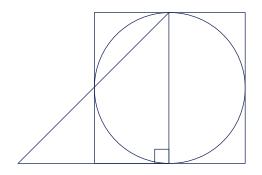
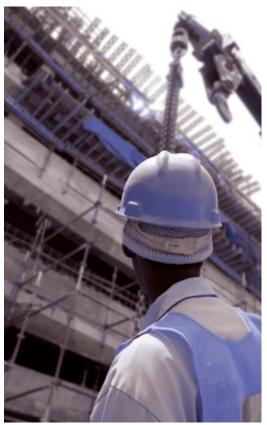
Report 05/06



Faculty of

Natural and Agricultural Sciences









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Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences

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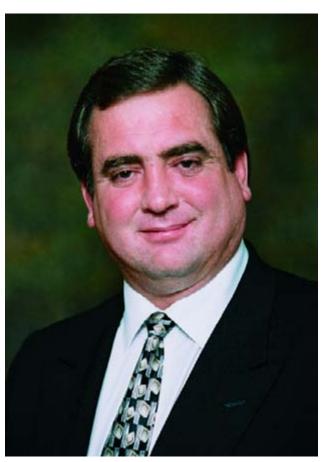
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Preface

From the Dean's office



Prof. Herman van Schalkwyk.

he Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences at the University of the Free State (UFS) leads the way in the practising of natural and agricultural sciences in South Africa and the highest levels of quality and credibility are reflected.

Our commitment, however, reaches far beyond just this. It reaches beyond the borders of the country and across continents; its multi-disciplinary and practical approach is vested in all the disciplines presented by the faculty.

In 2005/06 the Faculty experienced significant growth in measurable outputs. A contributing factor was the comprehensive apparatus strategy and plan which was implemented in 2005. With this strategy, university funds were used to leverage other funds in order to obtain huge discounts from suppliers of apparatus. In this way the faculty managed to obtained almost R50 million worth of apparatus in 2005.

The strategy was continued in 2006 when an agreement to the value of R7 542 531 was reached with Shimadzu, according to which apparatus was supplied to the faculty at discount prices. The agreement, which is valid for three years, entails the free replacement of apparatus which is purchased during this period with upgraded versions.

The new apparatus forms part of the UFS vision to compete internationally with quality research outputs in certain niche areas, to provide leadership in advanced training to students from the African continent and to establish the university as a leader among South African universities.

Two researchers with a B rating from the National Research Foundation (NRF) were also appointed. Both of these initiatives bore fruit and in 2006 the faculty increased its total research outputs by

about 13%. As an example, the Department of Chemistry's outputs increased by 100%.

The faculty has been bursting at the seams over the past couple of years. Student figures rose from 3 935 undergraduate, postgraduate and occasional students in 2005, to 4 224 in 2006. There is also strong representivity of students from other African countries and in 2005/06 almost 600 students studied at the faculty.

An extended B.Sc. programme has been presented to students since 2005. The programme aims at providing students who do not comply with all the requirements for the B.Sc. programme with the necessary substructure to complete the B.Sc. degree successfully. A preliminary evaluation of the results indicates that the programme is delivering the desired results.

The alignment of the Qwaqwa Campus, which was incorporated into the UFS in January 2003, remains a challenge. Regular discussions are held with staff on the campus in order to make the faculty's programmes more sustainable and to align it with the broader strategic plan of the UFS.

On a national level, the faculty is in the process of making its mark in terms of teaching and community service. In 2005 the faculty again actively began utilising its

experimental farms. A three-way agreement between the UFS, the National Farmers Union (NAFU) and the Mangaung Local Municipality led to the establishment of the Lengau Agricultural Development Centre on the Sydenham Experimental Farm. The centre provides training and mentorship to small-scale upcoming farmers.

To be dynamic and progressive requires innovative thinking. It requires commitment and a desire to deliver excellent teaching and learning opportunities to students. It requires a willingness to form partnerships, and a multi-disciplinary and practical approach to the tertiary education environment in South Africa.

This report covers the faculty's activities in 2005/06. It is a reflection of two years' commitment on the part of a team of skilled and motivated academics and support staff.

