

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
11th ANNUAL ACADEMIC MONITORING AND SUPPORT COLLOQUIUM
PROGRAMME



11th ANNUAL
UKZN AMS COLLOQUIUM

THEME

Student Voice as a Contributor
to Student Support and
Success

Date: 20 November 2024

**Venue: UNITE BUILDING (Gate 8), HOWARD COLLEGE CAMPUS, UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL, DURBAN**

<https://utlo.ukzn.ac.za/11th-annual-ams-colloquium/>

Online participants:

<https://www.youtube.com/@UKZNSouthAfrica>

WELCOME MESSAGE



Prof Nhlanhla Mkhize
Deputy Vice-Chancellor
College of Humanities

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 11th annual UKZN AMS Colloquium hosted by the College of Humanities, where we embrace the theme of Student Voice as a Contributor to Student Support and Success. As we gather to explore the powerful role of student voices, I am reminded of the Zulu proverb, *Izandla zifilela umthwalo* - "Hands are burdened by the load." This proverb, when understood in its positive light, speaks to the responsibility and strength that comes with carrying a burden for the greater good. Just as hands are able to lift a load together, so too can the voices of our students help lift our entire Institution towards greater success.

Here, we recognise that student voices are not mere echoes; they are potent forces of insight, strength, and transformation. Every voice raised, every idea shared, contributes to shaping our collective journey. This annual colloquium brings together student support practitioners, academics, students, and researchers, where we reflect on our experiences, challenges, and achievements in our mission to elevate student success. Our work here contributes directly to strengthening student retention, enhancing learning experiences, and nurturing each student's potential. The aim is clear: to make each voice heard and valued so that it helps shape the very structures that support our students' journeys.

The concept of student voice in higher education is layered and intricate. It challenges us to consider how voices are received and interrogates whose voices become part of the academic fabric and whose remain on the margins. Which voices are amplified, and which are lost in silence? What structural or cultural barriers - whether linguistic, institutional, or otherwise - prevent all voices from being recognised? This year's colloquium presents an opportunity to explore these questions and to reflect on the ways in which we can cultivate an environment that affirms each student as a bearer of wisdom and knowledge.

Student voices, when truly heard, reveal dimensions of the educational experience that might otherwise remain hidden. They offer invaluable insights into what it means to succeed within the academic sphere and to navigate its challenges, thereby illuminating pathways to support that are both relevant and transformative. By inviting students to the table as partners, we enrich our programmes, making them adaptable and responsive to the realities of those they are meant to serve.

We are here not only to listen but to act upon what we hear. When students are engaged as partners and co-creators of knowledge, their insights help us refine our programmes, policies, and support systems. Whether through our Academic Monitoring and Support programmes, the First-Year Experience, or new initiatives yet to come, we commit to creating a future where student voices are integral to our Institution's identity and progress. We believe that empowering students to be architects of their educational experiences is a step towards creating a transformative and inclusive learning environment.

To those joining this important discussion, we extend our deepest thanks. Your participation enriches this colloquium and contributes to a shared tapestry of wisdom that will guide our academic and support strategies for years to come. In voicing experiences, reflections, and ideas, we collectively chart a way forward towards student-centred success.

Let us remember the essence of *Izandla zifilela umthwalo*. May every voice here, no matter how small, help us carry the load of shaping a better, more inclusive future for all students. Together, we will build an empowering, distinctly African space for higher learning, honouring the voices that shape us along the way.



Prof Thabo Msibi
Deputy Vice-Chancellor
of Teaching and Learning

The higher education sector continues to face challenges related to student retention, high dropout rates, low throughput rates and the unemployability of graduates. It is for this reason that the Academic Monitoring and Support (AMS) Colloquium was launched on the 26th of November 2013, with the aim of improving student retention, reducing dropouts, and increasing graduation rates. The inaugural colloquium focused on sharing exemplary practices, fostering collaboration, and finding coherence across the University.

This year's colloquium marks the 11th edition of this important event. Hosted by the College of Humanities in collaboration with the UTLO, the colloquium underscores our institution's commitment to advancing academic monitoring and support. The 2024 colloquium takes on an especially significant focus with its theme, Student Voice as a Contributor to Student Support and Success.

