

Campus Voice



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Graduation ceremony at the Qwaqwa campus of the UFS

The cloudy and cold morning did not stop the graduates at the Qwaqwa campus of the UFS from celebrating their achievements. The ceremony was held at the Rolihlahla Mandela hall on the 14 May 2005.

“It has been a long journey and for many of you it will be a special achievement as the graduates are awarded their diplomas and degrees. Indeed it is a day to be proud of these achievements and we therefore salute you. It is always important for me on special days like these to pay tribute to our guardians and parents, our lecturers and support staff, for all your dedication and hard work, and in fulfilling your obligations in ensuring that these graduates successfully completed their studies,” said Prof. Peter Mbatlana, the Campus Head.

Altogether 2 masters’ degrees, 69 honors degrees, 144 bachelors’ degrees and 162 diplomas were awarded during the autumn graduation ceremony at the Qwaqwa campus. Mr Sello Letawana,

Mayor of Phumelela Municipality, Mr Daniel Motsoeneng, Director of the South African Police Service in Free State, and

the senior management from the main campus were among the dignitaries who attended this auspicious occasion.



Prof. Peter Mbatlana, Campus Head and Rev Kiepie Jaftha, Chief Director: Community Services during the Qwaqwa graduation ceremony.

New equipment for a changed campus image

The Campus Head of the UFS’s Qwaqwa campus, Prof. Peter Mbatlana, handed over new garden equipment to the Maintenance Department. “The image of the campus is very crucial which is why I am counting on combined efforts towards keeping it in a good condition.

“The requisite efforts to realise the true potential of this campus is like a puzzle and through synergy we must put our pieces together for it to be complete. Your role in the reconfiguration of our campus as a quality institution cannot be underestimated. A clean and well maintained campus with manicured

lawns has a dramatic impact on the morale of both staff and students and sends a strong signal to the rest of the wider community on our resolve to make a success of the future of our campus,” said Prof Mbatlana.

Mr Eugene Malebo, Head of the Maintenance Department appealed for support from all the staff members as well as his colleagues. “I will not have anything to manage without your support. With your support I am planning on making changes on the campus, especially at the main entrance. Our campus will be one of the cleanest institutions in South Africa,” he said.



Mr Eugene Malebo, Head of the Maintenance Department, Mr Jack Vezi, Chairperson of Nehawu, Mr Moferefere Moeketsi and Prof. Peter Mbatlana, Campus Head.

Ford Foundation funds higher education redesign

The Ford Foundation will donate a grant of almost R280 000 for redesigning higher education delivery at three campuses in the Free State.

According to Prof Magda Fourie, Vice-Rector: Academic Planning at the UFS, the three campuses that will be affected by the strategic reconfiguration of higher education delivery are the Qwaqwa campus at Phuthaditjaba and the Vista campus of the UFS in Bloemfontein and the Welkom campus of the Central University of Technology (CUT).

Prof Fourie says the three campuses were all affected by the restructuring of higher education, in line with the National Plan for Higher Education.

The Qwaqwa campus of the UFS that was part of the former University of the North was incorporated into the UFS in January 2003. Likewise the Bloemfontein campus of the former Vista University was incorporated into the UFS in January 2004.

The Welkom campus of the CUT was also part of the former Vista University and was incorporated into the CUT in January 2004.

"These incorporations pose a challenge in that we have to think creatively about the best ways of using these three campuses to service the higher education, training, skills development and human resource needs of the Free State.

"The grant from the Ford Foundation will primarily be used to draw up strategic plans for the three campuses - the Qwaqwa campus of the UFS is a priority to us given the poverty and unemployment in a largely rural area of the Free State.

"A detailed consultation process will be undertaken in the Qwaqwa campus sub-region which will hopefully result in a comprehensive and a coherent suite of higher education activities being established on this campus.

