

GRADUATION CEREMONY

BLOEMFONTEIN CAMPUS

VISION130
Renew and Reimagine
towards 2034



EXCELLENCE

THURSDAY | 10 APRIL 2025 | 13:30



Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences

Bachelor's degrees, postgraduate diplomas, honours degrees,
master's degrees, and doctoral degrees



UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE VRYSTAAT
YUNIVESITHI YA FREISTATA



PROGRAMME

10 APRIL 2025 | 13:30
BLOEMFONTEIN CAMPUS

CONSTITUTION OF THE CONGREGATION

OFFICIAL WELCOME

MUSICAL ITEM

PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES

CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE

NATIONAL ANTHEM OF SOUTH AFRICA

DISSOLUTION OF THE CONGREGATION

PLEASE NOTE

List of candidates receiving degrees, diplomas, and certificates:

Degrees, diplomas, and certificates of candidates who are unable to attend the graduation ceremony will be conferred in absentia.

An* next to a name indicates that the degree, diploma, or certificate is awarded with distinction.

By attending the graduation ceremony, you agree that the UFS may use photographs taken by the official photographer in which you appear for marketing purposes.

By attending the graduation ceremony, you agree that the UFS may use video footage taken by the official videographer in which you appear for marketing purposes.

NATIONAL ANTHEM OF SOUTH AFRICA

Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika

Maluphakanyisw' uphondo lwayo,
Yizwa imithandazo yethu,
Nkosi sikelela, thina lusapho lwayo.
Morena boloka setjhaba sa heso,
O fedise dintwa le matshwenyeho,
O se boloke, O se boloke setjhaba sa heso,
Setjhaba sa South Afrika -
South Afrika.

Uit die blou van onse hemel,
Uit die diepte van ons see,
Oor ons ewige gebergtes,
Waar die kranse antwoord gee,
Sounds the call to come together,
And united we shall stand,
Let us live and strive for freedom,
In South Africa our land.

In order to maintain the dignity of the ceremony, you are requested to take note of the following:

- Please stand as the procession enters the hall
- Do not move around during the ceremony in order to take photos
- Please refrain from unacceptable actions such as whistling
- Please put your cellphone on silent so as not to disturb the proceedings
- We strive to conduct the ceremonies in a dignified manner
- Please do not leave the hall before the graduation proceedings have been concluded
- Family and friends who are unable to attend may watch the full graduation ceremonies through our livestream link at <https://livestream.ufs.ac.za>

ABOUT THE UFS



BLOEMFONTEIN, QWAQWA, AND SOUTH CAMPUSES

The University of the Free State (UFS) has a proud history as one of the oldest institutions of higher education in South Africa. It opened its doors in Bloemfontein in 1904 as the Grey University College, with six students in The Humanities. Today it is a multi-campus institution, with two diverse campuses in Bloemfontein and one in Qwaqwa in the scenic Eastern Free State, accommodating more than 39 000 students in its seven faculties (Economic and Management Sciences, Education, Health Sciences, The Humanities, Law, Natural and Agricultural Sciences, Theology and Religion), with a significant number of international students and associates, and an ever-widening scope of active involvement in and contribution to its surrounding communities.

For the past 121 years, the UFS has been delivering quality graduates who have made their mark in various sectors. What sets the institution apart is its holistic student support initiatives, enabling it to achieve some of the highest success rates in the country. Delivering students who are in high demand in the global job market remains a top priority. An established network of industry partners and close collaboration with the public and private sectors, as well as a continuous process of transformation and curriculum renewal, dovetail to produce highly employable graduates.

The UFS' research efforts are driven by dedicated scholars, some of whom are international leaders in their fields, with industry and social impact and real-world application.

Through the principle of engaged scholarship, the university responds to societal needs by using its scholarly and professional expertise with an intentional public purpose and benefit.

The UFS is an institution that goes all out to provide its students and staff with an outstanding university experience. Everything the institution does is rooted in its values of excellence, innovation and impact, accountability, care, social justice, and sustainability.

The university aspires to be a research-led, student-centred, and regionally engaged university that contributes to development and social justice through the production of globally competitive graduates and knowledge. Our *Vision 130* is an elaboration of our strategic intent to reposition the university for 2034, when we will commemorate our 130th anniversary.

Inspiring excellence, transforming lives through quality, impact, and care.

