



SACLA

SOUTHERN AFRICAN
COMPUTER LECTURERS' ASSOCIATION

2024 Gqeberha, South Africa: The 53rd Annual Conference

HOD meeting: SACLA 2024

**Date: 18 July,2024 @13:30, Courtyard Hotel, Port Elizabeth,
South Africa.**

1. Welcome: Dr Sue Petratos (SACLA 2024 conference co-chair)
 - 1.1. Welcomes all to the friendly city of GQ
2. Minutes of HOD meeting held at SACLA 2023:
 - 2.1. Read and approved.
3. Attendance register
 - 3.1. Find attendance register attached
4. Staff matters:
 - 4.1. Vacancies and recruitment of academics
This seems to be a problem through out all institutions as filling of positions become more and more challenging.
 - 4.2. Grow your own timber- How to make it work:
Growing your own timber has its perks, but it is also limiting, bias and promotes group thinking/ too much shared opinions. However, exposure outside of the institution for a while and welcoming back the individual after exploring the external environment helps open up a pool of different perspectives and introduces innovation and balance.
Growing your own timber is not a sustainable long-term plan, especially in terms of remuneration for different lecturing levels or scales, for senior and junior lecturers who've grown within the university.
The promotion process is also unfair and unfavorable to some who have grown within the institution. Growing your own timber limits the individual's recognition and growth, in comparison to exploring other institutions and different horizons.
There is also not much success with NGAP, it is a challenge to maintain the student's position which results in the likelihood of losing the students.

Possible Solutions:

Introduction of Scarce skills/ discipline allowance; applying this could maintain employment and give staff better remuneration options.

Move away from traditional post models in terms of payments/ remuneration and open room for financial flexibility on offers; allow opportunity for candidates to counteroffer within salary scales.

4.3. Making leadership positions attractive again

Succession planning in HOD/ DOS positions.

For the succession plan to work, one could look at the option of shifting the focus from recruiting only academics and opening up the opportunity for support staff who have experience and management background.

Explore a different approach with the position periods: for example, exploring possibilities of making these permanent posts instead of the current rotational recruitment. This may also help with stabilizing departments.

Rotational recruitment is not always a favorable approach as it may assume that every lecturer within the department/ institution is qualified at managerial positions.

Shared responsibilities are efficient, it promotes a better structured and clear succession plan.

Share responsibilities based on individual specialty/personality and interest.

It was suggested that HODs and DOS create some sort of position handbooks for upcoming candidates, for effective succession planning and handover.

4.4. Student numbers

Increasing numbers with no additional resources or infrastructure seems to be the norm.

Exploring justification and how far departments can go with different offers, e.g., distance offers – the modality of leadership may need to change depending on the student numbers

5. Research

5.1. Motivating staff- Publications and studies, sabbaticals

Following the entity model approached could be beneficial; Having one dedicated staff member to focus mainly on staff's research & publication plans, and also monitoring as well as motivating staff members doing their research. Making sure that the supervision workload is dispersed among the staff members to ensure the opportunities of promotion once the individual gets their PHD.

The departments can also motivate young writers to present even their work-in-progress papers. Have workshops for young lecturers to train and motivate them to apply themselves into publicizing and presenting at big conferences, as well as motivating papers that at least have ethics approvals.

Departments can also motivate writers by creating reward systems.

6. Finances and infrastructure:

6.1. Third Stream income ideas (seeing that DHET has cut subsidy by 20%)

Have programmes that are funded by institutions such as SETA and other corporates. These programmes help with resources. Along with this suggestion it was suggested that with such programmes departments should have a person who will be dedicated for the bursaries and student wellness; a way to motivate such partnerships to carry on in longer terms.

Offering short learning programmes to industry could also bring in a huge influx of income to the departments.

7. Academic and student matters

7.1. National student numbers decreased however the It classes are still overfull.

7.2. Blended learning: There seems to be a huge influx of students who are not passionate and aren't of the qualification caliber required for the courses they choose which impacts their performance. Perhaps that is due to lack of proper career counselling, which intuitions should carry out often.

