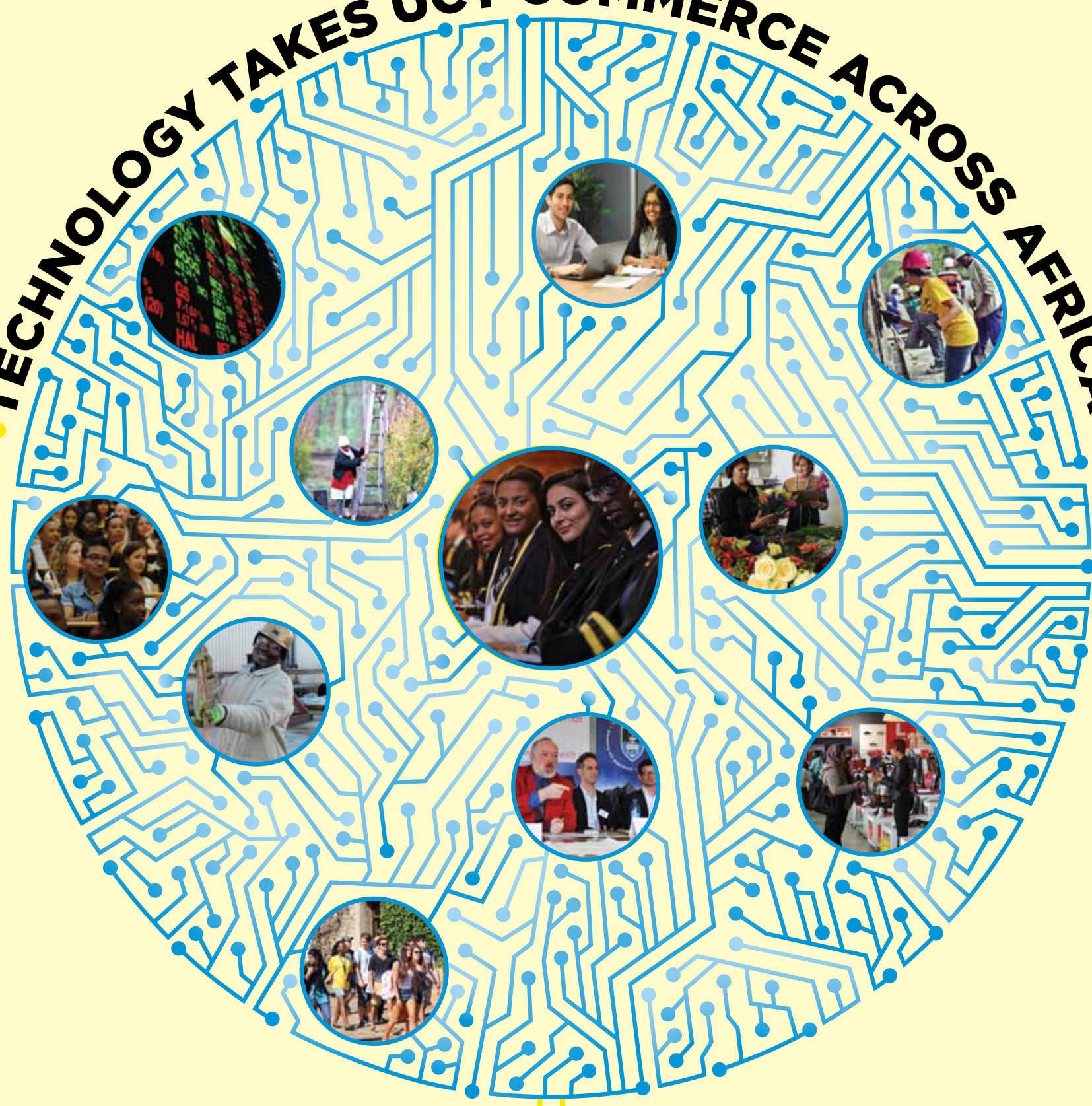


# FACULTY FOCUS

A MONDAY MONTHLY SUPPLEMENT

FACULTY OF COMMERCE

## TECHNOLOGY TAKES UCT COMMERCE ACROSS AFRICA



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# A WORD FROM THE DEAN

Professor Don Ross  
Dean of the Faculty of Commerce

This issue of *Monday Monthly* profiles the Faculty of Commerce at a moment when we're consolidating the outcomes of a few years of new strategic initiatives and restructuring. Four major units in the Faculty – the College of Accounting, the Department of Finance and Tax, the Graduate School of Development Policy and Practice (GSDPP), and the African Institute for Financial Markets and Risk Management (AIFMRM) – are less than three years old. Since 2010 the number of research units in the faculty has doubled. Finally, the faculty's most ambitious strategic thrust – the commercial joint venture with GetSmarter to market online postgraduate qualifications 'Across Africa' – has just launched, and is accepting its first cohorts of applicants.

All of this change has been driven by two complementary pressures. Firstly, the faculty needed to substantially increase its research output and postgraduate enrolments. The vision of 'wall-to-wall' research units, according to which the natural default for an academic's research (and a postgraduate student's thesis work) is to be integrated into wider projects conducted by research groups, equips faculty staff with the institutional basis for attracting large external grants. In this model, postgraduate students enjoy structured apprenticeship-style support from unit-based supervision committees that global experience shows to be instrumental in promoting thesis completion. Research units are better able to attract

and sustain postdoctoral fellows than are isolated academics. Finally, a diverse suite of research units facilitates international recognition of the faculty's research capabilities and areas of emphasis, and thereby enhances the building of global collaborations.

Since 2010, the faculty's postgraduate enrolments have risen by a third.

The second major pressure driving strategic change in the faculty has been the need to strengthen ties with the local and regional business community, particularly so as to be able to offer our postgraduate students access to research problems drawn from real problems encountered in the private sector, and to be able to provide them with opportunities for professional network-building during their studies. A few years ago we identified the strong public sector bias in the faculty's main research tradition as creating an unintended barrier to transformation; many of our best black undergraduate students were declining to consider postgraduate work because they