

**CENTRE FOR INNOVATION
IN LEARNING
AND TEACHING**

**CURRICULUM
AND ACADEMIC STAFF
DEVELOPMENT UNIT**

WELCOME

TO

CURRICULUM & ACADEMIC STAFF DEVELOPMENT UNIT

I am honoured to welcome you to our space that is dedicated to advancing teaching excellence and strengthening the academic project at CUT. Our work is grounded in the belief that high-quality, research-informed teaching is central to the realisation of our institutional vision and to the success of our students. In a rapidly changing higher education landscape, we are called to design curricula that are future-focused, contextually relevant and responsive to the social, economic and technological realities of the Free State, South Africa and the broader African continent.

Our practice is framed by transformative learning theory, which challenges us to move beyond information transmission and to cultivate deep, critical and reflective engagement with knowledge. This means creating learning environments where students can question assumptions, connect theory to lived realities and develop the confidence to become ethical, innovative and socially conscious graduates. Through our collaborative work in CASD, I invite you to join us in reimagining teaching and curriculum as powerful levers for transformation, equity and student success at CUT.



DR XOLANI KHOHLISO

DIRECTOR AND HEAD OF SOTL

ABOUT THE UNIT

Curriculum and academic staff development (CASD) is a unit located in the Centre for Innovative in Learning and Teaching (CILT) at CUT. The unit supports the university's curriculum initiatives, staff development and Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) activities. Amongst many things, CASD implements institutional policies related to curriculum, teaching and learning, assessment and academic development initiatives as guided by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and CUT's policies.

The pursuit for Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) is integral to the growth and success of university teachers and it is aligned with the DHET National Framework for Enhancing Academics as University Teachers (2018). The unit aims to support the ongoing growth of academics, from newly appointed to academic leaders, and to promote excellence and scholarship of teaching and learning, research and innovation, and community engagement. CASD offer different programmes from the coveted Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education, Short Learning Programmes, faculty specific, generic workshops and further provides opportunities for academic staff to share pedagogical expertise through the SoTL flagship programme which is twofold; to mentor upcoming academics and to strengthen communities of practice in disciplines. Furthermore, the unit;

- Initiates and coordinates curriculum renewal and transformation initiatives through among others;
- Decolonisation/Africanisation/Indigenisation of the curriculum.
- Internationalisation of the curriculum.
- Transform curriculum through, amongst others Collaborative Online Intercultural Learning (COIL).
- Coordinates curriculum-related projects such as the current UCDG curriculum transformation project, scholarship of teaching and learning project and language policy development project funded by DHET.



OUR KEY SERVICES

1



CURRICULUM
DEVELOPMENT
AND DESIGN

CONTINUOUS
PROFESSIONAL
LEARNING



2

3



POST-GRADUATE
DIPLOMA IN
HIGHER EDUCATION

SCHOLARSHIP OF
TEACHING AND
LEARNING



4

5



INDUSTRY EXPOSURE

STUDENT FEEDBACK
ON LEARNING
EXPERIENCES



6

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN

The unit is responsible for;

- Developing and designing curricula for a range of academic offerings, including formal mainstream programmes, extended programmes, online courses, student support initiatives, and short learning programmes where applicable.
- Implementing policies and procedures related to curriculum innovation, programme development, institutional curriculum frameworks, and learning material design.
- Providing continuous support to faculties to ensure curriculum alignment with industry needs and national regulatory requirements, including those of DHET, CHE, SAQA, and professional bodies.
- Ensuring that all programmes, modules, and study guides are designed using an outcomes-based approach to enhance learning effectiveness and compliance.

POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education, aims to:

- Professionalize the practice of university lecturers by equipping them with advanced teaching competencies.
- Enhance the quality of teaching and learning in higher education through scholarly engagement with higher education studies.
- Develop critically reflective practitioners who integrate theory, research, and practice in their teaching methodologies.
- Align with the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF) by deepening lecturers' understanding of higher education as an academic discipline.
- Improve teaching excellence at CUT and other institutions through evidence-based, reflective, and theory-informed pedagogical approaches.



SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

The primary purpose of SoTL;

- To promote the scholarship of teaching and learning and to improve quality teaching and learning by encouraging academic staff to research and reflect their teaching and learning practices.
- To promote scholarly teaching by sharing good practices with national and international peers through conferences.
- To create a platform for staff development to promote quality learning and teaching through colloquia, workshops & seminars.
- To increase research outputs for the institution and mentor staff on writing for publications.
- Create groups of Communities of Practices (COPs) to work on specific domains of learning and teaching.
- Contribute to increasing teaching and learning research outputs for the Institution.