UFS Honorary Awards | UFS Honorary Doctorates

1950	GLP Moerdyk – DLitt (h.c.)		
1951	NC Havenga – LLD (h.c.)		
1952	Thos Blok – DEd (h.c.)		
	SHS Rubidge – DSc (h.c.)		
1955	CR Swart – LLD (h.c.)		
	CA v Niekerk – LLD (h.c.)		
1958	CPB Brink – LLD (h.c.)		
	CF Visser – DEd (h.c.)		
1959	DB Bosman – DLitt (h.c.)		
	SP le Roux – DScAgric (h.c.)		
	DF Malherbe – DLitt (h.c.)		
	GH v Rooyen – MA (h.c.)		
1960	SPE Boshoff – DLitt (h.c.)		
1961	T Boydell – DPhil (h.c.)		
1962	ES Botes – DEd (h.c.)		
	PE Rousseau – DSc (h.c.)		
1963	EH Louw – LLD (h.c.)		
	EN Roberts – DSc (h.c.)		
	JGF (Kaalkop) vd Merwe – DCom (h.c.)		
	HF Verwoerd – DLitt et Phil (h.c.)		
1966	PSZ Coetzee – DPhilTh (h.c.)		
	PJ du Toit – DSc (h.c.)		
	MS Louw – DCom (h.c.)		
1967	SM Naudé – DSc (h.c.)		
	LC Steyn – LLD (h.c.)		
	BJ Vorster – LLD (h.c.)		
1968	SJ Naudé – DCom (h.c.)		
1969	CW (Nellie) Swart – DPhil (h.c.)		
	AJJ Wessels – DCom (h.c.)		
1970	GS Nienaber – DLitt (h.c.)		
	HO Mönnig – DSc (h.c.)		
1971	N Diederichs – DCom (h.c.)		
	RS Verster – DPhil (h.c.)		
1972	LW Hiemstra – DPhil (h.c.)		
	PJ Meyer – DPhil (h.c.)		
1975	PJ Nienaber – DLitt (h.c.)		
	De la H de Villiers – DScAgric (h.c.)		
	GJ Stander – DSc (h.c.)		
1976	AJA Roux – DSc (h.c.)		
1978	SP Botha – DSc (h.c.)		
	EM van Zinderen Bakker – DSc (h.c.)		
	HB Thom – DEd (h.c.)		
1979	FCL Bosman – DPhil (h.c.)		
	G Cronjé – DSocSc (h.c.)		
	CJF Human – DCom (h.c.)		
1980	G Boonzaier – DPhil (h.c.)		
1981	PW Botha – DPhil (h.c.)		
	B Human – DCom (h.c.)		
	SG Shuttleworth – DSc (h.c.)		
1982	BLS Franklin – DPhil (h.c.)		
	GvN Viljoen – DEd (h.c.)		
1983	L Luyt – DCom (h.c.)		
	SF Zaaiman – DPhil (h.c.)		
1984	HS Steyn – DSc (h.c.)		
	FR Tomlinson – DScAgric (h.c.)		
	JH vd Berg – DMed (h.c.)		
1985	L Alberts – DSc (h.c.)		
	GG Cillie – DPhil (h.c.)		
	SPD le Roux – DLitt (h.c.)		
	A Polson – DPhilMed (h.c.)		
	J du P Scholtz – DPhil (h.c.)		
1986	S Grové – DMus (h.c.)		
	FP Retief – DMed (h.c.)		
	JA Stegmann – DCom (h.c.)		
1987	WA Joubert – LLD (h.c.)		
	B Kok – DPhil (h.c.)		
	WP Venter – DCom (h.c.)		
1988	JJN Cloete – DAdmin (h.c.)		
	FC Fensham – DLitt (h.c.)		
	JW vd Riet – DPhil (h.c.)		
1989	BJ Meyer – DSc (h.c.)		
	N van Uden – PhD (h.c.)		
1990	MG Corbett – LLD (h.c.)		
	JS Rabie – DLitt (h.c.)		
1991	SS Brand – DCom (h.c.)		
	JWL de Villiers – DSc (h.c.)		
	GT Fagan – DArch (h.c.)		
	JH Hofmeyer – PhD (h.c.)		
	E v Heerden – DLitt (h.c.)		
1992	JP Louw – DLitt (h.c.)		
	H Olivier – DSc (h.c.)		
1993	JD Anderson – DMed (h.c.)		
	RR Arndt – DSc (h.c.)		
	SJ Naudé – LLD (h.c.)		
1994	JJ Human – DPhil (h.c.)		
	JA Myburgh – DMed (h.c.)		
	JP vd Walt – DSc (h.c.)		
1995	WA Landman – DEd (h.c.)		
	WL Mouton – DPhil (h.c.)		
1996	WDO Marasas – DSc (h.c.)		
	NE Wiehahn – LLD (h.c.)		
1997	AP Brink – DLitt (h.c.)		
	B Hurwitz – DPhil (h.c.)		
1998	FC Müller – DMed (h.c.)		
1999	FM Claerhout – DPhil (h.c.)		
	JJF Hefer – LLD (h.c.)		
	S Nigam – DSc (h.c.)		
	WL Nkuhlu – DCom (h.c.)		
	MA Ramphele – DPhil (h.c.)		
	HJO van Heerden – LLD (h.c.)		
	FJ van der Merwe – PhD (h.c.)		
2000	MH Daling – DCom (h.c.)		
	TN Liversedge – PhD (h.c.)		
	I Mahomed – LLD (h.c.)		
2001	BP Gilbertson – DCom (h.c.)		
	NR Mandela – LLD (h.c.)		
	EC Taglauer – DSc (h.c.)		
2002	BH Meyer – PhD (h.c.)		
	BAK Rider – LLD (h.c.)		
	CF Slabber – PhD (h.c.)		
	JM Stetar – DEd (h.c.)		
2003	EWA de Corte – DEd (h.c.)		
	HA Serebro – DPhil (h.c.)		
	AG Sykes – DSc (h.c.)		
2004	S Badat – DPhil (h.c.)		
	R Bringle – DPhil (h.c.)		
	J de Wet – DMus (h.c.)		
	CF Fauconnier – DSc (h.c.)		

	GJ Gerwel – DPhil (h.c.)		M Nussbaum – DLitt (h.c.)
	WD Jonker – DTh (h.c.)		OW Prozesky – MD (h.c.)
	A Krog – DLitt (h.c.)		FDJ Brand – LLD (h.c.)
	K Mokhele – DPhil (h.c.)	2013	ZKG Mda – DLitt (h.c.)
	CJC Nel (Posthumous) – PhD h.c.)	2014	ML Blum – PhD (h.c.)
	L Quayle – DMus (h.c.)		L Mulvey – DLitt (h.c.)
	T (Karel) Schoeman – DLitt (h.c.)	2015	L Brahimi – DPhil (h.c.)
	YK Seedat – DMed (h.c.)		JM Samuel – DEd (h.c.)
	MK Seely – DSc (h.c.)		MA Oduyoye – DTh (h.c.)
	C Seerveld – DPhil (h.c.)		JD Sacks – DEcon (h.c.)
	F van Z Slabbert – DPhil (h.c.)	2016	RJ Khoza – DEcon (h.c.)
	JC Steyn – DLitt (h.c.)		TA Manuel – DEcon (h.c.)
	PA Verhoef – DTh (h.c.)		M du Preez – PhD (h.c.)
	L van den Heever – LLD (h.c.)		J Samoff – DPhil (h.c.)
	HA Wessels – LLD (h.c.)		F Haffajee – PhD (h.c.)
2005	A du P Heyns – DMed (h.c.)	2017	PH Holloway – DSc (h.c.)
	JJF Durand – DPhil (h.c.)		M Botha – LLD (h.c.)
	JA Groenewald – DSc (h.c.)	2019	BL Fanaroff – DSc (h.c.)
	WH Neuser – DTh (h.c.)		J Mofokeng wa Makhetha – DLitt (h.c.)
	M Ramos – PhD (h.c.)		MB Molemela – LLD (h.c.)
	SJ Terreblanche – DCom (h.c.)	2021	ZM Yacoob – LLD (h.c.)
2006	T Moss – PhD (h.c.)		SM Pityana – DPhil (h.c.)
	PV Cox – PhD (h.c.)		RJ van Niekerk – DLitt (h.c.)
2007	BJ (Bannie) Britz – DArch (h.c.)	2022	WK Byanyima – PhD (h.c.)
	KPD Maphalla – PhD (h.c.)		DM Davis – LLD (h.c.)
2008	D Ferreira – DSc (h.c.)		DE Moseneke – LLD (h.c.)
2009	JC Loock – PhD (h.c.)		AL Sachs – LLD (h.c.)
	LTC Harms – LLD (h.c.)		MJ Wingfield – DSc (h.c.)
2010	P Gordhan – PhD (h.c.)	2023	M Musk – DDiet (h.c.)
	BBS Ngubane – PhD (h.c.)		A Ekwamu – DSc (h.c.)
	AH Strydom – PhD (h.c.)		D Pepler – DSc (h.c.)
	M Jones – PhD (h.c.)		PCJ Vale – PhD (h.c.)
2011	D Tutu – DTh (h.c.)	2024	Salim Abdool Karim – PhD (h.c.)
	P Fourie – DLitt (h.c.)		Thabo Cecil Makgoba – PhD (h.c.)
	OG Winfrey – DEd (h.c.)		Murray Leibbrandt – PhD (h.c.)
	RWM Frater – PhD (h.c.)		Bineta Diop – PhD (h.c.)
	A Sawyer – DEd (h.c.)	2025	RMM Zondo – LLD (h.c.)
2012	RJ Goldstone – LLD (h.c.)		T Falola – LLD (h.c.)
	ER v Heerden – DLitt (h.c.)		J Siwani – PhD (h.c.)