"It is envisaged that the Qwaqwa campus will become a centre of excellence in the area of rural development. This vision is based on a focused integration of the core functions of a university - teaching, research, and community service - around the issue of rural development," said Prof Fourie.

Prof Fourie said that various educational offerings including among others short courses, bridging and foundation programmes, and degrees could be offered, with a particular focus on providing courses of relevance to students from the local rural community and students from elsewhere with an interest in focusing on rural development studies.

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Residences, lecture halls get R8,2 million facelift



Ceiling before



Ceiling after

A capital injection to the total value of R7,7 million rand has given the UFS Qwaqwa campus a facelift. Prof. Peter Mbatlana, Qwaqwa campus head, says that in order to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning, management recognised the need to improve the infrastructure on campus and made R6,2 million available towards the end of 2004 for the upgrading of student residences.

The first phase of the residence renovation has been completed. This phase mainly dealt with the maintenance backlog. The residences were painted, old furniture was replaced, electricity was rewired and the necessary alterations were made to ensure a proper hot water supply as well as a new look to the image of the residences. The gazellies, reception areas and rooms were affected by these changes. The renovated residences now also include facilities such as kitchenettes, washing machines and tumble driers and computers rooms.

Wardens and sub-wardens will assist students to keep these facilities in a neat, tidy and acceptable state. Aiming to also capacitate the administration structure of residences and to assist with the maintenance of the residences the university appointed a Senior Administration Officer.

Mr Teboho Manchu, Deputy Director: Student Affairs at the Qwaqwa campus, says that according to feedback from students, that they are impressed with the upgraded facilities. The residences are now running on full capacity.

Currently there are five residences on campus, accommodating 754 students. The majority of students at the Qwaqwa

campus stay in residences. Three residences accommodate female students and the other two are for male students. Students who are not accommodated here stay at Tshiya College of Education, approximately 5km's from the campus. These students are bused to the campus on a daily basis.

Mr Nico Janse van Rensburg from the Physical Resources and Special Projects at the main campus of the UFS said that a tender to the value of R1,4 million for the second phase of renovations was awarded to a local business in the Qwaqwa region, Mguni Enterprises. This phase started in May 2005 and is expected to be completed in July 2005.

During the second phase, lecture venues L1 - L6, lecture venues in the library and lecture venues in the Humanities and Education buildings as well as security are being upgraded. All four houses of the staff quarters, including the caretaker's house are also being upgraded. An extra R100 000 was made available for this.

Mr. Manchu said: "In terms of security in residences there is money available for fencing and security doors to ensure access only to those who must have access. The cabling is already completed. This measure will regulate possible squatting."

"All these developments are a major step forward for the Qwaqwa campus as it once again shows our commitment to the campus to make it an attractive site of higher education in the Eastern Free State," said Prof. Frederick Fourie, Rector and Vice-chancellor of the UFS.

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She said the redesign of the three affected campuses is being managed as a project of the Free State Higher Education Consortium (FSHEC) consisting of all the higher education institutions operating in the Free State.

"The aim of the project is to establish how the Qwaqwa and Vista campuses of the UFS and the Welkom campus of the CUT can be used effectively to meet regional education and training needs, to serve the strategic priorities of the two higher education institutions and contribute to the sustainable development and poverty alleviation of the region," she said.

According to Prof Fourie the grant will also be used to prepare a detailed funding proposal for each of the three campuses.

The planning for the Vista campus of the UFS is still in an early stage. "We are looking at the possibility of developing this campus into a hub of education and training opportunities for Bloemfontein and Free State region. Further plans will be communicated later in the year," said Prof Fourie.

Campus camera

Ask Dr Claassen about health care issues



Dr J.H.D. Claassen was nominated to represent the Qwaqwa campus in the Health Care Committee. This is the Committee that deals with medical aid issues. Dr Claassen will report to members after every meeting that he attends.



Saying their fare wells are from the left Mrs Kallie Van Jaarsveldt, Prof. Pieter Keulder and Mrs Ria Keulder.

