



CENTRE FOR INNOVATION IN LEARNING AND TEACHING

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

For

12th International Conference on Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Conference Theme

Advancing Student Success through SoTL and Curriculum as Praxis

7 – 9 October 2026

Venue: Central University of Technology, Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa

Publication Opportunities: The Journal details for the special issue will be shared with all registered delegates.

CONFERENCE CALL

The Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT), South Africa, invites scholars, academic developers, postgraduate researchers, and higher education leaders to submit contributions to the 12th International Conference on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). The conference theme, *Advancing Student Success through SoTL and Curriculum as Praxis*, positions SoTL as a rigorous, evidence-informed vehicle for enhancing learning through curriculum renewal, purposeful pedagogy, and context-responsive educational innovation. SoTL's distinctive contribution lies in making teaching and learning public, transparent, and improvable through theoretically grounded inquiry that is both disciplinary and interdisciplinary. A coherent conceptualisation of SoTL is therefore essential to strengthen the quality, communicability, and impact of scholarly teaching investigations across diverse fields (Miller-Young & Yeo, 2015). Within this frame, curriculum as praxis emphasises curriculum as lived, enacted, and continually reworked through reflective action that links what is valued, what is taught, how learning is supported, and how success is interpreted in real institutional contexts.

ABSTRACT

Student success is not produced by curriculum structure or teaching technique alone but emerges through an educational interface in which institutional conditions, learning design, relationships, student identities, and academic emotions interact to shape engagement and achievement (Kahu & Nelson, 2018). This conference foregrounds the value of SoTL as a rigorous way of making these interacting mechanisms visible and improvable, particularly when curriculum is approached as praxis rather than as a static plan. Framing curriculum as praxis strengthens the link between theory, evidence, and reflective action, enabling institutions to design learning pathways that cultivate belonging, academic momentum, and meaningful learning. In this sense, the conference advances a SoTL agenda that moves beyond generic claims about “what works” to develop transferable principles, context-sensitive evidence, and actionable implications for module, programme, and institutional improvement.

Assessment for learning and feedback are positioned as central levers in this praxis-oriented approach because they powerfully shape what counts as knowledge, how standards are interpreted, and how students regulate their learning over time. Throughout the learning process, students are formatively assessed to give them and their lecturers information that promotes better learning and student growth. The importance of this focus is amplified by the recognition that feedback only becomes educationally valuable when students can interpret, evaluate, and use it to improve future work. Strengthening student feedback literacy is therefore integral to advancing student success, as it supports learners' capacity to engage productively with evaluative information and to develop agency and judgement in their learning (Carless & Boud, 2018). By elevating assessment and feedback as curriculum, the conference highlights how SoTL can reconfigure assessment practices to support progression, deepen learning, and build sustainable learning capabilities.

The conference also treats AI-enabled teaching and learning as a pedagogical and curricular question that requires scholarly scrutiny rather than instrumental adoption. While AI tools are rapidly entering educational spaces, systematic evidence suggests that research in this area has often been technology-driven, underlining the need to reconnect AI applications to educator perspectives, robust pedagogy, and ethical considerations (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). A SoTL

lens is essential here because it anchors AI adoption in evidence, values, and educational purpose, and it supports principled approaches to curriculum design, learning activities, assessment practices, feedback processes, academic integrity, and student support. In doing so, the conference frames AI not as a substitute for teaching expertise, but as a site for scholarly inquiry into how learning can be enhanced in equitable, transparent, and human-centred ways.

Conclusively, the theme ‘Advancing Student Success through SoTL and Curriculum as Praxis’ explicitly connects student success to decolonising and diversifying learning, recognising that epistemic access and belonging depend on whose knowledge is legitimised, whose languages are valued, and which identities are recognised in curriculum and pedagogy. Decolonising the university requires confronting the politics of knowledge and the institutional conditions that shape what can be taught and learned (Mbembe, 2016). From a complementary perspective, SoTL framed through social justice insists that scholarly teaching must attend to equity, recognition, and participation, not only to effectiveness in the abstract (Leibowitz & Bozalek, 2016). Through bringing these concerns into conversation with curriculum as praxis, the conference positions SoTL as a vehicle for transforming learning environments so that student success is advanced through inclusive, context-responsive, and socially just curriculum and pedagogy.

Submissions are invited under the following sub-themes:

- **SoTL and Curriculum Renewal:** Exploring how scholarly inquiry informs curriculum transformation, coherence, alignment, and responsiveness to diverse student needs.
- **High Impact Pedagogy:** Investigating evidence-informed teaching strategies that promote deep learning, engagement, belonging, and academic momentum.
- **Assessment for Learning:** Reframing assessment and feedback as curriculum practices that develop feedback literacy, agency, and sustainable learning capabilities.
- **Student Success Pathways:** Examining institutional, programmatic, and classroom-level interventions that strengthen retention, progression, and epistemic access.
- **AI Enabled Teaching and Learning:** Critically exploring AI integration through a SoTL lens, including pedagogy, assessment, AI ethics, governance and policy.
- **Decolonise and Diversify Learning:** Interrogating curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment practices to advance epistemic justice, inclusion, and socially just student success.

We welcome research papers, reflective practice papers and posters that clearly articulate a teaching and learning problem, situate it within relevant theory, present appropriate evidence, and offer implications for curriculum and pedagogy that advance student success in diverse higher education contexts. *Please contact the SoTL office if you would like to conduct a workshop during the conference.*

Submissions

Deadlines	Dates
Call for Abstracts	15 March 2026
Closing date for Abstract	09 May 2026
Notification for Accepted Abstracts	17 – 20 June 2026
Registration closing date	15 August 2026
Conference Dates	7 - 9 October 2026
Full Papers for Special Issue	20 October 2026

Abstract Submission Guidelines

To ensure consistency and quality, please follow the guidelines below when preparing your abstract for submission. Please note that adherence to these guidelines is crucial for the review and publication process. Failure to meet these requirements may result in the rejection or delay of your abstract.