Shields of Honour, Council and Chancellor's Medals

1994	Prof FO Müller (Shield of Honour)	2008	Ludo Helsen (Shield of Honour)
	RE Schoombie (Shield of Honour)	2009	Prof JU Grobbelaar (Council Medal)
1995	Prof FO Müller (Chancellor's Medal)	2010	Mrs AM Dippenaar (Chancellor's Medal)
	RE Schoombie (Chancellor's Medal)	2014	Dr H Verster (Chancellor's Medal)
1996	Prof S Mittman (Shield of Honour)	2014	Mr JL Pretorius (Chancellor's Medal)
1997	Prof M Jansens (Shield of Honour)	2016	Mr AD Osler (Chancellor's Medal)
1998	Prof CJC Nel (Chancellor's Medal)		Ms M van der Merwe (Chancellor's Medal)
	Prof C Swanepoel (Chancellor's Medal)	2017	Ms JS Isaacs (Chancellor's Medal)
1999	WJ (Hansie) Cronje (Shield of Honour)	2019	Mr JF de Villiers (Chancellor's Medal)
	Prof David Justice (Shield of Honour)		Ms EM Oosthuizen (Council Medal)
2000	Prof P Rosseel (Shield of Honour)	2022	Dr N Pearce (Chancellor's Medal)
	Prof MJ Viljoen (Chancellor's Medal)		Mr N Janse van Rensburg (Council Medal)
2001	Prof PC Potgieter (Chancellor's Medal)	2023	Prof MG Lötter (Chancellor's Medal)
2002	T Moss (Shield of Honour)		Prof SC Brown (Council Medal)
	Prof CD Roode (Chancellor's Medal)		
2003	Prof HC Janse van Rensburg (Council Medal)		
	Prof SA Petersen (Shield of Honour)		

MESSAGE FROM VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PRINCIPAL: UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE

Welcome to the graduation ceremony of the University of the Free State (UFS).

Today is indeed a special day. Few occasions hold as much significance as your graduation, both for you and for those who have supported you along the way. Many of you have had to overcome numerous challenges during your journey to get to where you are today. Many of you are the first in your families to reach this significant milestone. You have earned this moment, and you should be extremely proud of your achievement.

Graduands, you have had the honour of studying at a 121-year-old institution. Always acknowledge and recognise the significance of your achievements as you transition from being a University of the Free State (UFS) student to a UFS graduate. I invite you to stay connected to your alma mater as a proud alumnus.



Although the mission of our university has always been to equip you with the knowledge and skills needed to make a difference in your field of study, we are also mindful that values are just as important for you to make a difference in your community. The University of the Free State places great emphasis on ensuring that students have an outstanding university experience. In our pursuit of excellence, we are proud that our environment is conducive to intellectual and personal growth. As such, our values of excellence, innovation and impact, accountability, care, social justice, and sustainability are embedded in all activities across the institution.

As you step into the world beyond the University of the Free State, remember that your education is a powerful tool. I urge you to use it to create positive change, to question the status quo, and to pursue your passions with determination. The future may seem uncertain, but it is filled with possibilities waiting for your unique talents and contributions. As you embark on your next adventure, carry with you the lessons you have learned and the courage to forge your own path.

Celebrate your success, cherish the memories, and embrace the opportunities that lie ahead. The world is yours to explore, and we cannot wait to see all the amazing things you will do and accomplish.

Congratulations to all our Kopsie graduands. May you have continued success in all your endeavours!

Best wishes

PROF HESTER C. KLOPPER

**VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PRINCIPAL
UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE**

Welkom by die gradeplegtigheid van die Universiteit van die Vrystaat (UV).

Vandag is voorwaar 'n spesiale dag. Min geleenthede hou soveel betekenis in as 'n mens se gradeplegtigheid, sowel vir julle as vir diegene wat julle langs die pad ondersteun het. Baie van julle moes talle uitdagings te bowe kom tydens julle reis om te kom waar julle vandag is. Baie van julle is die eerste in julle gesinne om hierdie belangrike mylpaal te bereik. Julle het hierdie oomblik verdien en julle kan baie trots wees op julle prestasies.

Graduandi, julle het die eer gehad om aan 'n 121-jaar-oue instelling te studeer. Erken en herken altyd die betekenis van julle prestasies waar julle nou beweeg van studente van die Universiteit van die Vrystaat (UV) na UV-gegradueerdes. Ek nooi julle uit om as trotse alumni by julle alma mater betrokke te bly.

Alhoewel die missie van ons universiteit nog altyd was om julle toe te rus met die kennis en vaardighede wat nodig is om 'n verskil in julle studieveld te maak, is ons ook bedag daarop dat waardes net so belangrik is vir julle om 'n verskil in julle gemeenskappe te maak. Die Universiteit van die Vrystaat lê groot klem daarop om te verseker dat studente 'n uitnemende universiteitservaring het. In ons strewe na uitnemendheid is ons trots daarop dat ons omgewing bevorderlik is vir intellektuele en persoonlike groei. As sodanig is ons waardes van uitnemendheid, innovasie en impak, aanspreeklikheid, omgee, sosiale geregtigheid en volhoubaarheid ingebed in alle aktiwiteite oor die instelling heen.

Waar julle die wêreld buite die Universiteit van die Vrystaat betree, onthou dat opvoeding 'n kragtige hulpmiddel is. Ek moedig julle aan om dit te gebruik om positiewe verandering teweeg te bring, om die status quo te bevraagteken en om julle passies met vasberadenheid na te streef. Die toekoms lyk dalk onseker, maar dit is gevul met moontlikhede wat wag vir julle unieke talente en bydraes. Waar julle nou die volgende avontuur aanpak, neem die lesse saam wat julle geleer het, asook die moed om julle eie weg te baan.