Blended learning is working a bit against staff members, students have found innovative ways to cheat the assessment system. Therefore, lectures need to be more driven in their assessing approaches, as well as focus more on critical thinking rather than retention of information during both the delivery of lessons and assessments.

- 7.3. AI in the classroom: In order to address the AI issues encountered, lecturers should start testing students' base understanding, in order to curb plagiarism and the relying on AI systems for help. AI use must be encouraged and lecturers should adapt their teaching style to accommodate the use of AI without compromising the theoretical foundations required to solve complex problems.
- 7.4. Decreasing number of postgraduates- reasons and interventions:

One of the reasons for the decreasing number is the lack of funding.
Workload is a lot for the working students, so most do not have time for studies.
Another reason for the decrease in postgraduate students is the inability to register in institutions because of debt incurred during their undergrad.
South African institutions are competing with abroad PHD studies and opportunities and perhaps one should consider adapting the recruitment styles used. This means that a project or projects are identified, the PHD students apply and are selected and ultimately remunerated for their studies as well.
8. External examiners and moderators:
 - 8.1. External moderators and examiners Database:

This should be created and lecturers should be able to fill in their short career descriptions and career field which should be a list publicised on the central SACLA channel.
SACLA to have a platform for all members to be part of the SACLA database. Work with HODs to register and be part of the database platform to be created.
Consider a request to IITPSA or other funder to create such a system.
9. Accreditation SACAB:

Prof Calitz is driving the Accreditation Board for Bachelor degree programs under the banner of the IITPSA. While this was widely supported at SACLA it is not being driven by the industry and also not by the HEIs. This is an important step to ensure professionalism in our industry. Accreditation puts a huge "stamp of approval" on our qualifications and allows our students to be able to work anywhere in the world without the qualifications being questioned because they come from SA.

Prof Calitz has compiled a number of documents to support this initiative and appeals to universities to also help with the initiative and support it in order for it to move forwards and be an active initiative. Universities that want to go through the accreditation process must contact him for guidance. The ultimate goal is to make it a requirement to be accredited and also to drive the IITPSA to the point where it is as prestigious to be a member as other accreditation bodies for example in the engineering spaces.
10. Meeting Closed: It was recommended that an online meeting be held so that HODS can communicate around matters at least twice a year.

Dr Petratos closed the meeting at 16:45 wishing everybody a successful and enjoyable SACLA.

HOD meeting: SACLA 2024

Attendance Register

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>University</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Email</u>
Rudi Harmse	HOD	NMU	Software Engineering	Rudi@mandela.ac.za
Carolien van den Berg	HOD	UWC	IT Department	cvandenberg@uwc.ac.za
Malcolm Garbutt	Staff	UWC	IT Department	mgarbutt@uwc.ac.za
Japie Greeff	HOD	NWU	CSIS	Japie.greeff@nwu.ac.za
Noluxolo Gcaza	Staff	NMU	IT governance	noluxolog@mandela.ac.za
Andre Calitz	Staff	NMU	Computer Science	Andre.calitz@mandela.ac.za
Jean Greyling	HOD	NMU	Computer Science	Jean.greyling@mandela.ac.za
Roxanne Piderit	HOD/DD	UFH	Information System	rpiderit@ufh.ac.za
Tapiwa Gundu	HOD	NMU	IT governance	Tapiwag@mandela.ac.za
Eduan Koetze	HOD	UFS	Computer science& IT	koetzee@ufs.ac.za
Nomabhongo Masana	staff	CUT	IT department	nnomabhongo@cut.ac.za
Thembekile Mayayise	HOD	WITS	Information System	Thembekile.mayayise@wits.ac.za
Lynn Futcher	Staff	NMU	IT Governance	Lynn.futcher@mandela.ac.za
Annelise du Preez	HOD	NMU	Applied Technology	adupreez@mandela.ac.za
Sue Petratos	DOS	NMU	Applied Technology	Sue.petratos@mandela.ac.za
Bobbi Tait	HOD	UNISA	Computer Science	taitbl@unisa.ac.za

Apologies

Name	University	Substitute	Comments
Nobert Jere	UFS- CS		
Estelle Taylor	NWU		
Kevin Kativu	NMU		