sought careers in the private sector, and saw few opportunities to immerse themselves in that environment while working on research master's or doctoral degrees. In this context, the full funding of AIFMRM as a graduate school by a consortium of banks and insurance companies, whose representatives will closely oversee curricular development to ensure its continuing relevance, directly serves the faculty's efforts at transformation.

The fact that AIFMRM is fully externally funded symbolises another major change in the faculty's current circumstances. As the state subsidy steadily shrinks, it is imperative for the faculty to identify major and sustainable new sources of revenue. This is why Across Africa is the faculty's highest strategic priority. We are fortunate to have – on our very doorstep – GetSmarter, who have designed the most pedagogically sophisticated and student-supportive online course delivery platform in the world. Combining this with the Faculty of Commerce's academic expertise and reputation provides the basis for a product that competitors will chase, and that they will fail to catch – provided we never lose our commitment to continuous improvement. Across Africa operates as a commercial joint venture, governed according to corporate rather than bureaucratic management norms. It constitutes the first and most important of a suite of profit centres the faculty aims to establish going forward. As business academics, there is nothing we should find to be more fun and motivating than launching and growing businesses!

In this brief introduction, it is not possible to mention all of the diverse range of contributions to research, teaching and learning, and social development that characterise the faculty's activity set. As perusal of this special edition will show, commerce academics make leading contributions to



tracking and modelling the causes of poverty and inequality; to performing fully professional monitoring and evaluation for public- and private-sector projects; to training municipal, provincial and national public servants in implementing policies through the shoals of politics and unanticipated obstacles; to maintaining SAs proudly-won distinction as the global pace-setter in accounting standards and rigour; to diversifying and transforming the national profile of chartered accountants and actuaries; to generating information technology innovations for businesses and consumers operating in the special contexts of Africa; to ensuring that African statistics are accessible, reliable and useful; to understanding African demographics, especially as shaped by epidemiological influences; and to ensuring that the evolution of South African tax policy is

coherent with developments in the global environment.