I am extremely impressed by this focus on student voice, as it aligns seamlessly with the deliberate intention of our 2023–2032 Strategic Plan, which places student experience as its second goal, intricately connected to the first goal of teaching and learning excellence. This commitment is a recognition of the importance of not only hearing our students but also supporting them holistically to achieve academic success, enjoy enriched campus experiences, and thrive beyond their university studies.

An important development is our institution's increasingly deliberate efforts to mainstream student success. To this end, we have established a Student Access and Success Forum, which reports to the University's Teaching and Learning Committee. This Forum will use data-driven analytical processes to monitor student success and to launch relevant initiatives that address identified challenges. Student voice forms an integral part of the Forum, with student leadership representing the voice of students. The Forum is chaired by the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Student Services, ensuring alignment between institutional strategy and student success initiatives. Our aim is to ensure that all our students receive the necessary institutional support to ensure success.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our keynote speakers, who are leading voices in this field, and to our students, academic staff, and support teams for their participation at this important colloquium. Your insights, experiences, and contributions are vital to shaping a stronger, more coherent, and evidence-based AMS programme at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Finally, let me congratulate the College of Humanities for hosting this important event and for their dedication to creating a space where student voices are heard. It is my hope that the papers presented at this colloquium and the discussions that follow will lead to even greater collaboration, innovation, and success in our shared mission of supporting our students. Thank you, and I wish you well in your deliberations.

Professor Thabo Msibi
Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning



Prof Ruth Hoskins
Dean of Teaching and
Learning
College of Humanities

The College of Humanities is proud to host the 11th Academic Monitoring and Support (AMS) Colloquium. The theme for the Colloquium, “*Student Voice as a Contributor to Student Support and Success*”, foregrounds UKZN’s commitment to place our students at the centre of their educational journey to success. Student voice relates to student agency, or giving students a say in their education and is thus important for empowering and engaging students. Students’ voices in higher education are included in various ways, ranging from feedback on learning experiences to involving students in curriculum design, and including student representation in decision-making processes. The UKZN Academic Monitoring and Support Policy (2023), recently revised, mandates the monitoring and support of students through various support interventions to enhance student success.

There are three conceptualisations of student voice in the design, implementation and review of student support programmes and interventions at the institutional level: as partners, as producers of new insights or knowledge and as change agents in higher education. These conceptualisations apply to the University of KwaZulu-Natal’s Academic Monitoring and Support (AMS) Programmes and interventions aimed at enhancing student success. Such interventions include the recently launched holistic First-Year Experience (FYE) Programme, Academic Advisors (ADOs), Supplemental Instructional (SI), Writing Places, Peer Mentorship (Wellness and FYE) and Student Counselling.

The international keynote speakers for the Colloquium, Prof Sid Nair and Prof John Gardner are international experts in student voice and the FYE, respectively. Both are seasoned academics with a wealth of knowledge in these areas, and their addresses highlight the importance of student voice and an FYE Programme in contributing to student support and success. The Pre-Colloquium Workshop conducted by Prof Nair provided practical insights on how to enhance student voice.

The papers presented at the Colloquium recognise students’ voices through their evaluations of educational experiences, including processes through which the institution listens to student voices to drive change and student satisfaction. For the first time, papers from other South African institutions will be presented at the Colloquium, enhancing student engagement research as measures of students’ experiences at a national level. A balance of presenters ranging from academics teaching the mainstream curriculum and senior peer mentors in AMS programmes at UKZN will share their research or reflection and practice on foregrounding student voice as contributing to support and success. Above all, the Colloquium will allow delegates to network in person and online on a Colloquium that promises a thought-provoking understanding of the value and importance of student voice in contributing to student support and success.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Professor Sid Nair

[Executive Dean/Academic Dean – Learning, Teaching & Student Experience/Dean Sydney Campus, Victorian Institute of Technology \(VIT\), Melbourne, Victoria, Australia](#)

Sid Nair is currently, Executive Dean and the Dean of Learning, Teaching & Student Experience at the Victorian Institute of Technology (VIT), Australia. In his role, he is responsible for the strategic direction, the learning, teaching, student experience, and quality matters of the Institution. Prior to this appointment, Sid was the Executive Director of the Tertiary Education Commission, which is the apex regulatory body in Mauritius. He was also Professor of Higher Education Development at the Centre for Education Futures (CEF), University of Western Australia, and Interim Director and Quality Advisor (Evaluations and Research) at the Centre for Higher Education Quality (CHEQ) at Monash University, Australia. His research work lies in the areas of quality of teaching and learning, classroom and school environments, and the implementation of improvements from stakeholder feedback. His current role is to build the capacity of academics in the digital delivery of their teaching.