Prof. Herman van Schalkwyk

Dean: Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences

University of the Free State

Department of

Computer Science and Informatics



Prof. Janse Tolmie

Overview

n the pursuit of the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences and the university's strategic priorities for 2005, the Department of Computer Science and Informatics was active in the areas of education, research and community service. In order to ensure that our students obtain relevant and market-related training, the department switched to the teaching of a new programming language called C#.

Community involvement was done is several ways: Prof. Pieter Blignaut and Dr Anelize van Biljon acted as external moderators for Umalusi and Ms Nancy de Sousa trained officials from the Free State Department of Education in project management. Ms de Sousa was also involved in the phasing in of the use of computers at schools in the Bloemfontein area.

The department took part in the Bloemfontein Technology Project, which teaches computer literacy to learners from previously disadvantaged communities. Short courses in computer literacy were also presented to the community.

Research in the department was boosted tremendously by the establishment of the Telkom Centre of Excellence in 2005. The centre focuses on research in human-computer interaction and is equipped with sophisticated sight-tracking apparatus which makes it possible to analyse computer use. The Departments of Mathematical Statistics and Physics at the UFS were also involved in activities at the centre. Besides Telkom, Microsoft is also involved as a donor. Bursaries from Telkom were awarded to two students and Prof. Blignaut is acting as director of the centre.

In 2005/06 research in the centre focused on human-computer interaction and data warehousing. A significant amount of research was conducted in these areas and research results led to a number of national and international publications.

The centre acquired an eye tracker for research purposes. This apparatus has many research possibilities, not only for Computer





At the eye tracker are from the left: Prof. Janse Tolmie, Departmental Chairperson, Ms Anne Jansen from the supplier Tobii Technologies in Sweden, and Prof. Pieter Blignaut.

Science, but also for other disciplines such as Psychology, Occupational Therapy and Marketing. This is the first eye tracker in Africa that allows free eye movement.

The centre's eye tracker opened up many opportunities for research projects in human-computer interaction. New research with great future potential focused on the quantification of usability studies, and a contract usability study was conducted for a group in Germany.

Research was also undertaken in the areas of human-computer interaction, knowledgebased systems, data warehouses and information systems. Several international publications were submitted on these topics. A group of laboratory computers were set up as a Linux cluster to perform powerful calculations. This cluster is also used for simulations in a project that focuses on the optimisation of a programming language.

In 2006 the department was involved in a project on action research in e-learning, conducted in one of the undergraduate courses. This project was closely linked to the university's interest in blended learning. On postgraduate level, it became evident that programmes that enable students to combine management modules and IT management modules with pure IT modules, have become very popular. The number of honours students increased to more than 50 during the year.

Academic staff

Main Campus

Professors: Proff. Janse Tolmie, Pieter Blignaut, Theo Mc Donald, Hans Messerschmidt

Senior Lecturer: Dr Lizette de Wet Lecturers: Drs Liezel Nel, Anelize van Biljon, Messrs Andries Burger, Deon du Plessis, Dana Kotze, Eduan Kotze, Johan van Rooyen, Ms Engela Dednam Junior Lecturers: Messrs Rouxan Fouché, Philip Penning, Fanie Riekert, Ray Shih, Johan Pretorius, Ms Annelie Naudé

Qwaqwa Campus

Senior Lecturer: Dr Mike Kyobe Junior Lecturers: Messrs Jacques Eysele, Walter Gwiba, Molapo Jonathan, Isaac Mokhotla, Frederick Mudavanhu, Benedict Sebastian, Mss Nidhi Mary-John, Victoria Mochochonono, Ruth Wario

Vista Campus

Lecturer: Ms Nancy de Sousa Junior Lecturers: Messrs Rudolf Oosthuizen, Timothy Mahloko, David Ramatlotlo

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Research outputs

Publications

Blignaut, P.J. & Cruywagen, I. 2005. Development of an information kiosk for a large transport company: Lessons learned. *Journal of Cases on Information Technology* 7(4): 27-45.

Blignaut, P.J. & McDonald, T. 2006. Die implikasies van lees- en skryfvoorkeurtaal met betrekking tot internettoegang vir Suid-Afrikaanse gebruikers. Suid-Afrikaanse Tydskrif vir Natuurwetenskap en Tegnologie 25(3): 165-171.