It is endlessly fascinating to me to work, as a dean, amid such a wide-ranging and important cascade of learning. I hope that from the profiles in this edition of the *Monday Monthly*, the reader will gather some sense of that breadth and depth. If you are not yet a commerce student, consider becoming one. If you are a commerce alumnus who hasn't been in touch with your alma mater lately, I urge you to follow the faculty's social media presence, Commerce Families. Go to [www.commerce.uct.ac.za](http://www.commerce.uct.ac.za) and scroll to the bottom of the landing page – you'll see the Commerce Families portal in the bottom left corner. Once you are following the site, I suggest that you be not just a consumer, but also a producer: post and tweet your ideas and views.

# EXTENDING REACH ACROSS AFRICA

Story by Abigail Calata  
Photo by Raymond Botha

Across Africa is the Faculty of Commerce's strategic initiative, aligned with UCT's Afropolitan vision, to broaden access to higher education across the continent through a blend of online and face-to-face education models. The initiative is being launched in partnership with GetSmarter, an online education company, and hopes to enrol some 1 000 students in postgraduate programmes over the next five years.

Across Africa was born out of the question: is technology an enabler or an impediment to expanding access to education?

The answer, following a pilot project where two groups of UCT students were presented their normally residential courses in blended format, identified technology as an enabler, much to the delight of faculty members.

Jacques Rousseau, managing director of Across Africa, and his colleague Dale Williams volunteered their courses, evidence-based management (for first-years) and strategic thinking (for fourth-years), to serve as pilots for the blended mode, which combines online and traditional face-to-face learning.

The results were both gratifying, and to some extent surprising. "Student engagement was far in excess of anticipation, while course evaluations – and crucially, results – indicated that students were enjoying and also benefiting from this new mode of delivery," says Rousseau, adding how surprised they were that students from disadvantaged backgrounds sometimes performed better in the online delivery mode, thanks to being free to study when and how they wanted to, in a context in which lectures and course material could be engaged with as often as desired.

The successful pilots led to the launch of the first two of a planned suite of online postgraduate programmes under the umbrella of

Across Africa. "GetSmarter have developed a cutting-edge interactive virtual learning environment, which – when paired with UCT's content and quality assurance – holds the promise of the highest-quality online education," maintains Rousseau.

## Tackling youth unemployment

Professor Don Ross, dean of the Faculty of Commerce, believes that people with "very good degrees who can immediately add significant value to the economy" are the answer to youth unemployment in South Africa and Africa.

"All over the world, young people who don't have good educational qualifications, who thereby don't have significant value to add to the 21st century economy, are unemployed... There's the temptation to think that all you have to do is to create mass capacity at your most basic tertiary institutions – however rickety they might be – and just cram the students through. Some of that will probably have to be done, but that in itself is not a solution. We also have to ensure that we increase access at our best tertiary institutes," said Ross at the recent launch of the Postgraduate Diploma in Management in Marketing and the Advanced Diploma in Business Project Management. These courses are expected to start in February 2015.

The residential elements of the courses employ block teaching sessions for designated weeks, initially taking place at UCT only, and examination sites initially only in South Africa, but potentially also elsewhere on the continent should there be a demand. Online elements include pre-scripted lectures on videoclips and reading materials crafted by UCT staff and industry professionals, as well as interactive elements such as chat rooms and discussion forums.

Referring to Across Africa as the Commerce Faculty's highest strategic priority, Ross stressed that the courses are in no way MOOCs (massive open online courses), because Across Africa presents its offerings via a high-touch support model involving constant interaction with students, driven by deep engagement with analytics regarding any particular difficulties students might be having with elements of the curriculum. "Through our private-sector partner, GetSmarter, we believe this enterprise comes with the best-quality online delivery platform in the world. We're committed to keeping it the best in the world... and though our initial focus is South Africa, our goal is to serve the whole continent."