Professor John N Gardner

[Founder and Executive Chair, John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education, Brevard, North Carolina, USA. Host of \[Office Hours with John Gardner\]\(#\)](#)

John Gardner is an educator, university professor, administrator, non-profit organization founder, author, public speaker, consultant, public intellectual and thought leader, change agent, student retention specialist, first-year, sophomore, transfer, and senior-year students' advocate, and initiator and scholar of multiple undergraduate education reform movements. He serves as Founder and Executive Chair of the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education. The Institute was founded by John and his wife, Betsy O. Barefoot, in October 1999.

IKUSASA LETHU

BIO: Founded in 2000 by the visionary Dr. Opondo, this ensemble has been a vibrant haven for African Music and Dance students yearning to explore the depths of their creative talents. 'Ikusasa Lethu' - a name that resonates with promise and potential. The meaning, 'Our Future,' encapsulates the spirit of the ensemble.

ACHIEVEMENTS: Embarking on a musical journey that spans the globe, Ikusasa Lethu has left an indelible mark with concerts and workshops in Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Canada, Peru, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Seychelles, Thailand, Uganda, and captivating audiences right at home in Durban, Pietermaritzburg, Grahamstown, and East London.

COLLOQUIUM WEBSITE



COLLOQUIUM PROGRAMME



COLLOQUIUM EVALUATION FORM



BOOK OF ABSTRACT AND PRESENTER BIOS



UNITE FLOOR PLAN



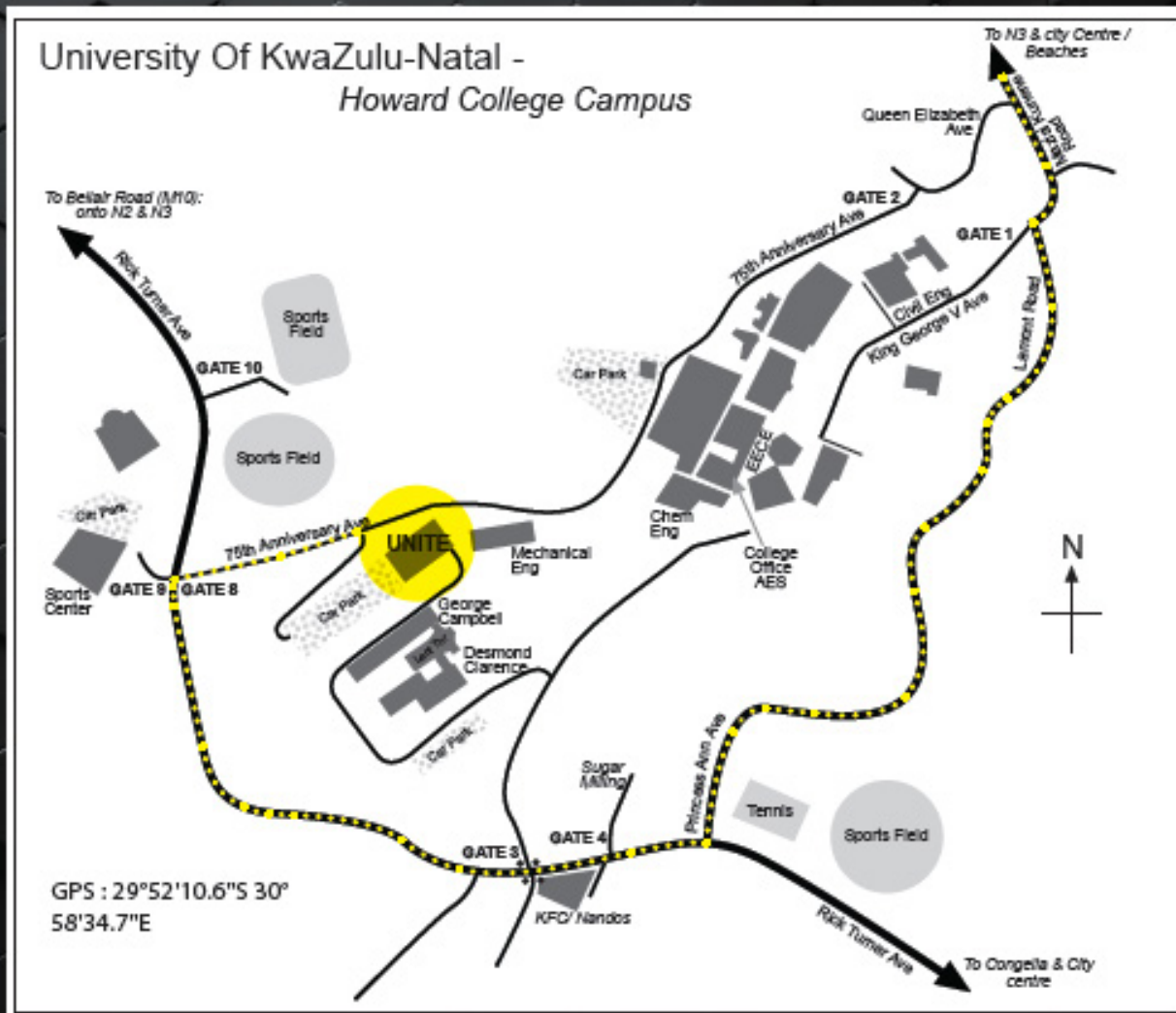
PROGRAMME

TIME	ITEM	SPEAKER	
08h00	Arrival Tea and Registration & Pre-Event Dance Performance –	Ikusasa Lethu Ensemble	
08h30	Programme Director	Prof Samukelisiwe Khumalo, College of Humanities	
08h40	Welcome	Dean of Teaching and Learning: Prof Ruth Hoskins	
