Overview

The Department of Urban and Regional Planning has embarked upon a process in the master’s degree programme in terms of which students can specialise in sustainable rural development, tourism and development, planning for communities or integrated development planning. In this way students can do more work that is region and community-related. For instance, if students are working in rural areas of the Eastern Cape, the problems experienced in their immediate vicinity could influence their choice of topic.

The first student has completed the new master’s degree programme and 32 students have enrolled for the first time for the honours degree. In total the department had 77 students enrolled for the various graduate programmes in 2007. One of the Ph.D. students, Mr Henk Theron, successfully finished his thesis entitled: Lessons from the strategic management of integrated development planning in KwaZulu-Natal from 1994 to 2006.

Two staff members, Dr Marléne Campbell and Ms Dienie Steenkamp, are actively involved in the university’s strategic cluster for “New frontiers in poverty reduction and sustainable development” with a focus on local development and resource-poor environments. Dr Campbell is supervising a project on homelessness while Ms Steenkamp conducted research on the acceptability of dry alternatives to water-borne sewerage in the Karoo area. The department has decided to focus on arid areas in their research with students for the next couple of years because a large proportion of the Free State, Eastern and Northern Cape fall under this description.

Staff members were also actively involved with professional institutions. The department hosted the annual general meeting of the South African Planning Institution (SAPI), where the president of the South African Council of Planners (SACPLAN) was the guest speaker. The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) visited the department in a benchmarking exercise for the eleven schools of planning in South Africa.

Students were taken to Pretoria as part of their practical training programme, to gain an understanding of how the city of Tswane approached and executed their integrated development programme. Several shorter tours to local development sites in Bloemfontein were also undertaken as a large number of projects are in different phases of development due to the upswing in the economy.

The department is also home to the only accredited journal in planning, known as Stads- en Steekbeplanning/Town and Regional Planning/Mesalo ya Detoropo le Mabatowa. Prof Das Steyn, Departmental Chairperson, is the editor of this multi-lingual journal which was started in Stellenbosch in 1974. In collaboration with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) a special edition was published on Integrated Planning in South Africa. The department was also actively involved in another accredited journal Acta Structilia, published by the Department of Quantity Surveying and Construction Management at the UFS.

Community service is encouraged by the offering of three postgraduate programmes in urban and regional planning for full time, part time and compact learning students. Through the compact learning programme, senior students who are in town planning positions, varying from assistant town planners to directors in planning as well as a few private practitioners, come to the department, where they attend the classes which are a duplication of the full time lectures, but where they do the work of one term in one week. In this way students who have positions in planning, but who may not have the correct qualifications, are empowered to do the jobs they are paid for.
Staff

Professor: Prof. Das Steyn
Senior Lecturer: Dr Marlène Campbell
Lecturers: Mr Pieter Potgieter, Ms Lize Barclay
Part-time Lecturers: Prof. Wynand Senekal, Dr Henning Stapelberg, Messrs Neil Devenish, Schalk Grobbelaar, Danie Krynauw, George Musabi, Ms Erika van der Westhuizen
Senior Professional Officer: Ms Dienie Steenkamp
Typist/Clerk: Ms Riana Hugo
Assistant Officer: Ms Antoinette Nel

Contact details

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Ms Dienie Steenkamp and students in Hanover busy with fieldwork on the arid areas project.

The department celebrated World Planning Day with a lecture by Prof. Martin Drake, a retired professor from the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits). In his lecture, Prof. Drake discussed the development of urban planning and the need for planning, with a focus on Africa. Some of the guests at the lecture are, from the left, front: Mr Jacques Janse van Rensburg, student, Prof. Peter Bikam, Head of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Venda, and Prof. Drake; back: Mr J.J. Pienaar, student, and Prof. Das Steyn, Departmental Chairperson.
Research outputs

Research articles


Conference contributions


