman said UKZN’s LIDAR detection system involved three different telescopes for measuring the middle atmospheric temperature from 30-70 km, aerosol (0-35 km) and water vapour (6-20 km).

Venkataraman previously worked at the National Laser Centre of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) so was able to organise the loan of the CSIR-NLC Mobile LIDAR unit.

In September, members of UKZN’s LIDAR team will pay a reciprocal visit to Algeria to further the research collaboration between the two countries. The team consists of Venkataraman, Dr Mathew Moodley, Dr Nkanyiso Mthatha, Dr Bashahavendra Rumar Kanke and Mr Enoch Chekure.
UKZN boasts four bestseller books

MELISSA MUNGRoo

Ten thousand copies of a book sold in South Africa makes it a best seller – and UKZN has published four of them! This is according to Ms Sonya Keyser of New Readers Publishers (NRP), a non-profit publishing project of the Centre for Adult Education.

Keyser said bestsellers were rare, particularly in South Africa, where the South African Book Development Council’s recent survey revealed that 1 percent of the population were book buyers, 14 percent were regular readers and about 5 percent read their children.

She said the Guide to Publishing in South Africa (2012 edition) published by the Publishers’ Association of South Africa (PASA) stated that 10 000 copies of a book sold in South Africa made it a bestseller.

The aim of the NRP project, which has been in operation since 1991, is to make a contribution to an increase in adult literacy and reading culture.

NRP has four bestsellers and they were all written, edited, published and promoted by UKZN staff.

From left: Professor Donal McCracken, Ms Sanaa Ebrahim and Father Declan Doherty of Mtubatuba, to whom the book is dedicated.

UKZN professor editor of new book on Southern African-Irish history

VICKY CROOKES

ESSAYS and Source Material on Southern African-Irish History, edited by Professor Donal McCracken of UKZN’s Centre for Communication, Media and Society, was recently launched by Irish Ambassador to South Africa, Mr Brendan McMahon.

This new book, the fourth in the occasional series Southern African-Irish Studies edited by McCracken, records the saga of the Irish Diaspora in Africa. It was published by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs.

According to McCracken, the population of Ireland declined by half after the great Famine of the 1840s. One of the principal reasons for this was emigration. While hundreds of thousands of the suppressed and dispossessed Irish fled to the United States and Australia, some also came to South Africa, said McCracken.

Essays and Source Material on Southern African-Irish History has contributions which range from the 1808 Irish-led revolution in the province.

According to McCracken, the population of Ireland declined by half after the great Famine of the 1840s. ‘One of the principal reasons for this was emigration. While hundreds of thousands of the suppressed and dispossessed Irish fled to the United States and Australia, some also came to South Africa,’ said McCracken.

One of the questions respondents were asked was who they believed had contributed most effectively to water research in South Africa and Schulze was No 1! Other UKZN researchers who featured in the Top 25 list were Graham Jewitt (8), Simon Lorentz (15), Jeffrey Keyser (21) and Mark Dent (23).

Sixty-nine-year-old Schulze, an emeritus professor of Hydrology and senior research associate at the School of Agricultural, Earth and Environmental Science, said modestly he was very ‘chuffed’ when he saw the results of the survey.

His research into climate change and global warming-related issues has earned him world-wide recognition as an authority in the field with much of his time now taken up addressing gatherings on the subject in all corners of the globe.

Schulze has a long list of accolades including being a member of the National Water Research Committee, a Fellow of the Royal Society of South Africa, a member of the Academy of Science of South Africa and is currently leading several multi-institutional research projects.

His latest book, A 2011 Perspective of Climate Change and the SA Water Sector is due out this month, while his previous work, An Atlas of Climate Change and the Southern African Agricultural Sector: a 2010 Perspective, was well received.

He said there had been a significantly increased acceptance of climate change as a reality in recent years while ‘we as scientists realise there are still many uncertainties the challenge is to make decisions under those uncertainties.’

Schulze said special tribute to his wife, Waltraud, who had supported him totally during his long career. ‘Our six grandchildren, aged from five down, keep us fully on the go but we enjoy it thoroughly.’

Schulze who describes himself as a fifth-generation South African – says his first memories are of Harburg in the KwaZulu Natal Midlands. His forefathers had emigrated from Germany in the 1880s with one side of the family settling in the little village which today still has a strong German influence.

He matriculated at the nearby German school at Herrmannsburg and did a BSc in Geography and Chemistry at the then University of Natal, going on to do his honours and masters as well as a teaching diploma.

In 1969 he got a lectureship in the Geography Department at the Pietermaritzburg campus of the University so beginning an association which has lasted more than 40 years and continues to prosper!

While in the geography department he started working on his doctorate with a focus in the field of hydrology.

