



FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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OVER THE PAST YEAR the Faculty has changed its costume by taking a new logo into use. This was the result of a class project launched among Visual Arts students. The hand motif indicates the human aspect of the Faculty. In conjunction with this, the slogan “Sharing knowledge | Shaping debate” points to the Faculty’s academic role, but also the interaction in the Faculty.

In addition to our new image, we are also very excited about our initiative under the banner of the University’s Overarching Strategic Plan (OSP). As of February 2009, Prof Johann Groenewald was appointed as a consultant to assist the Dean, his management committee and the theme leaders in the implementation of the School of Graduate Research as a flagship project of the Faculty.

This project includes a number of subthemes, two of which have been identified as general enablers, namely the establishment of an interfaculty geographic information technology platform, and a doctoral academy aimed at the needs of advanced academic study in the context of Africa. The themes that currently form part of this initiative and that are based on the international development goals include:

- *Conflict and peace in Africa.*
- *Land, environment and sustainability in Africa.*
- *Transitions and translations: Africa in the global imaginary.*
- *Towards sustainable cultural creativity: empowering the arts in developing communities.*
- *Science, technology and society.*
- *Consolidated geographical information technology at SU.*
- *Public mental health.*
- *Promoting human physical and psychological well-being through sport and exercise (in collaboration with the Centre for Human Performance Sciences).*

The idea is to recruit about 30 to 40 additional full-time doctoral bursary students every year. They will be given research methodology training for a year to write a good research proposal. The South Africans will then remain at Stellenbosch, while the foreign students will return to their country of origin to work on the dissertation there. A joint degree – currently in the negotiation phase – of both universities will then be awarded. Promotors and co-promotors will be appointed from the collaborating faculties. Our main partners are the universities of Botswana, Malawi, Dar es Salaam (*Tanzania*)

and Makerere (*Uganda*). They will be joined in the network PANGeA (*Programme for Africa’s Next Generation of Academics*).

During 2009 a promotional poster was compiled, a web site was designed, rules for the School of Graduate Research were approved, and all expectations were exceeded when close on 180 applications were received by November 2009, the closing date for the first intake.

The Faculty was not active only on the postgraduate level, however. Arts students have to jump higher was the essence of a poster with which the Faculty explained to undergraduate students that they would need to earn 0,5, and not 0,3, HEMIS credits to qualify automatically for re-admission for 2009. This means that a student has to pass at least half of the credits for his or her degree course in order to be allowed to continue studying. If not, the student has to apply for re-admission. We are full of confidence that this will contribute to an improvement in the culture of learning in the Faculty.

In order to serve the large group of undergraduate and postgraduate students we depend on a special group of lecturers, a few of whom were rewarded for their inputs in 2009:

- *Ms Jeanne Ellis (English) and Dr Lambert Engelbrecht (Social Work) received the Rector’s Award for Excellence in Teaching.*
- *Prof Keith Dietrich (Visual Arts) and Prof Cheryl Walker (Sociology and Social Anthropology) received the Rector’s Award for Excellence in Research.*
- *Prof Ashraf Kagee (Psychology) received the Rector’s Award for Excellence in Community Interaction.*

An aspect of research that possibly is not that well known beyond the borders of the campus is that there are a number of research centres in the Faculty. The academic structure was expanded by the addition of two new centres in the past year, namely the Centre for Comic, Illustrative and Book Arts (CCIBA) in the Department of Visual Arts, and the Centre for Regional and Urban Innovation and Statistical Exploration (CRUISE) in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies.

On the whole, 2009 was a busy, preparatory year during which we invested in a number of initiatives that hopefully will produce good dividends for the Faculty, the University and the continent in the near future.