Vier julle sukses, koester die herinneringe en omhels die geleenthede wat voorlê. Die wêreld is oop vir julle om te verken, en ons kan nie wag om al die wonderlike dinge te sien wat julle sal doen en bereik nie.

Baie geluk aan al ons Kowsie-graduandi. Mag julle volgehoue sukses in al julle ondernemings hê!

Beste wense

PROF HESTER C. KLOPPER

**RISEKANSIELIER EN PRINSIPAAL
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE VRYSTAAT**

Re a le amohela moketeng ona wa dikgau le dikapeso tsa Yunivesithi ya Freistata (UFS).

Letsatsi la kajeno efela e le le ikgethileng. Ke diketsahalo tse mmalwa tse nang le bohlokwa jwaloka mokete wa hao wa dikapeso, molemong wa hao esita le bao ba nnileng ba o tsehetso nakong ena yohle. Ba bangata ba lona ba ile ba lokela ho hlola diphephetso tse ngata nakong ya leeto lena ho tla fihla moo le leng teng kajeno. Ba bangata ba lona le ba pele malapeng a bolona ho fihlella mokolokotwane ona wa bohlokwa. Le sebeditse ka thata ho fihla nakong ena, mme le lokela ho ba motlotlo ka phihlello ena ya lona.

Lona boradikgau, le bile le tlotla ya ho ithuta yunivesithing e nang le dilemo tse 121. Kamehla le amohela le ho ananela bohlokwa ba diphihlello tsa lona ha le fetola maemo a ho ba baithuti ba Yunivesithi ya Freistata (UFS) mme jwale le se le ba boradikgau ba UFS. Ke le kopa ho dula le ikamahanya le mohlodi ona wa lona wa dikgau tsa thuto, le le boradikgau ba motlotlo.

Le hoja sepheo sa yunivesithi ya rona e nnile ya ba ho le hlomella ka tsebo le ka boitsebelo ba mesebetsi e hlokehang bakeng sa ho etsa diphetoho mafapheng a dithuto tsa lona, re ntse re tseba hore makgabane a molemo ho wena ho etsa diphetoho setjhabeng sa heno. Yunivesithi ya Freistata e hatella haholo ho etsa bonnete ba hore baithuti ba na le boiphihlelo bo hlwahlwa ka yunivesithi. Mabapi le kgothaleto ya rona ya boipabolo bo hlwahlwa, re motlotlo hore tikoloho ya rona e tsehetso kgolo ya kelello le mahlale esita le ntshetsopele ya botho. Ka tsela e jwalo, makgabane a rona a boipabolo bo hlwahlwa, boitshimollelo, sekgahla, boikarabello, tlhokomelo, toka ya setjhaba, le tshwarello, di kenyeleditswe mesebetsing yohle ya institjushene kapa setsha sena sa thuto.

Ha e le mona le kena lefatsheng le ka nqane ho meedi ya Yunivesithi ya Freistata, hopolang hore thuto ke sesebediswa se matla. Ke le kopa hore le e sebedise ho sibolla diphetoho tse molemo, ho nahanisisa ka hohle ka maemo a bophelo a hona jwale, esita le ho ntshetsa pele ditabatabelo tsa lona ka boikemisetso. Bokamoso bo ka bonahala bo sa kgolwehe, empa bo tletse maemo a kgonahalo a emetseng dineo tsa lona tse ikgethileng esita le tsona diabo tsa lona. Ha le tswela pele ka sepheo sa lona se latelang bophelong, hlomellang ka dithuto tseo le ithutileng tsona le tshepo ya ho ipetlela tsela ho ya pele.

Ketekang katleho ya lona, thabelang mehopolo ya mahopotsane, mme le amohela menyetla e tlang. Lefatshe lena ke la lona hore le le sibolle, mme re ke ke ra emisa ho tadima ka tebello dintho tse makatsang tseo le tla di etsa le hona ho di fihlella.

Ditakaleto tsa mahlohonolo ho baithuti ba rona ba Kowsie ba amohetseng dikgau. E se eka le ka ba le katleho e tswelapeng pele mererong yohle ya lona ya boiteko!

Madume

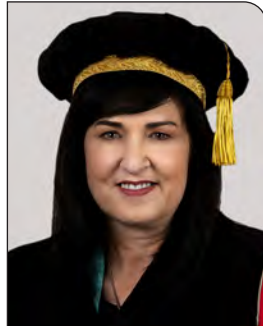
MOPROFESA HESTER C. KLOPPER

**MOTLATSI WA MOTJHANSELA LE MOOKAMED
YUNIVESITHI YA FREISTATA**

OFFICE-BEARERS



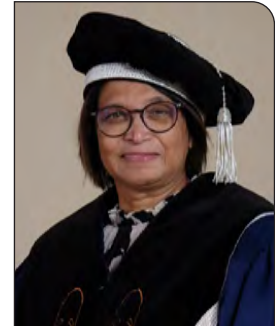
Prof BF Mohale
Professor of Practice (JBS)
CHANCELLOR



Prof HC Klopper
PhD (UJ)
VICE-CHANCELLOR AND
PRINCIPAL



Mr D Noko
HND Mechanical
Engineering (UJ)
CHAIR OF COUNCIL



Prof A Rhoda
PhD (UWC)
DEPUTY
VICE-CHANCELLOR:
ACADEMIC



Prof V Reddy
PhD (UKZN)
DEPUTY VICE-
CHANCELLOR:
RESEARCH AND
INTERNATIONALISATION



Dr M Qhobela
PhD (KSU)
DEPUTY
VICE-CHANCELLOR:
INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE,
STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS
AND SOCIETAL IMPACT



Mr T Hlasho
MPhil (NMU)
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:
STUDENT AFFAIRS



Ms M Nel
CA(SA) BAccHons (UFS)
CHIEF FINANCIAL
OFFICER



Mr NN Ntsababa
MPA (NMU)
REGISTRAR



Prof P Ngobeni
DTech (TUT)
CAMPUS PRINCIPAL:
QWAQWA CAMPUS



Mpho Maloka
ISRC:
ACTING PRESIDENT
GENERAL

DEANS



Prof P Burger
PhD (UFS)

DEAN:
ECONOMIC AND
MANAGEMENT SCIENCES



Prof LC Jita
PhD (MSU)

DEAN:
EDUCATION



Prof GJ van Zyl
PhD (UFS)

DEAN:
HEALTH SCIENCES



Prof MA Masoga
PhD (UFS)

DEAN:
THE HUMANITIES



Prof SD Kamga
LLD (UP)

DEAN:
LAW



Prof P Oberholster
PhD (UP)

DEAN:
NATURAL AND
AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES



Prof JS Klaasen
DTH (US)

DEAN:
THEOLOGY AND RELIGION

EMMIE PIETERSEN



GUEST SPEAKER

Emmie Pietersen completed her undergraduate studies in Social Sciences at the University of the Free State in 1990. In 1997, she graduated with a master's degree in Clinical Social Science from the University of Johannesburg. She went on to obtain a Certificate in Organisational Development and Change Management from Pepperdine University and completed the Senior Executive Programme at the Harvard Business School in Boston, USA.