De Wet, L. & Van Aswegen, W. 2005. Determining the usability of computer input devices by Parkinson's disease sufferers. *SA Family Practice* 47(1): 58-59.

Messerschmidt, H.J. & Messerschmidt, J.J.E. 2006. Die kategorisering van onderskikkers: Enkele kenmerke van dat-samestellings. *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies* 24(1): 7-22.

Nel, E. 2006. Enhancing collaborative learning in a blended learning environment: Applying a process planning model. *Systemic Practice and Action Research* 19(6): 553-576.

Chapters in books

Blignaut, P.J., Burger, A.J., McDonald, T. & Tolmie, C.J. 2005. Computer attitude and anxiety. In *Encyclopedia of Information Science and Technology, Volume I-V*, edited by M. Khosrow-Pour. USA: Idea Group Publishing. pp. 495-501.

Messerschmidt, H.J., Messerschmidt, J.J.E., Blanckenberg, L. & Van der Westhuizen, J. 2005. In *Semi-automatic generation of LA* grammars, multilingualism and electronic language management, edited by W. Daelemans, T. Du Plessis, C. Snyman & L. Teck. Pretoria: Van Schaik. pp. 70-80.

Kyobe, M.E. 2006. Entrepreneur behaviors on E-Commerce security. In *Encyclopedia of E-Commerce, E-Government, and Mobile Commerce Idea Group Inc.*, edited by M. Khosrow-Pour. USA: Information Resources Management Association. pp. 437-444.

Conference contributions

Beelders, T., Blignaut, P.J. & McDonald, T. 2005. A word processor prototype to assess the effect of culture on usability. Paper presented at the Southern African Telecommunication Networks & Applications Conference, Drakensberg, South Africa.

Beelders, T., McDonald, T. & Blignaut, P.J. 2005. A proposed study to determine the effects of culture on the usability of word processors. Proceedings of the 4th Conference on Human-Computer Interaction in Southern Africa, Johannesburg, South Africa. pp. 29-33.

Blignaut, P.J. & McDonald, T. 2005. *Capturing usability data on-the-go.* Paper presented at the 5th International Conference on Measuring Behavior, Wageningen, The Netherlands.

De Wet, L. & McDonald, T. 2006. Gender and cultural differences (if any): South African school children and computer games. Paper presented at the 5th International Conference on Computer and Games, Turin, Italy.

Kyobe, M.E. 2005. Addressing E-crime and computer security issues in small organisations in South Africa. Paper presented at the European Management and Technology Conference, Rome, Italy.

McDonald, T. 2006. Neuprobdb: A database application for processing neutron water meter data. Paper presented at the Combined Congress of the South African Society of Crop Production and the Soil Science Society of South Africa, Durban, South Africa.

McDonald, T. & Blignaut, P.J. 2005. The effect of cultural differences on the efficiency of searches on a university website. Paper presented at the 11th International Conference on Human-Computer Interaction, Las Vegas, USA.

Nazir, A. & McDonald, T. 2006. Challenges in developing a cost-effective data warehouse for a tertiary institution in a developing country. Proceedings of the 7th International Conference on Data, Text and Web Mining: Business Applications and Management Information Engineering, Praque, Czech Republic. pp. 389-397.

Nazir, A. & McDonald, T. 2006. Lessons learned in developing a data warehouse for a tertiary institution in South Africa. Paper presented at the 2nd Foundation of Tertiary Institutions of the Northern Metropolis (FOTIM) International Quality Assurance Conference, Pretoria, South Africa.

Nel, E. 2006. Enhancing online collaboration practices in South African undergraduate classrooms. Paper presented at the 8th Annual Conference on World Wide Web Applications, Bloemfontein, South Africa.

Nel, E. 2006. Voices from a South African blended learning classroom: Reflections based on an action research diary. Paper presented at the 2006 Conference of the Education Association of South Africa (EASA), Bloemfontein, South Africa.

Nel, L. 2005. Incorporating student feedback in the enhancement of online collaborative activities. Proceedings of the 4th International Conference on Technology in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, University of Peking, Beijing. Edited by C. Spirou & Q. Wang. pp. 209-213.