INDUSTRY EXPOSURE

The primary purpose of Industry Exposure is to;

- Ensures academic programmes align with South Africa's labour market and economic needs.
- Enhances practical teaching methods through real world industry insights and applications.
- Strengthens research relevance by addressing local socio-economic and industrial challenges.
- Fosters partnerships with industry for funding, resources, and student opportunities.
- Supports national transformation goals by promoting skills development and inclusive growth.



STUDENT FEEDBACK ON LEARNING EXPERIENCES

The purpose of student feedback is to:

- Provides constructive evaluations of teaching effectiveness, identifying successful instructional methods while highlighting areas needing refinement to optimize student learning outcomes.
- Enhances lecturers' professional development by increasing self-awareness of teaching strengths and weaknesses, enabling targeted improvements in course delivery and engagement strategies.
- Promotes equitable learning environments by revealing potential unconscious biases in teaching practices, allowing for necessary adjustments to ensure fairness.
- Generates valuable institutional data to inform relevant faculty development programs that address real classroom challenges and elevate teaching standards.
- Establishes a continuous improvement cycle where evidence-based feedback leads to regular teaching enhancements, ultimately advancing overall educational quality.

CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

The Continuous Professional Learning initiatives aims:

- Provide plans and guidelines for effective in corporation, roll out, Teaching, Learning and assessment of key CUT strategic goals such as Graduate Attributes and Student Success.
- Determine training and development needs of academic staff and address appropriately.
- Coordinate, facilitate and present professional learning opportunities for academic staff, including workshops on relevant issues.
- Provide support to academic staff in planning and implementing high quality training sessions and report on the outcomes.
- Assist with completion of teaching portfolios of evidence.



CPL MAIN INITIATIVES

SELF PACED ONLINE SHORT LEARNING PROGRAMMES

Description

The 4 Short Learning Programmes (SLP) as per the professional learning pathways in the continuous Professional Learning (CPL) framework (2024). The pathways include newly appointed academics, emerging scholars, mid-level scholars, established scholars and academic leaders. These SLPs are offered on the institutional LMS – Ethuto.

SLP 1	SLP 2	SLP 3	SLP 4
Introduction to Higher education practices	Designing for Student Success in Higher Education	Effective Learning Practices in Higher Education	Academic Leadership and Mentorship
Newly Appointed Academics	Emerging scholars	Mid-level Scholars	Established scholars & Academic Leaders
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Know your Context (CUT). 2. Higher education in context 3. Teaching your first class 4. Teaching today's diverse students 5. Teaching and learning theories. 6. Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) and online learning 7. Introduction to Assessment 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Curriculum design 2. Planning for learning. 3. First year transition 4. Managing student teams 5. Reflection for learning 6. Scholarship of T&L 7. Psychology of learning and students 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Peer review of teaching 2. Work integrated learning 3. Collaborative learning 4. Universal design for learning 5. Assessment in focus 6. Feedback for learning 7. Managing and developing Part-time academic staff 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leadership for learning and teaching 2. Quality assurance 3. Transformation in HE 4. Academic Mentorship 5. Ethical leadership
7 Units	7 Units	7 Units	7Units

PGDIP IN HE - SHORT LEARNING PROGRAMMES

(NQF LEVEL 8)

Purpose

The purpose of the SLPs designed from Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education is to professionalise the practice of university lecturers. To enhance the quality of teaching and learning at institutions of higher education through scholarly engagement with the field of higher education studies and through the development of critically reflexive practitioners. In line with the HEQSF, this programme will strengthen and deepen the university lecturer's knowledge of higher education as a field of study. Furthermore, it will enhance the quality of learning and teaching at CUT and other institutions of higher education through scholarly teaching, reflection, as well as linking theory with practice as reflected in the mainstream qualification.

Short Learning Programme	NQF Level	No. of Credits
Learning and Teaching in Higher Education	8	30
Curriculum Development and Design	8	30
Assessment in Higher Education	8	20
Quality Assurance in Higher Education	8	20
Technology in Learning and Teaching	8	10
Introduction to research on teaching and learning in Higher Education	8	10
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)	8	10

ACADEMIC TEACHING PORTFOLIO WORKSHOP

Description

A Portfolio of Evidence Workshop for Academics is designed to guide faculty members / academics in developing comprehensive portfolios that showcase their professional achievements, teaching practices, and contributions to academia. The workshop typically focuses on preparing portfolios for purposes such as promotion applications, professional reflection, and teaching excellence awards.