Before being appointed as the National Change Management Leader at Telkom in 1997, Pietersen managed various areas of specialisation in human resources. Exploring people-business processes and creating synergy between people and organisational strategy have intrigued her since then. This remained an area of both passion and interest to her and she has lectured part-time at the UFS Business School for more than a decade, both on PG Dip and MBA levels.

For the past 24 years, Pietersen has been the Head of Strategy and Programme Development at the Peritum Agri Institute, a training company she started in 2001 with partner Belinda Louw. In 2012, Peritum was registered as a private agricultural college and holds accreditation for various programmes with the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations as well as the Higher Education Quality Committee. Peritum Agri Institute is currently the largest private agricultural college in South Africa.

Emmie Pietersen is a specialist in strategy development and organisational development and design, who consults widely in the agricultural sector. She is also the co-author of a book on leadership in the African context, currently in its fourth review, and holds professional registration with the South African Board for People Practices as registered Master HR Practitioner.

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Dissertation Title: DRIVERS
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Dissertation Title: THE IMPACT
OF CLIMATE VARIABILITY
ON WATER USE BEHAVIOUR
FOR SMALLHOLDER MAIZE
PRODUCERS IN SELECTED
AREAS OF THE VHEMBE
DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY,
LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH
AFRICA

Supervisor: Prof YT Bahta

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Monteiro and Prof H Jordaan

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Dissertation Title:
FACTORS AFFECTING THE
PROFITABILITY OF LUCERNE
HAY PRODUCTION IN THE
NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE
OF SOUTH AFRICA

Supervisor: Dr HN Van Niekerk

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Dissertation Title: THE
EFFECT OF INCLUDING A
PREBIOTIC IN A WINTER LICK
ON THE PERFORMANCE OF
BEEF HEIFERS ON SWEET
GRASSLAND

Supervisor: Mrs GC Josling

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ADAPTATION: A CASE STUDY
ON MAIZE PRODUCTION IN THE
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SOUTH AFRICA

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ON PRODUCTION AND
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CONTENT IN MILK
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PERFORMANCE OF DAIRY BULL
CALVES

Supervisor: Dr OB Einkamerer

Co-Supervisor: Dr B Van Zyl

LE ROUX, Rina-Mari

Dissertation Title: THE EFFECT
OF DOSING OILS HIGH IN
OMEGA-3, OMEGA-6 OR
OMEGA-9 FATTY ACIDS ON
DOHNE MERINO EWE MILK
COMPOSITION AND LAMB
GROWTH PERFORMANCE

Supervisor: Dr HA O'Neill

Co-Supervisors: Dr OB
Einkamerer and Prof A Hugo

MANS, Hanél*

Dissertation Title: A
SYSTEMATIC REVIEW TO
ASSESS THE APPLICATION OF
SOYBEAN HULLS IN LACTATING
DAIRY COW DIETS

Supervisor: Dr OB Einkamerer

Co-Supervisor: Prof JA Van
Niekerk

NESER, Charles Augustus*

Dissertation Title: THE EFFECT
OF HYDROXY-Zn AS TRACE
MINERAL SOURCE ON THE
PERFORMANCE AND WOOL
QUALITY OF FINISHING LAMBS

Supervisor: Dr OB Einkamerer

Co-Supervisor: Mrs GC Josling

VALENTIN, Bianca

Dissertation Title: THE
EFFECT OF FUNGAL AND
BACTERIAL PROBIOTICS ON
IN VITRO FERMENTATION
CHARACTERISTICS AND
MICROBIAL DIVERSITY

Supervisor: Dr OB Einkamerer

Co-Supervisors: Dr C Rothmann
and Prof ED Cason

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN
AGRICULTURE MAJORING IN
PLANT BREEDING**

**BORNMAN, Johannes Gysbertus
Roos**

Dissertation Title:

ASSESSMENT ON
THE PREVALENCE OF
XANTHOMONAS CAMPESTRIS
PV CAMPESTRIS CAUSING
BLACK ROT OF CABBAGE IN
SOUTH AFRICA

Supervisors: Prof A Minnaar-
Ontong

Co-Supervisors: Mrs WM Kriel

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN
AGRICULTURE MAJORING IN
PLANT PATHOLOGY**

HLONGWANE, Neo Victor

Dissertation Title:
IDENTIFICATION, PREVALENCE
AND FUNGICIDE CONTROL
OF SEEDBORNE FUNGI
ASSOCIATED WITH SOYBEAN

Supervisor: Dr LA Rothmann

Co-Supervisors: Prof A Minnaar-
Ontong and Dr M Jackson

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN
AGRICULTURE MAJORING IN
SOIL SCIENCE**

NTULI, Hleziphi Anna

Dissertation Title: EVALUATION
OF THE MOBILE DEVICE
PHOTOGRAMMETRY METHOD
FOR SOIL BULK DENSITY
DETERMINATION

Supervisor: Dr NV Mathinya

Co-Supervisor: Prof E Kotze



FACULTY OF **NATURAL AND AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES**

SIBALEKILE, Ayabonga

Dissertation Title:
GLYPHOSATE-INDUCED
CHANGES ON SOIL MICROBIAL
COMMUNITIES, SOIL CARBON,
AND NITROGEN IN SOYBEAN
SYSTEMS

Supervisor: Prof TA Weldeclassie

Co-Supervisor: Dr JC Castillo
Hernandez

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN AGRICULTURE MAJORING IN WILDLIFE SCIENCE

HIGGS, Ruan William

Dissertation Title: UTILIZING
CAMERA TRAPS TO SURVEY
ELUSIVE KEY SPECIES UNDER
CONDITIONS OF ECOLOGICAL
DISTURBANCE

Supervisor: Prof F Deacon

PARDAVE SACO, Rosalyn Paola*

Dissertation Title: THE
NUTRITIONAL COMPARISON
BETWEEN FREE-RANGING
AND ZOO-HOUSED GIRAFFES
(GIRAFFA CAMELOPARDALIS)
ON A GLOBAL SCALE

Supervisor: Prof F Deacon

Co-Supervisor: Prof M Clauss

MASTER OF SCIENCE MAJORING IN AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