A major turning point in Schulze’s career was sparked by the Water Act of 1968. The Water Research Commission was founded and funded research in the then Department of Agricultural Engineering. Having completed his doctorate in the field of hydrological computer modelling, I was offered a research post at the University funded by the Commission.

In the early 1980s, Schulze was able to convince the University to start the discipline of hydrology as a degree course in the Faculty of Science, a first for any South African University. Hydrology grew to the extent that many hundreds of hydrologists have graduated through UKZN since the early 1960s.

Included among Schulze’s many research highlights is the development of a hydrological model which estimates peak floods for engineering design still used today as an industry standard in South Africa. Another is the development of an integrated hydrological model called ACRU being used extensively in South Africa and overseas in decision-making for water resources, including estimating runoff and land use requirements to land use/cover impacts.

‘A third highlight was the development of detailed mapping systems for climatology and hydrology in South Africa. Coming out of that has been the publication of a series of detailed atlases used nationally and internationally.’

Climate change became much more than a high-flier on Schulze’s radar in the late 1980s. It has grown dramatically over the years with major funding for his team’s research coming from the Water Research Commission (WRC) and other national and international sources.

He said the South African Government, as well as the private sector, were putting effective strategies and actions in place to adapt to climate change and mitigate its effects. ‘It is encouraging that the private sector, as an affected party, is playing a more and more important role in this sphere.’
The UKZN G’rit COP17, IDs and Identities

KEYAN G TOMASELLI

“WHO do you think you are?” a partygoer once asked Peter Sellers in his comedy, The Party. A few years ago an insurer refused to pay me out an investment because they claimed that my signature was different to the one I had signed 20 years earlier! No matter that my long-term broker was present when I signed the claim form, or that my fingerprints were on it, or that my ID was valid, or that I have an electronic footprint. I did not exist until I could prove that I existed in terms of their irritating and irrational legal procedures. Clearly, I did not know who I was.

But who am I as a carbon emitter? I own a house and two 4x4s (for my research, not to show off). I consume water, electricity and I use the Internet – judiciously. The Internet, like everything consumed, generates vast quantities of e-waste.

When recently filling in a FICA form (thanks to 419s and 9/11) I was required to submit an original utility bill to prove that I live somewhere in concrete serviced by overpriced electricity (that some mining companies get at below cost). I daily thank my lucky stars that I am not a shack dweller with no utility bills (and that I don’t have to steal electricity). I am therefore able to invest in the stock market. No wonder so few South Africans are able to invest anywhere at all – they don’t have any utility bills to prove that they exist and therefore have limited access to Internet. That’s the flaw with BEE. Only those with utility accounts and e-access are able to invest and participate in the formal financial sector. No wonder the masses are all for nationalisation. I am for nationalisation too if it means that I no longer have to carry wads of official certificates, documents, invoices, ID books, and a signature fixed in stone to conduct my daily life.

“When I come from, we know exactly who we are”, responded Sellers. So it is quite disconcerting when a manager whom I have never met tells me on the phone and by email that I am not who I know I am because he thinks that my signature is ‘different’ to what it once was. No, I could not fill out another form and apply a fresh signature that I would copy from the original. No, I could not go to the local police station and sign an affidavit stating that I know who I am. No, the investment would not be released until I was put through the endless misery of having to fill in more forms and provide utility bills which, thankfully, did not ask for the date of birth and gender of my granny’s cat. They even refused to take my fingerprint and stuff them into what ever system Home Affairs claims to have developed to ensure that – like criminals elsewhere – we are all known.

Until the early teens of the 20th century ID documents were unknown. Passports were introduced during the First World War to regulate free movement. Now, stolen and forged passports are high currency on the open market. As a result, SA citizens can’t even stop off at Heathrow in transit to take a crap without having to get an expensive visa with all the rigmarole and carbon emissions that goes with its application.

The carbon footprint of surveillance is immense. Many Africans who want to get visas to participate in conferences overseas have to fly to adjacent territories or participate in conferences overseas – we are all known.

The Party, its cast and crew, is ‘related in the matter’ to the seething masses to which most Afrikaners belong. They demand the destruction of the ‘Committee of Polluters’. Unlike the COPers, the rest of us just get on behind the scenes without making an issue of it to get the job done.

Our individual identity (and image) is irrelevant.

Oh, and by the way, the Internet is not entirely green as one local environmental magazine claims. The average Google search spews 7 grams of carbon into the atmosphere, and electronic waste is worse than plastic bags. The shack dwellers might spew the bags, but the celebs and educated spew the carbon directly.

We would like to include a page on social news in UKZN DABA that features personal news of staff and students – marriages, the birth of babies, hobbies, competitions that were entered and so on. Email your contributions to captain@ukzn.ac.za or shabangwe@ukzn.ac.za

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