The Qwaqwa campus community bids farewell to Prof. Pieter Keulder after 41 years of academic activities.

"When I was employed at this university 22 years ago this campus did not exist. I was at Lere la Tshepe at that stage and it was really under-developed but we joined hands with the Qwaqwa local government and some buildings were erected. Chief Mopeli also contributed a lot to the development of this campus.

"The only two faculties available on campus at that time were Natural and Agricultural Sciences and Economic and Management Sciences. The first building was the Administration Building," said Prof. Pieter Keulder, Acting Academic Head, during a series of farewell functions held on campus.

The Qwaqwa Campus Coordinating Management Committee, students and the rest of the staff members were given an opportunity to say goodbye to their colleague who really deserves a break after 22 years of challenges and successes.

"I am very happy about the initiative that the main campus has taken in renovating the student residences but I would like our students to have their own student centre, sports facilities and to enjoy their life as students and to experience the university environment. Our students and the

Qwaqwa community deserve a shopping mall. The students might benefit from it if it is built opposite the road of our campus.

"We really need an institutional plan for our campus and I feel that there are still a lot of uncertainties amongst the staff. But we cannot wait for top management to provide us with feedback. In the meantime we must engage ourselves in discussions and generate ideas.

"Preliminary discussions have identified the rural development niche as an area of focus for the Qwaqwa campus. It should be done well. A lot of research and investigations should be done. Our campus is situated in the most unique surroundings and we have to take advantage of that.

"This is not a static campus and the approach should be dynamic. From literally nothing, our campus has grown. The recognition of this campus means a lot and to be the pioneer in academic excellence is an achievement that we should be proud of.

"I would like to see the campus excelling in terms of academic offerings, and an academic working group should be established. The recent visit by the National Minister of Education made a huge difference to the campus and I am positive of its continuous existence," concluded Prof. Keulder.

Writing skills workshop presented at the UFS Qwaqwa campus



Prospective Qwaqwa News freelancers recently attended a writings skills workshop, offered by Qwaqwa News, at the University of the Free State Qwaqwa campus. From left are Khotso Mokoena, P.J. Tshabalala and Siphamandla Nkabini.

“The campus plays an essential role in the development of Qwaqwa and is providing many people with an opportunity of further education. Being a major role player in the area, the campus succeeds in going beyond the call of duty,” says Mr Andy Galloway, editor of Qwaqwa News.

He presented a writing skills workshop at the UFS Qwaqwa campus. Staff members, students as well as local journalists were educated on the importance of proper writing skills.

Since the recent launch of Qwaqwa News, the Qwaqwa campus played both a vital and positive role in helping to develop the newspaper in Qwaqwa. Not only has the campus been most helpful to Qwaqwa News but it has also given its full co-operation regarding matters affecting the university.

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"Notice to contributors"

The editor has the right not to publish.

Aspiring business leaders visit UFS-Qwaqwa campus

“All degrees are important but a B. Com. is the best because that is where the money is,” said Ms E. Samson-Akpan a Business Management and Marketing lecturer.

Edu-College Lifika’s Grade 9 learners attended a presentation at the UFS Qwaqwa campus on 1 June 2005. The presentation was held by the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences in the Senate Hall.

The purpose of the presentation was to educate young minds about endless opportunities that Commercial Subjects offer, in

terms of career fields. “Our aim at the UFS-Qwaqwa campus is to eradicate the mentality of failure in business as early as possible, hence we are addressing Grade 9 learners,” said Mr. Samuel Mensah, Programme Head in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences.

Increased interaction between the university and high school learners is what the Marketing Department at UFS- Qwaqwa campus strives for through campus tours and presentations of this nature.



From left are Ntombi Buthelezi, Siphon Mlangeni, Helene van Bosch, Life Orientation teacher, Siphonwe Kubheka, Head boy, Tumelo Keele, Student Recruitment Officer and Rethabile Chephetsa, Head girl.