Nel, L. & Wilkinson, A.C. Design for interaction: The implementation of a collaborative e-learning approach in undergraduate education.

Proceedings of the 4th International Conference on Technology in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, University of Peking, Beijing. Edited by C. Spirou & Q. Wang. pp. 215-219.





Statistical data of the faculty

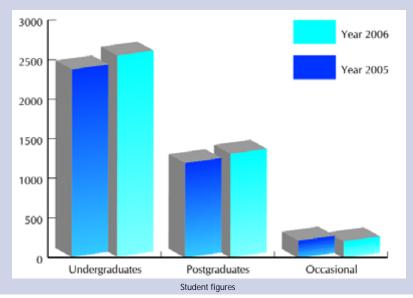


Student figures Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences, 2005/06

Male					
2005					
Description	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Total
Undergraduate	676	31	26	724	1457
Postgraduate	351	22	15	400	788
Occasional	84	3	4	17	108
Total 2005	1111	56	45	1141	2353
2006					
Description	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Total
Undergraduate	729	28	21	768	1546
Postgraduate	385	21	16	431	853
Occasional	68	2	2	23	95
Total 2006	1182	51	39	1222	2494
Female					
2005					
Description	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Total
Undergraduate	563	41	11	394	1009
Postgraduate	206	16	11	221	454
Occasional	101	5	2	11	119
Total 2005	870	62	24	626	1582
2006					
Description	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Total
Undergraduate	641	39	17	401	1098
Postgraduate	243	15	17	234	509
Occasional	103	2	2	16	123
Total 2006	987	56	36	651	1730
Total					
2005					

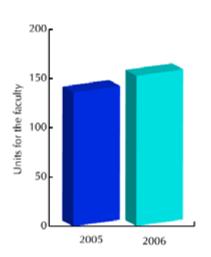
Nationality	2005	2006
Angola	1	
Asian countries	21	18
Botswana	20	20
European countries	6	6
Lesotho	142	142
Malawi	2	1
Mauritius		2
Mozambique	8	7
Namibia	40	42
No information	1	
North America	4	4
Other Africa	45	48
South Africa	3610	3893
South America		1
Swaziland	13	13
Zambia	4	6
Zimbabwe	18	21
Total	3935	4224

Description African Coloured Indian White Total Undergraduate Postgraduate Occasional Total 2005 Description African Indian White Coloured Total Undergraduate Postgraduate Occasional Total 2005



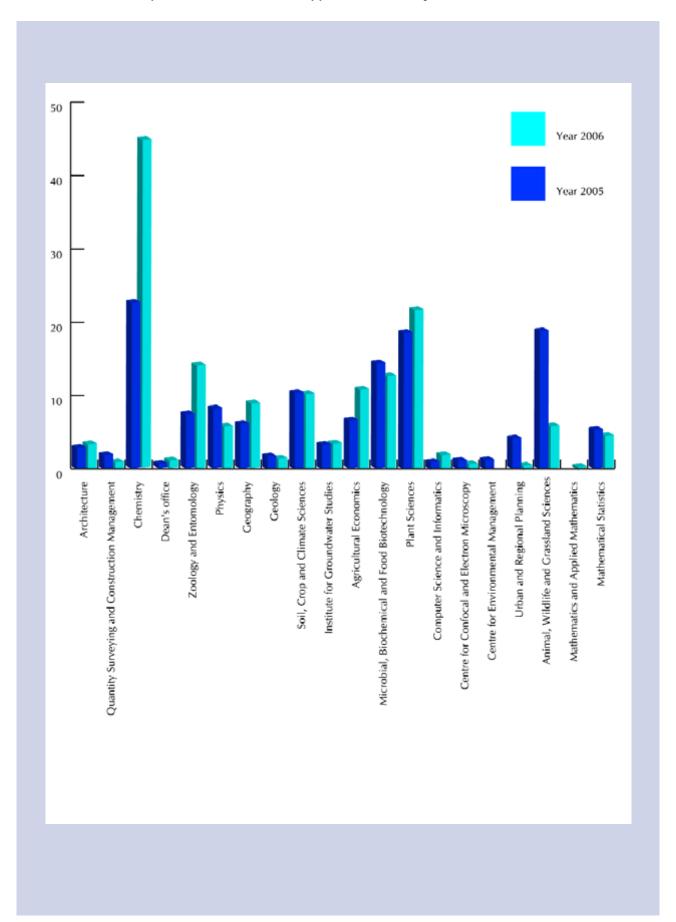
Research outputs

for the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences



Articles published in accredited approved research journals.

