



# Postgraduate School

## Newsletter 03/June 2013

Website: <http://postgraduate.ufs.ac.za/>

Email: [postgrad@ufs.ac.za](mailto:postgrad@ufs.ac.za)

T: +27 (0)51 401 3541 | Johannes Brill Building

 UFSUV |  UFSweb |  UFSweb

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



## From Office of the Director

This academic year is progressing at an incredible pace. It has been an exciting time at the postgraduate school. We are constantly looking for new ways of reaching out to and supporting our postgraduate students. In this newsletter we cover important events in the lives of our postgraduate students. As with any journey, the postgraduate journey is characterized by many milestones that serve as beacons of progress. These milestones include the approval of your research proposal and registration of your title, submitting your work for examination purposes and graduating. Along the way there are numerous other steps that vary according to your discipline and the nature of your study. These include writing a literature review, gathering data or completing the empirical part of the study, writing the methods chapter, writing up your results as well as your conclusions and recommendations. Students can use these milestones to track their progress. Different postgraduate students invariably find themselves at different stages in the research and writing process and each of the stages demand different types of effort and commitment. The events or processes in the postgraduate calendar that we want to focus on in this newsletter include graduation, submission of theses and dissertations for examination purposes and calls for NRF and other scholarships.

In two weeks we celebrate the excellent work of many postgraduate students at the June graduation ceremonies. A total of 62 doctoral and 400 magister candidates will graduate this month. **We want to congratulate all graduates with their outstanding academic projects, their perseverance and commitment.** The successful completion of a degree is an important milestone in the academic journey and serves for many students as a bridge to cross into the job market and for others as an upward move to a higher rung on the career ladder.

Another significant milestone that needs commitment and attention to detail is submission of a thesis and dissertation for examination purposes. The next deadline for submission is 1 July 2013. Only candidates who notified the University of their intention to submit their examination copies, will be allowed to do so. This reason for this is that external examiners must be notified well in advance to allow them to schedule time for the examination and to make alternative arrangements for the delivery of examination copies in case they are travelling overseas. All candidates who notify Postgraduate Student Administration of their plans to submit, receive a document from them that provide information about guidelines for submission and detail regarding the format and requirements of the examination copies.

Funding for postgraduate studies play a crucial role in postgraduate studies. We are concerned at the relatively small number of UFS students who apply for prestige scholarships and for external funding such as NRF scholarships. We therefore devote a section of this newsletter to scholarship information. Please note that the NRF will distribute a call for bursaries within the next month and we encourage our full time South African students to apply for these scholarships. Our best wishes accompany you during your studies. Visit our website for available scholarship and funding opportunities.

For those of you who take a well deserving break, enjoy the break and return safely.

Henriette van den Berg

## DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF THESES/DISSERTATIONS FOR DECEMBER 2013 GRADUATION

The deadline for submission of documents for examination for graduation in December is 1 July 2013. For the majority of candidates the final weeks before the submission of a thesis or dissertation are very stressful. You have been working long hours to make the last changes required by your supervisor(s), to complete your list of references and to proofread the document. The final proofreading and technical care of the script always take more time than what we planned for, but it is a very important task. Over the years I have seen many students who have worked hard to produce research of high quality, but who have neglected the technical aspects due to time pressures. Do not do this to yourself! There is nothing worse for you and your supervisor than opening a copy of your thesis the day after you have submitted it for examination and seeing typographical and other mistakes.

Unfortunately, examiners do not take kindly to this type of academic carelessness. Prof Tara Brabazon wrote an article in *Times Higher Education* ( 28 January 2010) titled *Tips to fail a PhD* where she includes spelling mistakes and typographical errors as well as submitting an incomplete, inaccurate and poorly formatted bibliography as sure ways of eliciting negative feedback, even a fail from examiners.

She argues that examiners often start reading the document from the back. **According to her examiners look at the table of contents, read the abstract and then move to the bibliography.** The calibre of references influence the judgement of the quality of the work in general. She also suggests that superficial

mistakes create doubt in the minds of examiners about the academic rigour of the student and therefore urges them to delve deeper into the rest of the document. It is clear from her article that it is wise to be extra careful about the overall quality of the examination copy.

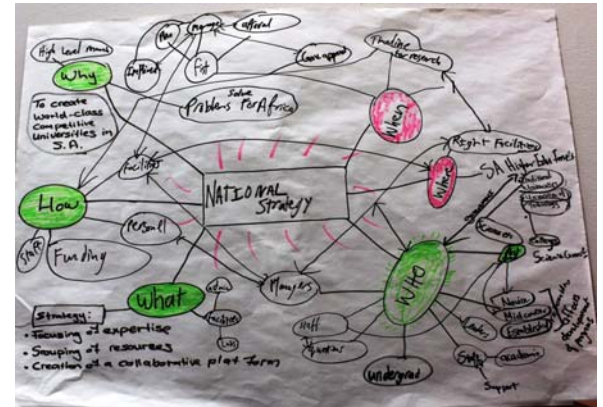
The examiner sees the dissertation/thesis as an independent piece of work, without any prior knowledge about your postgraduate process, your hard work and academic record. Your dissertation/thesis must therefore speak of academic rigour, attention to detail, clarity of thinking and passion for your research topic and discipline.