MOSHUGI, Moshugi Ezael*

Dissertation Title: FACTORS
INFLUENCING THE RESILIENCE
OF COMMERCIAL LIVESTOCK
FARMERS TO AGRICULTURAL
DROUGHT IN THE NORTHERN
CAPE PROVINCE, SOUTH
AFRICA

Supervisor: Prof YT Bahta

Co-Supervisor: Prof FA Mare

SCHOEMAN, Ryno*

Dissertation Title: A
COMPARISON BETWEEN
MATHEMATICAL
PROGRAMMING AND
DIFFERENTIAL EVOLUTION
IN FARM-LEVEL WATER USE
OPTIMISATION

Supervisor: Prof B Grove

Co-Supervisor: Prof N Matthews

VENTER, Andries Johannes*

Dissertation Title: THE
ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY
OF COMMERCIAL LIVESTOCK
FARMERS TO AGRICULTURAL
DROUGHT IN THE NORTHERN
CAPE PROVINCE OF SOUTH
AFRICA

Supervisor: Prof YT Bahta

Co-Supervisor: Prof FA Mare

MASTER OF SCIENCE MAJORING IN CLIMATE CHANGE

MOKOTLA, Ntebaleng Agnes

MASTER OF SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

BHENGU, Smangele Smangele

BREAKFAST, Them bani

CESHE, Cyril Sakhiwo

CHILIBA, Ziyanda

CHITSA, Gilbert

CHIYA, Bakhululekile Precious

CHONCO, Bongiwe

CHUMA, Lindelwe Success

DIKO, Phakama

DLAMINI, Khayelihle Iodine Angel

DLAMINI, Njabulo S'Jabule*

DOUGLAS KOBESSE, Akona

DUBE, Hlengiwe Precious

FOKOTHI, Tshediso Andrew

FUTHWA, Unathi

GWALA, Matho Primrose

HAJANE, Mosima Kerileng

HUMA, Regina Mmakgomo

JANSEN VAN VUUREN, Leon

JORDAN, Khululwa

KADURIRA, Martin

KHATI, Lerato Ntuthuzelo

KOLISI, Mihlali

KONZANI, Bongiswa

KUMALO, Sandise

KWINANA, Philani

LANDZELA, Gcisakazi

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 MASHABA, Phinda Herman
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 MBHELE, Makhosazane Priscilla
 MBONGO, Lerato
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 MGUDLWA, Ukuthemba
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 MOGALE, Monare Esther
 MOLATO, Lerato Bongumusa
 MOPEDI, Mpho Sefora
 MOSS, Sithandiwe
 MQADI, Zoliswa
 MRAMBA, Wandisile
 MTSHALI, Ncamisile Pearl

MWANDLA, Sikhulisile
 MZILA, Zanani Zeal
 NARE, Brilliant
 NDINOMUWA, Hikevali Ndeitodino
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 NODO, Bayanda
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 NQABE, Dimakatso Emily
 NTEMA, Puleng Tamlynn
 NTIKANG, Tumisang
 NTSHANGASE, Nokwanda
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 NZUZA, Khethukuthula Etheline
 PANDELA, Yanga Wendy
 PHEKO, Ufikile Macdonald
 PHUDUHUDU, Lerato Lorraine
 QWABE, Opheleleyo Sifumene
 RAMATSA, Makgala Juliet
 RAMOKHUTI, Hendrica Mmanare
 ROGERS, Jodi-Anne Lana*
 SALAMANE, Kgopudiso Hendrick*
 SEEPAMERE, Tsholofelo Tshiamo
 SEEPAMORE, Keoikantse
 Theophilus

SEHORU, Rebaone
 SEKORI, Tebogo Joba
 SEPHOKO, Nthabiseng Jeminah
 SHABALALA, Langelihle Chris
 SHONGWE, Simingaye
 Bantubahle
 SIBISI, Mbekezeli
 SIBISI, Qiniso Zakithi
 SODLADLA, Mziwakhe
 SOMKOSI, Phatheka
 TASANA, Sinesipho
 VAN NIEKERK, Adel Catharina
 Magrietha*
 WULANA, Owethu
 XABA, Sicebiseni
 ZACA, Nomcebo Millicent
 ZUMA, Nompumelelo
 ZUMA, Nomusa Precious
 ZUNGU, Samukelisiwe Nosipho*
 ZWANE, Hopewell Ndumiso

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN AGRICULTURE MAJORING IN SOIL SCIENCE

GUMEDE, Ntombikayise Nolwazi

Dissertation Title: INFLUENCE OF KELPAK® ON SOIL BIOCHEMICAL PROPERTIES AND GREEN BEANS

Supervisor: Prof E Kotze

Co-Supervisor: Dr E Van Der Watt



FACULTY OF **NATURAL AND AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES**

DOCTORAL DEGREES

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY MAJORING IN AGRONOMY

MAMABOLO, Lerato Katedi

Lerato Katedi Mamabolo was born at Dikgale Village on the 13th of October 1995. She matriculated at Northern Academy Secondary School in 2013. She obtained a BSc (Agronomy) degree in 2018 at the University of Limpopo, MSc Agric in Horticulture at the University of Limpopo in 2021, and a PhD in Agronomy at the University of the Free State in 2025. She started her career as a research and development officer at Opus Cactus, Bloemfontein.

With her thesis titled: **BIOSTIMULATORY AND ANTIMICROBIAL ACTIVITY OF CACTUS PEAR FRUIT EXTRACTS**, Lerato Mamabolo contributes to the field of plant physiology and biocontrol agents, investigating the antimicrobial and biostimulant properties of cactus pear fruit extracts, particularly from the cultivars *Morado*, *American Giant*, and *Fusicaulis*. Through a combination of laboratory and glasshouse experiments, Mamabolo examines the effects of these fruit extracts on crop growth, fungal inhibition, and disease resistance. The study reveals that the crude extract of *Morado* significantly promotes seedling growth and improves germination rates in various crops, while also exhibiting antifungal activity against several pathogens. Although *Morado* and *American Giant* showed limited antibacterial properties, *Fusicaulis* extract demonstrated strong antifungal effects, particularly against *Alternaria alternata* and *Botrytis cinerea*. Notably, the *Fusicaulis* extract contains flavonoids like neohesperidin and chlorogenic acid, which are believed to contribute to its antifungal properties. This research highlights the potential of cactus pear fruit extracts as eco-friendly biostimulants and natural antifungal agents in sustainable agriculture.

