

COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING

2010 AND 2011

During 2010 community service learning was included for the first time in the module BWR224 (Law of Evidence). The community service learning projects formed part of the formative assessment of the students. The module is presented in the second year of legal studies and teaches students the various evidential rules and procedures of the adversarial trial system. The staff of the clinic is responsible for the facilitation of the projects. During 2011 four groups of students were engaged in service learning projects in the module BWR224.

The fourth year RPK412 students attending the clinic in the appeal unit have to complete community service learning projects as part of their formative assessment. We believe that the values and skills normally associated with the attorneys practice can only be learned through meaningful service learning activities. Service learning contributes greatly towards the delivery of a well-rounded law graduate. The students need to link the curriculum content of the LL.B degree with the outcome of the project and need to adhere to reciprocity in learning. During 2010 one of the RPK422 student groups presented a play to Grade 7 learners at Monyatsi Primary

School in Bloemfontein. The play portrayed human trafficking and learners were used to act out the different parties in a typical human trafficking situation, for example the victim, the transporter as well as the trafficker. The students used the play to convey to the learners how trafficking takes place and how to identify a trafficking situation. The students presented prevention strategies and provided learners with emergency contact information. Human Trafficking forms part of the module Criminal Law presented in the second year of the LLB degree. Human trafficking is currently escalating in prevalence; however the legislative framework to combat trafficking and to prosecute the crime is still in the process of being enacted. A similar project was presented during 2011 in the module RPK422 when a group of final year law students visited Tsoseletso Secondary School. The group approached grade 11 learners and the focus of the presentation was on the prevalence of human trafficking. The



learners were invited to actively participate in a question and answer session facilitated by the law students.

A group of students in the module RPK422 presented a project at a local secondary school in Rocklands on the effects and implementation of mandatory sentences in cases such as rape, robbery and murder. This project followed on the identification of the need to raise awareness in the community that the legislature enacted the Criminal Law Amendment (General Sentencing) Act, Act 105 of 1997 which prescribes mandatory sentences for serious and prevalent offences. Sentencing is dealt with in the second year of legal studies, however students have difficulty understanding sentencing legislation and how it applies in practice. The envisaged outcome of the project was to educate the community on the severe consequences of certain actions as well as to reinforce in the students the theoretical grounding of the principles of sentencing.



During the first semester of 2011, a group of students in the module RPK412 interacted with children in conflict with the law at the One Stop Centre, Bloemfontein. The students engaged the children during an interactive session in discussions regarding the newly enacted Child Justice Act and the criminal court process in general. The Child Justice Act came into operation on the 1st of April 2010 and for most of the final year law students this project was their first opportunity to interpret and understand the principles of the act and how it is enforced.



The students in RPK412 further presented a very interactive session at Soetdoring for first year students from various residences on campus. The focus of this session was to demonstrate and explain the effects of alcohol consumption to the target group. The information session explained to the students what effect alcohol consumption has on a person by way of illustrating the short and long term effects and legal consequences that may follow on exceeding the legal limits. This project links with the University's campaign to prohibit the use of alcohol on campus. The course content of Medicina Forensis, Criminal Procedure, as well as Criminal Law were used and applied in this context.

During the second semester of 2011 a group of final year law students in the module RPK422 presented an awareness raising campaign on campus to educate students regarding the

dangers of social networking, in particular the associated security risks, infringement of copy right laws, and related labour disputes arising from the use of social networks. The project was implemented by distributing information leaflets on campus followed by a discussion which was broadcasted on Kovsie FM. This project was a good example of how the law can never be viewed and applied in isolation since the students practically linked the course contents of various modules in the LLB curriculum to achieve the desired outcome.

In the second semester of 2011, a student group in the module RPK422 conducted a survey on the misconceptions often encountered in the elderly community regarding testate and intestate succession. The results of the survey were discussed during a session at the Mooihawe retirement home, during which session the students practically explained to the audience what the legal consequences are of various aspects pertaining to the law of succession. The group of students further explained to the elderly where to seek assistance in this regard. The students presented a play relating to the issue of abuse of elderly and the legislative measures to curb emotional, physical and economic abuse.