Departmental research outputs Articles published in accredited approved research journals, 2005/06



Glossary



Glossary

Α		FSRPO	Free State Red Meat Producers	N	
ACIAR	Australian Centre for International		Organisation	NaCOF	National Climate Outlook Forum
HOIM	Agricultural Research	G	3	NAFU	National African Farmers Union
AEASA	Agricultural Economics Association	GIS	Geographical Information Systems	NAMC	National Agricultural Marketing
	of South Africa	Glen ADI	Glen Agricultural Development		Council
ALPRU	African Large Predator Research Unit		Institute	NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
ARC	Agricultural Research Council	GM	Genetically Modified	NASSP	National Astrophysics and Space
ARMSCOR	Armaments Corporation of South	GMBA	Gauteng Master Builders' Association		Science Programme
	Africa	GMO	Genetically Modified Organisms	NCEE	National Council for Economic
ARS	Agri Risk Specialists	GWK	Griekwaland-Wes Koöperasie		Education
ASAQS	Association of South African		Chekwalana Wes Reoperasie	NDA	National Department of Agriculture
	Quantity Surveyors	Н		NECSA	National Energy Commission of
ASSA	Anatomical Society of South Africa	HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus		South Africa
ASTER	Advanced Spaceborne Thermal	HPCSA	Health Professions Council of South	NELSAM	Natural Earthquake Laboratory in
	Emission and Reflection Radiometer		Africa		South African Mines
AVS	American Vacuum Society	HPLC	High Performance Liquid	NERPO	National Emergent Red Meat
С		LICRONA	Chromatography		Producers' Organisation
CANSA	Cancer Association of South Africa	HSPCM	Health and Safety Programme for	NGO	Non-Governmental Oganisation
CATSA	Catalysis Society of South Africa		Construction Managers	NML	National Metrological Laboratory
CBD	Convention of Biological Diversity	I		NMMU	Nelson Mandela Metropolitan
CCEM	Centre for Confocal and Electron	IAGOD	International Association on the	NMR	University
	Microscopy		Genesis of Ore Deposits	NRF	Nuclear Magnetic Resonance National Research Foundation
CePHMa	Centre for Plant Health	IAH	International Association of	NUFU	Norwegian Council of Universities
	Management		Hydrogeologists	11010	Committee for Development,
CfPB	Centre for People and Buildings	ICCC	International Conference on		Research and Education
CIAT	International Centre for Tropical	ICEC	Coordination Chemistry	NWGA	National Wool Growers'
CIDD	Agriculture	ICEC	International Cost Engineering Council		Association
CIDB	Construction Industry Development Board	ICID	International Commission on	0	
CIMMYT	International Maize and Wheat	ICID	Irrigation and Drainage	OABS	Optimal Agricultural Pusiness
CIIVIIVITI	Improvement Centre	ICP	Inductively Coupled Plasma	UABS	Optimal Agricultural Business Solutions
CIOB	Chartered Institute of Building	ICRBM	International Conference on Rodent	OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-
CIOB-SA	Chartered Institute of Building -		Biology and Management	OLOB	operation and Development
	South Africa	ICRISAT	International Crops Research	Р	
CSACEE	Central South African Council on		Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics	-	Dit-li! Ai-tif
	Economic Education	IDC	Industrial Development Corporation	PARSA	Parasitological Association of Southern Africa
CSIC-INTA	Centro de Astrobiología	IGS	Institute for Groundwater Studies	PDMIW	Processing and Disposal of Mineral
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial	IITA	International Institute of Tropical	FDIVIIVV	Industry Wastes
	Research	INIOD D	Agriculture	POT	Peaks over Threshold
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and	INCRoP	Insects on New Crops Programme	PPP	Public Private Partnership
	Industrial Research Organisation	INTSORMIL	International Sorghum and Millet Research Support Programme	PRT	Protein Research Trust
D		IPMA	International Project Management	R	
DEAT	Department of Environmental	IFIVIA	Association	RICS	David Institute of Chartered
	Affairs and Tourism	IPMP	Intensive Project Management	RICS	Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors
DIMTEC	Disaster Management Training and		Programme	RIEP	Research Institute of Education
	Education Centre for Africa	IRDP	Institutional Research and	IVIEI	Planning
DMISA	Disaster Management Institute of		Development Programme	RNA	Research Niche Area
DCT	South Africa	IRWH	In-field Rainwater Harvesting	RPO	Red Meat Producers' Organisation
DST	Department of Science and Technology	IUCr	International Union of	S	•
_	recrinology		Crystallography	SA	South Africa
E		IUMS	International Union of Microbial	SAACE	South African Association of
EAAP	European Association for Animal	HIDAD	Societies	0, 0, 102	Consulting Engineers
FACA	Production	IUPAP	International Union of Pure and	SAB	The South African Breweries
EASA	Education Association of South	_	Applied Physics		Limited
ECA	Africa European Crystallographic	J		SACI	South African Chemical Institute
LOA	Association	JFM	Journal of Facilities Management	SACPCMP	South African Council for the
EIGG	Environmental Inorganic	L			Project and Construction
	Geochemistry Group	LExEn	Life in Extreme Environments		Management Profession
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme	М		SACPVP	South African Council for the
ESBES	European Symposium on	MIRCHEN	Migrapia Ingian Descuras Contra	020000	Property Valuation Profession
	Biochemical Engineering Science	MIT	Microbiological Resources Centre Massachusetts Institute of	SACQSP	South African Council for the
ESREL	European Safety and Reliability	IVIII	Technology	SADC	Quantity Surveying Profession Southern African Development
ESRP	Economic and Social Rehabilitation	MRM	Mineral Resource Management	SADO	Community
	Programme	MSA	Master's Degree in Sustainable	SAFMA	South African Facilities
F			Agriculture		Management Association
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation	MSSA	Microscopy Society of Southern	SAFOI	South African Fryer Oil Initiative
FEMS	Federation of European		Africa	SAIP	South African Institute of Physics
	Microbiological Societies	MUCPP	Mangaung University Community	SAISC	Southern African Institute of Steel
FMP	Facilities Management Programme		Partnership Programme	0.4	Construction
FOTIM	Foundation of Tertiary Institutions	MURP	Master's Degree in Urban and	SAMSI	Statistical and Applied
	of the Northern Metropolis		Regional Planning		Mathematical Sciences Institute