Remember that examiners receive six weeks for the examination process. Due to the time that it takes to courier examination copies to examiners and to finalise the examination reports it can take up to three months to receive your results. The supervisor usually contacts the student as soon as the results are available.

We realise that the waiting period can be very stressful, but the best that you can do in that time, is to enjoy the fact that you have submitted probably one of the biggest single pieces of writing that you will ever do in your life, celebrate that you have persevered and do all the things that you never have had time for during your study period. We are looking forward to join you at the graduation ceremony in December 2013.

For all those students who aim for the June 2014 graduation, remember that you need to submit a notice of submission form to Postgraduate Student Academic Services by 25 October 2013 and must submit your work by 31 January 2014.

By Henriette van den Berg



## UPCOMING SCHOLARSHIP CALLS:

1. Africa Thesis Award 2013 The deadline for the submission of theses this year is **12 July 2013** <http://www.ascleiden.nl/?q=content/africa-thesis-award-2013>
2. Poliomyelitis Research Foundation Travel grants Closing dates: **28 February; 15 July and 15 October** each year [http://www.prf.ac.za/pages/rules/travel\\_rules\\_01.htm](http://www.prf.ac.za/pages/rules/travel_rules_01.htm)
3. Poliomyelitis Research Foundation Study bursaries Closing dates: **28 February; 15 July and 15 October** each year [http://www.prf.ac.za/pages/rules/bursary\\_rules\\_01.htm](http://www.prf.ac.za/pages/rules/bursary_rules_01.htm)
4. Robert S McNamara fellowships. **Closing Date 31 Jul 2013**  
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/WBI/EXTWBISFP/EXTRSMFP/0,,contentMDK:21588557~menuPK:563061~pagePK:64168445~piPK:64168309~theSitePK:551843,00.html>
5. Respiratory Fellowship Awards 2013 **Closing Date 31 July 2013** [http://www.pulmonology.co.za/downloads/SATS\\_Respiratory\\_Fellowship\\_2013.pdf](http://www.pulmonology.co.za/downloads/SATS_Respiratory_Fellowship_2013.pdf)
6. Graça Machel Scholarships for Women closes in **August** <http://www.canoncollins.org.uk/gracamachel.html>
7. Canon Collins Scholarships for Postgraduate Study in South Africa close on **4 August** <http://www.canoncollins.org.uk/ccsa.html>
8. NRF Freestanding, Innovation and Scarce Skills Masters and Doctoral Scholarships **Closing date 31 Aug 2013** [http://www.nrf.ac.za/funding\\_overview.php?fid=133](http://www.nrf.ac.za/funding_overview.php?fid=133)
9. DAAD-NRF In-Country Scholarship Call for 2014 The application deadline is the **09 August 2013**  
<https://nrfs submission.nrf.ac.za/nrfmkii/FormView.aspx?AttachmentId=46051>

## Who are we?

- **Director:**  
Henriette van den Berg (x3451), [vdberghs@ufs.ac.za](mailto:vdberghs@ufs.ac.za)
- **Postgraduate funding:** Joy Nogabe (x2045),  
[Nogabesj@ufs.ac.za](mailto:Nogabesj@ufs.ac.za)
- **Academic writing specialist:** Alet Olivier (x3174),  
[AOLivier@ufs.ac.za](mailto:AOLivier@ufs.ac.za)
- **Office manager:** Eleanor Nel (x3541),  
[NelEP@ufs.ac.za](mailto:NelEP@ufs.ac.za)
- **Information officer:** Rene du Plessis (x9714),  
[Rene@ufs.ac.za](mailto:Rene@ufs.ac.za)
- **Information desk & Postgraduate Student Council Representative:** Khethiwe Biyo (x3112),  
[BiyoKC@ufs.ac.za](mailto:BiyoKC@ufs.ac.za)
- **Student assistant:** Cecilia Rabanye (x3541)
- **Course coordinator:** Naomi de Valdoeiros (x9432),  
[DeValdoNE@ufs.ac.za](mailto:DeValdoNE@ufs.ac.za) or [postgraduatersvp@ufs.ac.za](mailto:postgraduatersvp@ufs.ac.za)

Website: <http://postgraduate.ufs.ac.za/>

Email: [postgrad@ufs.ac.za](mailto:postgrad@ufs.ac.za)

