



HELTASA 2014 FIRST CALL FOR PAPERS

One of the key challenges facing higher education is to enable students who gain access to achieve success. Kuh et al. (2011) indicate that higher education today is asked to do something at a scale never before realised namely delivering a high-quality postsecondary education, at less cost, to a larger, increasingly diverse and often academically underprepared undergraduate population.

The need for more high quality graduates is vital if South Africa and the African continent is going to reach its potential in the 21st century. HELTASA 2014 provides an opportunity for South African higher education to reflect on 20 years of democracy and consider the evidence (quantitative and qualitative) of teaching and learning initiatives that have assisted students to access success. This conference aims to celebrate and share the hard work and dedication of academics and teaching and learning professionals who, despite the challenges of shrinking resources, find innovative ways to help students succeed.

Why the focus on evidence? International efforts to improve the chances of students accessing success show that evidence (quantitative and qualitative) is vital to understand which components of interventions have worked and which have not. It also allows us to identify approaches that might be more effective for specific student groups (González 2009).

However, evidence is worthless if it is not applied. Research shows that high-performing institutions have evolved from collecting and assembling evidence to using it to guide changes that improve the quality of teaching and learning and creating environments that promote students success (González 2009).

Conference themes

Within the different conference themes, recognition of the challenges facing higher education in a developing country like South Africa. Evidence-based presentations can be submitted within the following themes:

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- **Scholarship of teaching and learning**

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning provides an opportunity for academics and teaching and learning professionals to develop innovative teaching and learning practices by reflecting on various forms of evidence and how it facilitates student learning. Questions to address within this theme include (but are not limited to): How does reflective practice contribute to improving student learning? How can disciplines be decoded to facilitate learning?

- **Academic Staff Development**

Within this theme the focus falls on finding innovative ways of supporting academics to meet the challenges of a 21st century “classroom” (physical or virtual). A space is provided in which academics and teaching and learning professional can show how new approaches to staff development facilitate the development of a new generation of academic to deal with this changing higher education context. Examples of questions are: How can evidence be used to develop staff? Which training approaches are more effective at getting staff to focus on student learning?

- **Innovative use of technology in teaching and learning**

How can technology help us to take teaching and learning and student support to scale? How is technology disrupting teaching and learning? How can technology be used to effectively change assessment practices? How are you approaching the digital fluency of academic staff and students? What is the role of games and gamification in teaching a new generation of students?

- **Curriculum design**

What is the role of evidence in changing curriculum structure and approaches? How can academics and teaching and learning professionals facilitate the development of more flexible and innovative curricula? What blend of teaching and learning approaches and practices helps to facilitate success? Is small group teaching the only, most effective way of improving students chances of success or can blend of large classes and small group (tutorial) teaching be more effective?

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- **Engaging students**

Which approaches to access engage students in what it takes to be successful? How effective have access and extended degree approaches been in your institution? How effective are academic literacy and language development interventions at your institutions? What personal and external influences have an impact on student success?

Types of presentations

- Full papers (20 minutes presentation plus 10 minutes for questions)
- Digital presentations (Glogster or Videos, 3-5 min).

Computers will be situated at various stations which will allow attendees to engage with presentations. Digital presenters also have the option of uploading their presentations on the HELTASA 2014 website. Glogster information can be found at: <http://www.glogster.com/>

- Pre-conference workshops (2 – 3 hours)

Criteria for the selection of papers

- Clear focus on one or more of the HELTASA objectives.
- Linked to the conference theme, i.e. Accessing success: Using evidence for change.
- Report on the use of evidence to promote quality teaching and learning.
- Adherence to the technical criteria (e.g. length, etc.).
- The presentation makes a strong/significant contribution.

Submission procedure

- Electronic submission of abstracts on our HELTASA website opens in March 2014. The link to the submissions page will be included in the following Communique.
- **Abstract submission deadline:** Extended abstracts of 400-800 words (excluding references) should be submitted by 28 July 2014.


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- **Notification of abstract acceptance:** You will be notified if your abstract has been accepted on or before 15 August 2014.
- **Final author registration date:** 17 October 2014. Failing to register will lead to deletion of abstract from the programme.
- **Final copy of full paper due for publishing review:** Once the abstract has been accepted, you may send your full paper of 5000-7000 words (including references) to Mieke Du Plessis at duplessism2@ufs.ac.za by 29 September 2014 to be considered for publication. All papers must be in .doc or .rtf format.
- **Electronic presentations:** An electronic copy of the approved presentation should be submitted to Ms Mieke du Plessis by 31 October 2014. The presentation will be available on a laptop for presentation as scheduled in the conference program.
- Notification of paper acceptance (subject to any requested changes): On or before 20 October 2014
- Final paper submission (with changes): 03 November 2014

Please note the following:

- **Failure to submit within the given deadlines will lead to exclusion from peer review process, and ultimately from the programme and publication.**
- The acceptance of an abstract is dependent on the outcome of the double-blind peer review process. Presenters may be advised to change their type of presentation.
- Accepted abstracts will be published under 

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Opportunities for publication

HELTASA 2014 will provide the following accredited publication opportunities:

- Special Edition of New Generation Sciences (ISSN).
 The theme of the edition will correspond with the HELTASA 2014 theme, i.e. Accessing success: Using evidence for change. For more information on the journal please visit http://reference.sabinet.co.za/sa_epublication/newgen
- Conference proceedings, with the working title of *Beating the Odds: Evidence-based teaching and learning practices that promote success*.
 The aim of the proceedings will be to share innovative, contextualised teaching and learning practices, from an evidence-based perspective, that supports students' chances of success in higher education.

Do not hesitate to contact Mieke du Plessis at duplessism2@ufs.ac.za or 051 401 9889 if you have any further queries.

References

González, K. P. (2009). Using Data to Increase Student Success: A Focus on Diagnosis. Principles and Practices of Student Success. Lumina Foundation for Education. Retrieved from

<http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED532376>

Kuh, G. D., Kinzie, J., Schuh, J. H., & Whitt, E. H. (2011, August). Fostering Student Success in Hard Times. Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning. Retrieved February 13, 2014, from

<http://www.changemag.org/Archives/Back%20Issues/2011/July-August%202011/fostering-student-full.html>

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