- **Abstract Length:** Limit your abstract to 250-300 words excluding the title and keywords.
- **Formatting Requirements:** Submit the abstract as a single paragraph without subheadings in the structured format as indicated below. Use 12 pt, Times New Roman/Arial font, 1.5-line spacing, and the alignment should be fully justified.
- **Clear and Concise Language:** Use clear, concise, and easily understandable language, avoiding unnecessary technical jargon or excessive complexity. Aim to make your abstract accessible to a wide range of readers.
- **Ethical Considerations:** Adhere to ethical guidelines, privacy and rights of any participants involved in your research. Do not include any confidential or identifying information in the abstract.
- **Citation and Reference Style:** Avoid including citations or references within the abstract unless necessary. If citations included, use the APA referencing style. Both 6th and 7th editions are accepted, but 7th edition is more preferred.
- **Proofreading and Editing:** Carefully proofread and edit your abstract for grammar, spelling, punctuation, and clarity.

Structured Format: Organize your abstract into the following sections

- **Purpose/Objective:** Clearly state the purpose or objective of the study or research to be reported in the chapter, highlighting the problem or gap in knowledge that it aims to address.
- **Methods/Approach:** Briefly describe the methodology or approach that was used to conduct the study, including the research design, data collection methods, and analysis techniques.
- **Results/Findings:** Summarise the key findings or results of the study, highlighting the most important and relevant outcomes.
- **Conclusion/Implications:** State the main conclusions or implications of the study, emphasising the significance and potential impact of the findings.
- **Originality/Value:** Highlight the originality or value of the research that was conducted, explaining how it contributes to the existing body of knowledge or fills a gap in the literature.

- **Keywords:** Include a list of keywords or phrases that represent the main concepts or topics covered in the chapter (Maximum number of key words is 5).

We look forward to receiving your submissions and engaging in an enriching conference that challenges, inspires, and redefines the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

Conference Registration Fee

Category	Physical Attendance	Online Attendance
Academic Staff / Professionals	R3750	R1500
<i>Postgraduate Students (Full-time or Part-time)</i>	<i>R1500</i>	<i>R1500</i>

Proof of student registration may be required for the postgraduate student rate.

Communication Logistics

For any inquiries, please contact **Ms Dineo Mopeli** sotlconference@cut.ac.za

Abstract submissions must be completed electronically using link : [Abstract submission link](#)

References

- Carless, D., & Boud, D. (2018). The development of student feedback literacy: Enabling uptake of feedback. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 43(8), 1315–1325. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2018.1463354>.
- Kahu, E. R., & Nelson, K. (2018). Student engagement in the educational interface: Understanding the mechanisms of student success. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 37(1), 58–71. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2017.1344197>.
- Leibowitz, B., & Bozalek, V. (2016). The scholarship of teaching and learning from a social justice perspective. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 21(2), 109–122. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2015.1115971>.
- Mbembe, A. J. (2016). Decolonizing the university: New directions. *Arts & Humanities in Higher Education*, 15(1), 29–45. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1474022215618513>.
- Miller-Young, J., & Yeo, M. (2015). Conceptualizing and communicating SoTL: A framework for the field. *Teaching & Learning Inquiry*, 3(2), 37–53. <https://doi.org/10.20343/teachlearninqu.3.2.37>.
- Zawacki-Richter, O., Marín, V. I., Bond, M., & Gouverneur, F. (2019). Systematic review of research on artificial intelligence applications in higher education – where are the educators?

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Prof Earle Abrahamson (Professor of SoTL and Head of Anatomy, University of Hertfordshire)



Prof Siphamandla Zondi (Director: Institute for Pan African thought and Conversation, University of Johannesburg)



Prof Samukelisiwe Khumalo (Dean: Faculty of Education, University of Mpumalanga)

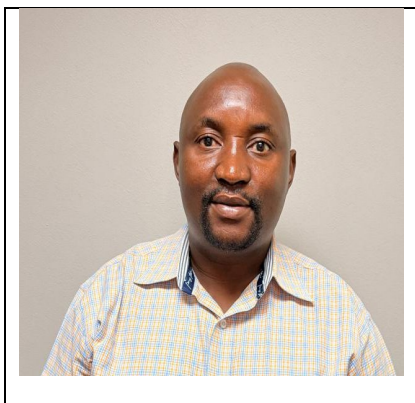


PANEL DISCUSSION

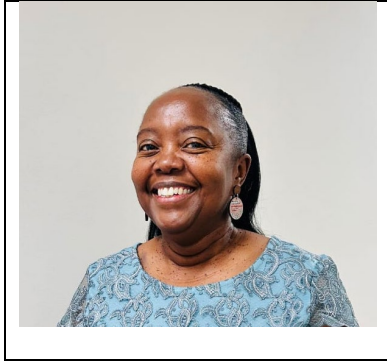
Prof Zenzile Khetsha (Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences, Central University of Technology, Free State)



Prof Bekithemba Dube (Faculty of Humanities, Central University of Technology, Free State)



Dr Charlotte Nunes (Centre for Innovation in Learning and Teaching, Central University of Technology, Free State)



Prof Luwes Nicolaas (Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology, Central University of Technology, Free State)



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