## Introducing Ms Joy Nogabe - Chief Officer: Postgraduate Funding Opportunities.



Ms Joy Nogabe joined the Postgraduate School in October 2011 as Chief Officer: Postgraduate Funding Opportunities. She is responsible for the management and marketing of postgraduate funding opportunities at the UFS. She provides strategic leadership on issues associated with postgraduate funding. She has a B.Sc., B. Sc. Hons. and M. Med. Sc., all from the UFS. She held the position as Research Officer: NRF Activities at the Central University of Technology's Research Directorate where she coordinated the NRF programmes on research funding and capacity building. While working in her previous position she realized the challenges facing postgraduate students' funding and this stimulated her interest in assisting postgraduate students. Her aim is to assist as many students as possible with funding. The biggest reward will be to secure as much financial assistance as possible for students from different funding agencies. Joy plans to obtain a Master's in Business Administration in the near future.

## Scholarships and Bursaries – why the fuss?

Financial assistance is a very important resource for postgraduate students. A resource that can reduce worries about daily living expenses and can pay your research costs. Researchers often underestimate the cost of their research. Scholarships have unique benefits and are the most desirable form of financial aid. Many are merit-based or awarded as recognition for achievements. Like grants, scholarships do not have to be repaid. But grants are often need-based, so scholarships are more prestigious and can enhance your resume as well as help you pay for your education.

Some students assume that scholarships are primarily designed for students who are in dire need of financial assistance. This is not the case. In fact, winning a scholarship will be beneficial to any student for several years following their receipt of the award. If you are on the fence about applying for scholarships and unwilling to commit your time to the process, consider these significant benefits before you miss your opportunity. Apart from the obvious financial benefits, scholarships can also help you achieve your career goals and can benefit students in the following ways:

### 1. Career Benefit

Earning a prestigious or merit-based scholarship can actually make you a more attractive job candidate. Employers who understand the competitive nature of the scholarship will recognize it as an accomplishment. Generally, a merit-based scholarship demonstrates to future employers that you have exceptional ability in the academic, athletic or artistic realm. Competitive scholarships are accomplishments worth listing on your resume and can help you stand out when you search for a job -- possibly helping you achieve the career you want. Distinguishing your resume from those sent by hundreds of other applicants can be difficult. A scholarship can make it easy to make your resume stand out. Being recognized by someone else for your achievements is sometimes enough to get you in for an interview with a future employer. Looking for a job is hard work, but when you have plenty of achievements and qualifications it is much, much easier.

The process of applying for a scholarship can be somewhat agonising. We must look realistically at ourselves and then put that image out for critical evaluation and comment. A great deal of effort goes into making a scholarship application, and there are few guarantees of success. On the other hand, the process of making a scholarship application forces us to reflect upon our field of study, what it is about, why it is of interest, and how might it evolve in the short and long term. This is a higher level of thinking, and thus has its own intrinsic value. We formulate academic goals and set a plan for achieving these goals. And without even noticing it, we have made some small, but important advances in our development as scholars—and, perhaps, as human beings as well.

### 2. Educational Benefit

According to a study conducted by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, working while in university is the number one reason people drop out. Having a scholarship that pays for your education and living expenses can actually reduce your risk of dropping out and not getting the degree you want. You may even be able to consider a more selective institution or major. By reducing financial concerns, scholarships can also mean more time for studying and learning, which can lead to better grades and retention of knowledge and increase your chances for continuing on to graduate school.

### 3. Financial Benefit

A scholarship is a financial award that is given to students by universities, or other organisations. The goal of a scholarship is to enhance the education of the student. There are a wide variety of scholarships available, and each scholarship will require applicants to meet a variety of different requirements. Many students graduate from university with enormous student loan debt or limit their education in an attempt to control costs. Because scholarships are free money, however, students can focus on their careers instead of thinking about how they will repay loans. By removing financial barriers, scholarships make education and career goals easier to obtain.

### 4. Personal Benefit

A scholarship can make a big difference in how much time and resources you will have during college to spend on enhancing your experience and knowledge through service-learning, volunteer opportunities and internships. The money and security afforded by a scholarship allows you to be more selective in how you spend your free time. Use this time wisely and make the most of it; instead of working at any minimum-wage job you can find to support yourself, select work that is meaningful and adds value to your degree.

**Important advice for scholarship applicants:** Attached find an article written by Prof D. Farenick that provides very useful information to consider before you complete your scholarship application.

Sources:

<http://work.chron.com/scholarship-achieve-education-career-goals-9040.html>

<http://www.exforsys.com/career-center/scholarships/scholarship-basic-facts.html>

<http://www.scholarships.com/financial-aid/college-scholarships/scholarship-information/the-scholarship-advantage/>

<http://www.math.uregina.ca/~farenick/scholarship-advice.pdf>