Supervisor: Dr GM Coetzer

Co-Supervisors: Dr E van der Watt and Dr HA Njom

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY MAJORING IN AGRONOMY INTERDISCIPLINARY

HAMADZIRIPI, Esnath Tatenda

Esnath Tatenda Hamadziripi was born on 6 February 1984 and grew up in the city of Mutare, Manicaland province, Zimbabwe. She matriculated at Arundel High School in 2002 and pursued a BSc degree in agriculture majoring in Horticulture from the Midlands State University. She later attained a MSc in Agrisciences at Stellenbosch University where she graduated cum laude. Her career began as a research technician supporting the horticulture industry and has spent most of her career as a researcher at the international maize and wheat improvement center (CIMMYT) where she participated in research focused on improving the livelihoods of smallholder farmers.

With her thesis titled: **PERFORMANCE OF *Ms44* GENE IN LOW YIELD ENVIRONMENTS OF SMALLHOLDERS IN AFRICA** the performance of a dominant male sterile gene *Ms44* in maize was evaluated to uncover the benefits of this genetic technology to smallholder farmers. The main advantage of this gene in seed production is that, it is not able to self-pollinate during seed production. In this study the potential of the dominant male sterile gene *Ms44* was evaluated as a means to improve smallholder farmer grain yields. The study was done with three specific objectives. Firstly, yield losses were quantified to demonstrate the impact of seed impurity in farmers' fields. Secondly, ss hybrids using the *Ms44* gene are the first of their kind to be released in Africa, it was imperative to understand the performance of this hybrid should farmers recycle the seed. Finally, the genetic gains of the maize tassel phenotype in tropical germplasm were evaluated to determine how the *Ms44* gene will complement tropical maize.



Supervisors: Prof A Franke

Supervisors: Prof M Labuschagne and Dr JE Cairns

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY MAJORING IN ANIMAL SCIENCE

MAFOLO, Kgaogelo Stimela

Kgaogelo Stimela Mafolo was born in 1992 in Motlolo Village, Burgersfort, Limpopo Province. He matriculated at the Kgokodibeng High School in 2009. In 2014 he obtained a bachelor's degree in animal production and a master's degree in 2018, both from the University of Limpopo. He was employed for seven years as a research candidate under the Professional Development Programme (PDP) at the Agricultural Research Council, where he gained extensive experience in research and data analysis. In 2022, he joined Afrika Tikkun as a Researcher, focusing on data-driven decision-making in youth development programmes.

With his thesis titled: **ESTABLISHING GENOMIC EVALUATIONS AND THEIR VALIDATION ACCURACIES IN SOUTH AFRICAN HOLSTEIN AND JERSEY CATTLE**, the candidate contributes to advancing knowledge of genomic selection in dairy cattle. This study is one of the first that investigate the use of genomic information in the prediction of breeding values in South African dairy cattle. Using adjusted single-step genomic best linear unbiased prediction (ssGBLUP), he has evaluated different parameter settings and identified a suitable combination for the South African Holstein breed. By assessing the accuracy of these genomic evaluations, he managed to refine genetic evaluation methods and improve selection strategies for enhanced productivity and sustainability. The findings highlight the potential of genomic selection in optimizing genetic gains, supporting more efficient breeding programs, and addressing challenges in dairy cattle improvement, ultimately contributing to a more sustainable and competitive dairy industry in South Africa.

Supervisor: Prof ML Makgahlela

Co-Supervisors: Prof FWC Naser and Dr MD MacNeil

VAN NIEKERK, Michiel

Michiel Van Niekerk was born in Bloemfontein on 24 May 1978. He received his secondary education in Kimberley, where he matriculated at Hoërskool Diamantveld in 1996. He obtained the degree B. Agric. (Animal Production) in 1999, the degree B.Sc. Agric. Hons (Animal Science) with distinction in 2001, and the degree M.Sc. Agric (Animal Science) in 2003. All his studies were conducted at the University of the Free State. He started his farming career as beef cattle stud breeder in 1994 on the family farm close to Kimberley. At present he is co-owner of his family's farming enterprise.

With his thesis titled: **GENOMIC EVALUATION IN DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENTS IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN HOLSTEIN BREED**, an alternative random regression model was developed that lead to a significant increase in genetic prediction accuracy of the genetic evaluations in SA Holstein cattle. This model that was developed for both total mixed ration and pasture production systems, makes less assumptions about the fixed and random variables affecting milk production. A significant genotype by environment interaction for persistency of production, an integral part of cumulative production, was also found. The new model enables breeders to maximize genetic gain by using production system specific estimated breeding values for selection. The study showed that genomic information can be introduced into the alternative random regression model to further increase the accuracy of genetic prediction for significantly faster genetic gain.



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Supervisor: Prof FWC Neser

Co-Supervisors: Prof V Ducrocq and Prof JB van Wyk

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY MAJORING IN PLANT BREEDING

MASEMOLA, Bogaleng Milcah

Milcah Masemola was born in Marble Hall in 1987. She graduated from the University of Pretoria with a BSc in Plant Production in 2010 and then joined the South African Sugarcane Institute for an internship. She received an MSc in Plant Breeding from the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal in 2014. From 2014 to 2017, she worked as a postgraduate development candidate at the Agricultural Research Council-Vegetables Industrial and Medicinal Plants (ARC-VIMP). She was appointed as a research technician to conduct indigenous vegetable breeding trials from 2017 to 2024. She is currently a researcher and project leader at the ARC-VIMP.

With her thesis titled: **HERITABILITY AND EXPRESSION OF GRAIN YIELD AND NUTRITIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF COWPEA**, the candidate generated significant genetic and breeding data on cowpea, an orphan, nutrient dense grain and vegetable legume (which is notoriously difficult to hybridize). She determined genetic distances among 10 diverse cowpea genotypes using simple sequence repeat markers and made crosses between these parents in a half-diallel design. The study indicated prevalence of dominant gene action for yield and its related traits, as well as the possibility for hybrid breeding. Parents with good general combining ability for yield were identified. Seed iron and zinc heritability was low, indicating the difficulty of improving levels of these mineral in cowpea. Protein content and phytic acid (as an indicator of nutrient bioavailability) heritability was high and should respond well to selection. The results of this study will contribute towards construction of a future cowpea breeding programme in South Africa.

Supervisor: Supervisors: Dr NW Mbuma and Prof MT Labuschagne

Co-Supervisors: Dr A Gerrano and Prof A Minnaar-Ontong

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY MAJORING IN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

ENGELBRECHT, Darren Luwayne

Darren Engelbrecht, born in Nababeep, Northern Cape Province, grew up and attended secondary school in Concordia and matriculated in 2002. He earned a Diploma in Agricultural Management from Grootfontein College of Agriculture (2005) and a Baccalaureus Technologiae in Agricultural Management from the Central University of Technology (2007). He obtained a Master's in Sustainable Agriculture from the University of the Free State (2017) and registered for a PhD in Sustainable Agriculture in 2019, researching agricultural policies and extension services. His career began as an Extensionsionist in 2007 and District Manager for Namakwa from 2019 until his resignation in August 2024 to become an Agricultural Training provider.