SANCIAHS	South African National Committee for the International Association of	SEDA	Small Enterprise Development Agency	UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
	Hydrological Sciences	SMME	Small, Medium and Micro	UNESCO	United Nations Educational,
SANCU	South African National Consumer		Enterprises		Scientific and Cultural Organisation
	Union	SRC	Student Representative Council	USA	United States of America
SANPAD	South Africa-Netherlands Research	SRL	Sustainable Rural Livelihood	USAID	United States Agency for
	Programme on Alternatives in	SSAG	Society of South African		International Development
	Development		Geographers	UTCHEM	University of Texas Chemical
SAPOA	South African Property Owners'	Т			Compositional Simulator
	Association	THRIP	South African National Research	UWC	University of the Western Cape
SAPS	South African Police Services		Foundation Thrust for Industry-	W	
SAQA	South African Qualifications		Related Projects	WARFSA	Water Research Fund of Southern
CACAC	Authority	TUE	Technical University Eindhoven	WARESA	Africa
SASAS	South African Society for Animal	U	•	WATOC	World Association of Theoretically
0110202	Science	UCT	University of Cons Toyen	WAIOC	Orientated Chemists
SASQUA	Southern African Society for		University of Cape Town	WFP	World Food Programme
CAVALL	Quaternary Research South African Association of Visual	UFS UJ	University of the Free State	WITS	3
SAVAH	Arts Historians	UK	University of Johannesburg	WRC	University of the Witwatersrand Water Research Commission
SBF	Sustainable Built Environments	UN	United Kingdom United Nations	WUA	Water Users' Association
SDE	Sustamable Dunt Environments	UN	Officed Mations	VVUA	Water Osers Association