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## Postgraduate School *newsletter*

Your guide to navigate through postgraduate studies

December 2020



### Postgraduate calendar

#### 2021 UFS Postgraduate School calendar

The UFS Postgraduate School events calendar is your go-to-guide for postgraduate teaching and learning webinars, annual events, bursary application deadlines and many more.

Students can select the event they would like to attend, RSVP online and, sync dates with their personal calendar via email to get reminders.

[Click here to view the calendar](#)

### International scholarships

#### DHET encourages students to apply for international postgraduate scholarships

The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) welcomes aspirant students who would like to pursue postgraduate studies to apply for DHET-facilitated international scholarship opportunities to study abroad.

The department facilitates the nomination process for several of these scholarships, while for others the department promotes and encourages South Africans to take advantage of the opportunities that are available.

"We prioritise postgraduate studies, particularly for students intending to pursue a career in academia or in scarce skills areas," says Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, Dr Blade Nzimande.

According to Minister Nzimande, the various scholarship opportunities have different deadlines, priorities and offerings, and the department's international scholarships website maintains an up-to-date list of open scholarships as well as information for applicants and opportunities that are made available on an annual basis.

[Click here for more information](#)



### Tamson Foster: '3MT is a good platform to see other institutional research'



Tamson Foster, a junior lecturer in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences (NAS) at the University of the Free State (UFS), believes the National Three-Minute Thesis competition, also known as the '3MT', is important for students from different institutions to share their research.

Foster, who researches the genetics, reproduction, and activity patterns of the tortoise species, *Homopus femoralis* – commonly known as the greater padloper – for her PhD, ended in 4th position out of 10 participants at the national competition in November 2020.

#### Benefiting from participating in the 3MT

She competed in the PhD category after presenting her tortoise research at the UFS Institutional 3MT on 9 October 2020 and finishing in second place.

"I would recommend that all faculties and departments at the UFS encourage postgraduate students to participate in this competition.

They will benefit from participating in this competition, as it would be good to see the research that other institutions are involved in across different discipline fields of study, so that they can also understand it; it is quite a task to be able to do it in just three minutes."

#### Motivation for next year

Foster says at first, she did not know that she came fourth, since only the top three winners were mentioned at the end of the competition held on 13 November. She is also glad to have had a chance to speak about her tortoise research, since there is hardly any research done on her species of tortoise. It is good motivation for next year when she will be entering again.

The postgraduate students in the Department of Zoology and Entomology were encouraged by the Head of Department, Prof Liesl van As, to take part in the 3MT competition. She also wanted to represent the department and the faculty and share information about her research, says Foster.

The competition is important for future PhD and Master's students.

"I think it is important for students from different institutions to share their research. With 2020 being a difficult year due to COVID-19 and lockdown restrictions, we could not really attend conferences or symposiums this year, and the 3MT provided the platform and the opportunity to share our research over different disciplines and various institutions," says Foster.

### Annual UFS progress reports

The call for the 2020 Annual Postgraduate Progress Reports for Research Masters and Doctoral students was opened this year from October to November due to Covid 19. The information and instructions were communicated via the students' UFS email addresses and UFS Digest for supervisors. Students and supervisors who have not yet completed the progress reports can still do so.

#### Graduate Research Management (GRM) System

The Graduate Research Management (GRM) enables the process of monitoring and evaluation of postgraduate students throughout their postgraduate journey at the UFS. A number of students and supervisors are now on the new Graduate Research Management System. Students who are not yet on the system need to contact their departments to be linked with their supervisors before they can start using GRM. Training manuals are provided on the University website under the Postgraduate School. For more information and enquiries, kindly contact Mr. Katleho Nyaiile at [nyaiilek@ufs.ac.za](mailto:nyaiilek@ufs.ac.za).

### UNISA's first woman vice-chancellor mindful of task ahead

She is mindful of the enormity of the task facing her but ready for the challenge, Professor Puleng Lenkabula said in the first interview since her appointment in November as the only woman in 148 years to head one of Africa's largest universities and the institution that in 1946 pioneered tertiary distance learning.

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### Mentorship aims at enhancing graduate employability

The transition from student to employee can be daunting, and frequently there's a lack of work-readiness and guidance, which can place young graduates at a disadvantage as they enter the world of work.

[read more](#)