08h50	Official Opening	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Humanities: Prof Nhlanhla Mkhize	
09h00	Message from University Teaching and Learning Office	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning: Prof Thabo Msibi	
09h10	African Music and Dance – (15 min)	Ikusasa Lethu Ensemble	
09h30-10h30	Keynote Address 1	Prof Sid Nair (Executive Dean/Academic Dean - Learning, Teaching & Student Experience/ Dean Sydney Campus, Victorian Institute of Technology (VIT), Melbourne, Victoria, Australia)	
10h30-10H45	Question and Answer Session		
10h45-11h05	TEA BREAK – DINING HALL		
11h05-12h05	Keynote Address 2 (VIDEO RECORDING) https://www.youtube.com/@UKZNSouthAfrica (Comments & questions to be posted on UKZN live feed)	Prof John Gardner (Founder and Executive Chair, John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education, Brevard, North Carolina, USA)	
CONCURRENT SESSIONS			
	Concurrent session 1: Student voice as producers of new insights and knowledge Venue: Plenary Hall Chair: Dr Ruwayda Petrus	Concurrent session 2: Student voice in the design, implementation and review of First-Year Experience and Transition Venue: Room 4 Chair: Prof Mandla Masuku	Concurrent session 3: Student voice in the design, implementation and review of Academic Advising Venue: Room 5 Chair: Dr Jacek Brzozowski
12h15-12h35	Student Voices as Producers of New Insight and Knowledge in the TransGariiep Inter-Institutional Student Leadership Programme Mgolombane, P. (University of Cape Town)	FYS Practitioners' Use of Student Voice as a Contributor to the Implementation of the FYS Programme at Nelson Mandela University Mokwana, L., Mdiya, Z., and Magele, Z. (Nelson Mandela University)	Leveraging Student Voice to Enhance Academic Advising and Foster Student Success at Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT) Ndlovu, S.L. (Mangosuthu University of Technology)