In his thesis titled: **ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AGRICULTURAL POLICIES AND EXTENSION SERVICES IN FACILITATING THE TRANSITION OF EMERGING FARMERS INTO COMMERCIAL FARMERS IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA: A NORTHERN CAPE CASE STUDY**, the candidate contributes to



scholarship on agricultural policy and extension services, focusing on emerging farmers' transition to commercial farming. The study sampled 56 land reform beneficiaries and 23 extension practitioners to assess commercialisation policies and examine enablers, limitations, and challenges in promoting commercialisation. Focus groups in five districts identified additional limiting factors. Key findings indicate that 75% of farmers fall within the middle-income bracket, with a strong positive correlation between the Household Commercialisation Index and income. Larger farms are more commercialised, although production intensity and efficiency also influence outcomes. The study developed the Commercialisation Framework and the Emerging Farmer Identification and Support Model to streamline resource allocation and enhance commercial readiness, fostering sustainable agricultural development.

Supervisors: Prof JA van Niekerk and Prof JW Swanepoel

MANCIYA, Sixolise

Sixolise Manciya was born in Mount Frere on 16 July 1985. He matriculated from Dangwana S.S.S. in 2004 and earned a bachelor's degree in agricultural economics from the University of Fort Hare in 2008. He completed his honours in 2009 and a master's in agriculture in 2012. He worked as an educator at Imingcangathelo High School from 2009 and later joined the Department of Agriculture as an assistant extension officer in KZN in 2011. Currently, he is a lecturer at Mangosuthu University of Technology.

With his thesis titled: **ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF BANANA PRODUCTION ON HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY AND INCOME AMIDST CLIMATE CHANGE ADOPTION: A CASE STUDY OF SMALLHOLDER FARMERS IN KWAZULU-NATAL AND EASTERN CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA**, the candidate contributes to scholarship on food security and climate change, focusing on the contribution of banana production in achieving food security among smallholder farmers. The study investigates how much knowledge do the extension officers have about climate change and banana production in South Africa? The study used a mixed-methods research design to understand the resource limitations faced by banana smallholder producers. The data was collected from 301 farming households in KwaZulu-Natal's Ugu district and the Eastern Cape's OR Tambo district through questionnaires and transect walks. Insights from 61 extension officers were also gathered. The study found that household members can sell bananas to each other to improve household security and increase household income. Most extension officers understood the impact of climate change, its causes, shifting weather patterns on banana production in smallholder farming.

Supervisor: Dr SM Mpuzu

Co-Supervisor: Dr N Cronje

STRAUSS, Andries Jacobus

Andries Strauss was born on 19 January 1978 in De Aar, Northern Cape. He completed his matric at Hoërskool De Aar in 1996 and obtained a Baccalaureus Agriculturae degree in 1999. He further attained a Baccalaureus Scientiae Agriculturae Honores in Animal Nutrition in 2001 and a Magister Scientiae Agriculturae from the University of the Free State in 2009. Since 2003, he has been serving as a Production Scientist at the Free State Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, and Environmental Affairs.

With his thesis titled: **BUILDING COMPETITIVENESS FOR SMALL-SCALE WOOL GROWERS BY DEVELOPING THE WOOL VALUE CHAIN IN THE FREE STATE PROVINCE OF SOUTH AFRICA**, the candidate aimed to design a model to enhance the competitiveness of small-scale wool growers by strengthening the wool value chain. The research focused on describing the socio-economic profile of communal wool farmers in the Mangaung district, identifying key factors influencing the production and reproductive performance of small stock in communal areas,



FACULTY OF **NATURAL AND AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES**

and analyzing the existing wool value chain with regard to wool prices, marketing, and market access. Additionally, the study sought to recommend best management practices for developing the wool value chain among communal farmers. Through interviews with 351 small-scale farmers, critical factors influencing wool production in the Thaba Nchu and Botshabelo communal areas were identified, providing essential insights for designing a model to improve competitiveness and sustainability within the wool sector in the Free State Province.

Supervisor: Prof JW Swanepoel

Co-Supervisor: Dr JJE Cloete

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY MAJORING IN WILDLIFE

GROBBELAAR, Andri

Andri Grobbelaar (nee Erasmus) was born on 14 April 1986 in Bloemfontein. She matriculated from Sentraal Secondary School (2004) with seven distinctions and earned (cum laude) her BSc (2008), BSc Honours (Zoology, 2009), and MSc (Zoology, 2011) from the University of the Free State. She was recognized as the 2nd Best Undergraduate Student in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences (2007/2008). From 2011 to 2021, she worked in the international Contract Research Organisation industry and founded Friends of Franklin, a nature conservation nonprofit organisation. She continues wildlife research as a contract researcher in the Department of Animal Sciences.

With her thesis titled: **FACTS FROM FAECES: NON-INVASIVE TECHNIQUES TO EVALUATE THE HEALTH OF GIRAFFES (*Giraffa camelopardalis*), IN SOUTHERN AFRICA**, the candidate presents a pioneering study on the use of non-invasive faecal analyses to assess the health and nutritional status of giraffes—a keystone species increasingly threatened by habitat fragmentation and population decline. This research makes a substantial and original contribution to wildlife sciences by introducing innovative methodologies for monitoring the nutrient dynamics of giraffe populations. The study is meticulously designed, employing a robust methodology and a comprehensive analysis of data collected across diverse environmental conditions. By integrating insights into dietary intake, microbiome, metabolome profiles, ecological factors and near-infrared spectroscopy, the thesis offers a holistic perspective on giraffe physiology and conservation. Notably, this research has led to the acceptance of four peer-reviewed publications, underscoring its scientific significance and providing a strong foundation for further investigations in the field.

Supervisor: Prof F Deacon

Co-Supervisor: Prof G Osthoff

FACULTY OF **NATURAL AND AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES**



DEAN'S MEDAL

AWARDED TO A STUDENT WHO ACHIEVED THE BEST RESULTS IN RESPECT OF A FOUR-YEAR BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN THE FACULTY OF NATURAL AND AGRICULTURE SCIENCES

KOTZE, Philippus Jacobus Ludick

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN AGRICULTURE MAJORING IN ANIMAL SCIENCES



CONGRADULATIONS,

Class of 2024, on your graduation! You are now officially alumni of the University of the Free State (UFS) and part of an ever-growing community of excellence. We are proud of your achievements and excited to see what your future holds and to connect with you in the bright future ahead of you.

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