

Universiteit van die Vrystaat --- University of the Free State

## 2005- turnaround target reached

The UFS already reached its turnaround target for 2005, the Executive Management heard this week. The UFS also exceeded its projections in student growth for 2005.

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## Language proficiency on fast track

A project team will be established to refine proposals and report back to management on language proficiency testing and development of students.

The plan is to make language courses credit-bearing in all faculties.

In a proposal to the Executive Management this week Prof. G.W. de Klerk and W.J. Greyling said the proposal is based on the widely held concern that poor language skills have a negative impact on learner throughput and learner success. Students' lack of language skills undoubtedly compromises academic standards. They said the development of students' language proficiency will also add significant value to their training and will ultimately improve their employability.

"The level of

language proficiency of learners at the UFS is a reason for concern especially (but not exclusively) in English.

"Research at South African universities has shown that at least 25% of our students are not having a grade-10 proficiency level in English. Grade 10-level proficiency is the minimum level of proficiency that students require to bridge that language gap and achieve success.

"Unfortunately the language proficiency problem is not limited to second-language speakers – surprisingly first-language speakers of Afrikaans and English also have problems in the field of language proficiency," they said.

Few – if any – researchers will argue that language proficiency is an

important indicator of effective learning, they said.

It is suggested that all novice first-year students be subjected to language proficiency testing at the start of the academic year. Test done in 2002 by Student Counselling confirm that language proficiency problems do exist among students.

Prof. De Klerk and Prof. Greyling said one of the important objectives of the proposal is that the university will not only develop related study skills, but will also add to graduates workplace competencies.

The project team will consist of representatives from every faculty, the language departments, Kovsie Guidance Services, the Access for Success Committee and the Career Preparation Programme.

## Meteoriet plaas UV in nuwe wentelbaan

'n Meteoriet wat verlede jaar in Lesotho geval het, het die UV en Wits in 'n sterk resies gewikkel gehad om die eerste te wees om navorsingsresultate daaroor in die *South African Journal of Science* gepubliseer te kry.

Die UV het dié wedloop gewen en die meteorietstudie open 'n hele nuwe veld vir die Geologiese departement hier.

Die departement spog nou met die grootste meteoriet-versameling in die land. Annegret Lombard, M-student in Geologie, wat haar honneurs op vier meteoriete, waaronder drie van Malawi gedoen het, sê die Thuathe-meteoriet wat op 21 Julie 2002 in Lesotho geval het, was waargeneem as 'n meteoriet-donderstorm wat glo met vuurballe, geraas en

skokgolwe gepaard gegaan het.

Die UV werk saam met die Universiteit van Roma in Lesotho om die nagenoeg 500 meteoriet-stukke te meet en te katalogiseer.

Fakulteitsfondse is goedgekeur vir die verdere bestudering van meteoriete 'n Groep vertrek in Julie na Namibië om nog drie meteoriete daar te beskryf.

## Taaldiens word geherstruktoreer

### Weer aangestel

Prof. Frans Swanepoel is vir 'n verdere tydperk van drie jaar deur die Minister van Landbou op die Landbounavorsingsraad aangestel.

### Appointed

Dr Johnnie Hay is appointed as senior lecturer at the Centre for Higher Education Studies and Development. The post was restructured and will be known as Co-ordinator: Programme Planning and Development.

### Get on the new website

Get access to the test version of the new website through a link on the current website. The link <http://kea.uovs.ac.za/> was activated last week. New information may not have been imported yet. Editing and fine-tuning are going ahead non-stop.

### Hemelvaartdiens

Die Kovsiekerk hou Donderdag (29 Mei) sy Hemelvaartdagdiens om 13:10 in die Kovsiekerk. Die diens sal gelei word deur prof. Piet Strauss.

Taaldiens gaan geherstruktoreer word om 'n Bestuurs- en Administratiewe taaldiens daar te stel wat alle vergaderings van die raad tot op departementele vlak (vir Akademie en Steudienste) sal ondersteun.

Die herstrukturering het ook noodsaaklik geword om kapasiteit te verskaf vir wanneer die UV se nuwe taalbeleid geïmplementeer word.

Onder die nuwe diens val die vertaling en taalversorging van agendas,

notules en bylaes vir vergaderings.

Die diens lewer of ondersteun ook die vertaling en taalversorging van amptelike kennisgewings, mediavrstelling, advertensies, sentrale beleid- en prosedure-dokumente en ander taal- en taalversorgingsdienste wat die Sentrale Administrasie mag nodig hê om die gehalte implementering van die Taalbeleid te verseker.

Taal- en taalversorgingsdienste wat die

Akademie nodig mag hê, soos die vertaling en taalversorging van studiemateriaal en wetenskaplike artikels, word na die fakulteite afgewentel.

Dit word nie meer deur die Taaldiens gehanteer of gefasiliteer nie.

Me. Helena le Roux is as hooftaalpraktisyn aangestel. 'n Nuwe pos vir 'n taalpraktisyn is ook goedgekeur. Die veranderinge sal deur die loop van die volgende semester ingefaseer word.

### Letuka to act as head: Kovsiesport

Mr James Letuka has been appointed as Acting Director: Kovsiesport due to the long leave and retirement of Mr Ewie Cronjé. Mr Cronjé will be on long leave from 1

January 2004 to 31 December 2004 and he will retire after that.

His position is likely to be advertised at the end of 2004.

### Process on to redesign vice-rector portfolios

A first proposal on the optimal configuration of the portfolios (post descriptions) for vice-rectors served before the Executive Management this week. This follows Council approval that the top-management capacity and skills requirements be investigated before advertising vice-rectors positions. The proposal suggests a rationale for portfolio design. It then identifies provisional clusters of (a) line management imperatives (e.g. faculty operations) as well as (b) strategic and planning imperatives that may be indicative of desired vice-rector (or chief director) portfolios.

It also analyses the required number of posts at that level, in the face of the daunting list of strategic and policy challenges facing the university in the next five years, and given current capacity and expertise. This is likely to be part of a broader assessment of capacity needs in order to sustain the quality of the institution. Prof. Sakkie Steyn, Registrar: General, said there also is a proposal to build a degree of flexibility into the process of advertising of the positions, enabling a best fit between eventual portfolios and the expertise of people appointed.

### Inaugural lecture

The inaugural lecture of Wilfred Joseph Greyling of the Department of English and Classical Culture is on *Applied Language Studies: Pursuing an applied competence* in the Senate Hall, CR Swart Building on Wednesday 4 June 2003 at 19:00. Contact Elize Rall (x3382) to attend.

### Vier saam fees

Bring julle kinders, kleinkinders, oupas, oumas, ooms, tantes en kom geniet 'n wonderlike fees, sê mev. Elize Rall, skakelpraktisyn, oor die Volksblad Kunstefees wat van 9 tot 13 Julie op die UV-kampus gehou word.

Vir die siel sal die vol kunsteprogram 'n fees wees, maar daar is ook ruim voorsiening gemaak vir die hongerkolle wat so tussen die gekuier deur gaan uitslaan.