12h35-12h55	Medical Student Learning on a Distributed Training Platform in Rural District Hospitals Ross, A., Nkabinde, T.C., and Gaede, B. (University of KwaZulu-Natal)	Assessing the Influence of the FYE Programme on Academic Success: A Case Study of UKZN Augmented Science and Engineering Students Haricharan, D., Khumalo, M.R., Motsomane, N., and Ndlovu, H.S. (University of KwaZulu-Natal)	Foregrounding Student Voice in Evaluating Academic Advice for Postgraduate Students at the College of Humanities, University of KwaZulu-Natal Goto, K., Gumbi, T., and Khoza, S. (University of KwaZulu-Natal)
12h55-13h15	Students' Voices as a Foundational Tool for Developing Critical Social Justice and Citizenship D'amant, A., Fudu, H., Nkambule, S.J., and Sanjigadu, S. (University of KwaZulu-Natal)	Student Voice in the Transitioning of First-Year Students in the College of Humanities Bux, R., and Ngubane, P. (University of KwaZulu-Natal)	Incorporating Student Voice in Academic Advising in the Bachelor of Social Science Extended Curriculum in the College of Humanities, University of KwaZulu-Natal Khan, S., Mofokeng, N., and Mthembu, S. (University of KwaZulu-Natal)
13h15-14h15	LUNCH BREAK – DINING HALL		
	Concurrent session 4: Student voice as producers of new insights and knowledge Venue: Plenary Hall Chair: Prof Samukelisiwe Khumalo	Concurrent session 5: Student voice in the design, implementation and review of student support programmes Venue: Room 4 Chair: Prof Janet Muthuki	Concurrent session 6: Student voice in the design, implementation and review of Academic Advising Venue: Room 5 Chair: Dr Boitumelo Seepamore
14h15-14h35	Empowering Student Voices: Transgressive Pedagogies in Higher Education Muslim, C., Nwodo, C.S., and Ebrahim, A. (University of KwaZulu-Natal)	How the Use of Code-Switching Supports and Helps Students to Succeed in the Classroom: Student Perceptions of the Advantages of CS in UKZN Tutorials Melane, K. (University of KwaZulu-Natal)	Student Voice in Evaluating the Academic Development Officers Curriculum Advising Services in the College of Humanities, University of KwaZulu-Natal Sibanda, M.L., Vundla, N.H., Maphumulo, Z.B., Nene, N.N., and Zulu, N.M. (University of KwaZulu-Natal)

14h35-14h55	From Access to Success: Student Experiences of the Science and Engineering Augmented Programmes at a Higher Education Institution Gumbi, Z., Diko, N., Varghese, B., and Chetty, N. (University of KwaZulu-Natal)	Student Voice in the Evaluation of the Support Interventions in the Writing Place in the College of Humanities Ndlovu, A., and Dubazana, M. (University of KwaZulu-Natal)	First-year Student Voice and Feedback on the 2024 College of Humanities, University of KwaZulu-Natal Online Orientation and Academic Advising Programme Ndlovu, S. (University of KwaZulu-Natal)
15h00-15h30	AFTERNOON TEA BREAK AND NETWORKING – DINING HALL		
15h30	Lucky Draw Quiz and Evaluations Awards for Best Presentations	Dr. William Dansoh	
16h05	Vote of Thanks	Dr. Sharmla Rama	
16h15	Closing Remarks	Prof Ruth Hoskins	

DIRECTIONS TO UNITE BUILDING, HOWARD COLLEGE CAMPUS.



DIRECTIONS FROM KING SHAKA INTERNATIONAL

From the Airport (N2) take the Pavilion off-ramp (N3). Keep on the Spine Road exit. Travel all the way down Spine Road until you get to the Bellair and Spine Road Junction. Continue to drive straight across the intersection. The Road becomes Rick Turner Road. Proceed for about 1 km and turn (left) into GATE 8 thereafter 1st right turn into Science Drive.

DIRECTIONS FROM N3/PMB

From N3 Durban Central take the Tollgate off-ramp and turn left into Ridge Road. All the way down Ridge Road until you see the Main Univ entrance. The road veers left, keep left until you hit the stop street. (DO NOT GO INTO GATE 1).

At the stop street turn right. Steers and Nando's and KFC will be on your left. Go straight through the intersection, for approximately 1 km.

The next gate on your right will be gate 8. Turn right into Gate 8

Inform Security you are going to the UNITE Building. Pass the boom gate and 1st right turn into science drive. As you enter the parking you will see the "School of Engineering/Unite Building"

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning

Professor Thabo Msibi

Deputy Vice-Chancellor: College of Humanities

Professor Nhlanhla Mkhize

Conference Chair

Professor Ruth Hoskins

Keynote Speakers

Professor Sid Nair

Professor John Gardner

Master of Ceremony/ Programme Director

Professor Samukelisiwe Dorothy Khumalo

Session Chairs

Professor Samukelisiwe Dorothy Khumalo

Professor Janet Muthuki

Dr Boitumelo Seepamore

Dr Ruwayda Petrus

Prof Mandla Masuku

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All presenters and participants