Key Objectives

- o Understanding the Portfolio Structure
- o Reflection on Teaching Practice and Evidence Gathering
- o Demonstrating Alignment with Institutional Goals
- o Writing a Teaching Philosophy
- o Promotion and Career Progression

Expected Outcomes

- o A clear understanding of how to construct a professional portfolio for academic purposes.
- o The ability to reflect deeply on personal teaching practice, leading to improvements in pedagogy and curriculum design.
- o A curated collection of evidence showcasing teaching effectiveness, research impact, and service contributions.
- o A personalized teaching philosophy statement, aligned with career goals and institutional expectations.
- o Enhanced readiness to apply for promotions, teaching awards, or other forms of academic recognition.



RESEARCH WRITING RETREAT FOR ACADEMICS

Description

A Research Writing Retreat for Academics on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) provides a focused environment where academics can dedicate uninterrupted time to developing their research related to teaching and learning. The retreat emphasizes collaborative support, peer feedback, and mentorship in advancing SoTL research projects.

Key Objectives

- o Deepening Understanding of SoTL
- o Developing Research Ideas and Writing Support and Development
- o Collaborative Peer Feedback and Publication Strategy
- o Mentorship and Expert Guidance

Expected Outcomes

- o Participants will make significant progress on their SoTL research papers, with the goal of submitting them for publication in peer-reviewed journals.
- o Academics will leave with a clearly defined research question, methodology, and structure for their SoTL projects.
- o Participants will benefit from valuable insights and critique from peers and SoTL experts, improving the quality of their research.
- o The retreat's concentrated focus on writing will help academics overcome common barriers to research productivity, such as competing demands and lack of dedicated time.
- o Participants will deepen their knowledge of SoTL, contributing to their teaching practice by linking theory and research to practical classroom experiences.
- o The retreat will foster a supportive community of SoTL scholars, encouraging future collaborations and the sharing of best practices in teaching and learning research.



INDUCTION FOR NEWLY APPOINTED ACADEMICS

Description

The Academic Induction is a structured orientation programme designed to support newly appointed academic staff as they transition into their teaching, research and service roles. Led by the Unit, the induction introduces participants to the CUT institutional context, academic policies and quality assurance requirements, assessment practices while foregrounding teaching excellence, innovative curriculum design, student success and transformative learning as core pillars of the academic project.

Key Objectives

- Familiarize new academics with CUT's vision, mission, strategic priorities and governance structures.
- Build foundational capacity in curriculum development, assessment, inclusive pedagogies and technology enhanced learning.
- Clarify expectations related to research, community engagement and scholarship of teaching and learning.
- Connect new staff to key support units, communities of practice and developmental opportunities for continuous professional learning.

Expected Outcomes

- Demonstrate an understanding of CUT's academic and policy environment and how their role contributes to the institutional vision.
- Apply basic principles of outcomes-based curriculum design, assessment and student-centered teaching in their modules.
- Engage more confidently with learning management systems and student feedback processes.
- Participate actively in ongoing professional learning and scholarly teaching practices that advance student success and transformative, socially responsive curricula.



LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK GUIDING THE UNIT OPERATIONS

1. Teaching and Learning Plan 2026 - 2030
2. Teaching and Learning Policy
3. Procedures for Guiding All Curriculum Transformation, Development and Programme Accreditation Processes
4. Framework for Curriculum Development and Programme Accreditation
5. Framework for Student Feedback on Learning Experiences
6. Framework for Continuous Professional Learning of University Teachers
7. Framework for Designing Effective Community of Practice
8. Guidelines for Industry Exposure for Academics and Academic Support Staff
9. Guidelines for Implementing Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
10. Guidelines on Credit Allocation



OUR TEAM

Dr Xolani Khohliso

Director and Head of SoTL
xkhohliso@cut.ac.za

Abigail Edem

Curriculum & Academic Staff Developer (FEBIT & FHES)
aedem@cut.ac.za

Bongani Mashaba

Curriculum & Academic Staff Developer (FUM & FMS)
bmashaba@cut.ac.za

Ernest Mpindo

Researcher
empindo@cut.ac.za

Dineo Mopeli

SoTL Coordinator
dmopeli@cut.ac.za

Rebabaletswe Matekane

Unit Administrator
rmatekane@cut.ac.za

Selleng (Irene) Leburu

Language Development Administrator
sleburu@cut.ac.za

CONTACT US

Student Academic Development Centre
2nd Floor, Room 222
Bloemfontein
Casdev@cut.ac.za

PGDip in HE Queries: pgdiphe@cut.ac.za
SoTL Conference Queries: SoTLconference@cut.ac.za