## People central to learning experience

It is estimated that over 6 million people worldwide are currently pursuing online qualifications. Sam

Paddock, co-CEO of GetSmarter, finds this "not surprising considering the range of benefits" promised by online learning. "The key benefit of flexibility is what drives the demand from a very specific sector of the population, namely working professionals. Online education promises that working professionals can fit considerable, comprehensive degree programmes into their very busy lives."

His brother, Rob, who runs GetSmarter with Paddock, points out that UCT and GetSmarter have been partners for the last seven years, offering short, non-credit-bearing online courses, mostly to working professionals. GetSmarter has attained a 94% completion rate on existing short courses. The Paddock brothers, both Faculty of Commerce alumni, are confident they can extend this to the postgraduate courses on offer.

Rob outlines what those registering for the newly launched and subsequent courses can expect. "Every course has a designated course instructor, who manages the programme from an academic perspective. They answer questions on the forum, manage project work, and guarantee quick turnaround times on any queries."

Each student is also assigned a personal course coach dedicated to ensuring success in the programme. "Finally, these courses are completed in conjunction with other students. This social learning aspect is critical to a really effective learning experience, which is

greatly augmented by students from vastly different backgrounds throughout Africa completing collaborative projects and peer-reviewing each other's assignments.

"We use technology to enhance the effort of our teachers, and not to replace them. We believe that people are at the centre of any learning experience, and that the best teaching takes place with support from and in collaboration with other people," Rob Paddock concludes.

## The way forward

In five years' time Across Africa hopes to have 1 000 students enrolled for its courses. "We hope to grow student numbers by two thirds of what our current first-year intake is, but without this growth impacting on (UCT's) physical space," says Rousseau. "We also plan to establish the brand as the online education provider in Africa, giving thousands of people access to education – and in this way, helping to address Africa's development challenges and skills shortages."

As yet, there is no commitment to presenting undergraduate courses in blended mode. For now, the Across Africa road map is focused on postgraduate courses; but according to Rousseau, there is nothing stopping them from considering how blended learning could be used in online bridging courses to facilitate greater access to undergraduate studies.

## COMMERCE BY NUMBERS

### INNOVATION

**R77.23-million**  
value of research contracts

**33** NRF-rated researchers

**13** accredited research groupings

### Did you know?

From 2006-2012, the Faculty of Commerce enjoyed the highest percentage increase in research output among UCT faculties, and most of this progress was made from 2010-2012. This is according to the Mouton Report, an evaluation of UCT's research profile over a 20-year period, released in 2013, and compiled by Professor Johann Mouton of the Centre for Research on Evaluation, Science and Technology.

### EDUCATION

**1** commerce faculty in South Africa with an A-rated Dean

**2** undergraduate degrees (BCom and BBusSc)

**2** online diplomas

**6943** students enrolled in the Faculty of Commerce

**4585** undergraduates

**2358** postgraduates

**761** postgraduate diploma students

**390** master's students

**355** honours students

**208** PhD students

### TRANSFORMATION

**8** black women actuaries in South Africa, **6** are from UCT's Faculty of Commerce

**1145** students enrolled with the Education Development Unit this year

**64** students sponsored by SAADP\*

**95%** UCT pass rate for SAICA\*\* Board Exam (national average **81%**)

**92%** UCT pass rate for SAICA\*\* Board Exam for African students (national average **77%**)

\* South African Actuaries Development Programme  
\*\* South African Institute of Chartered Accountants





Mobile apps developed by UCT's Samsung Mobile Innovation Lab are helping people learn new languages and empowering students to make more informed sexual choices.

## TECHNOLOGY BRIDGING DIVIDES

Story by Abigail Calata

Photo by Michael Hammond

Advances in technology have significantly shaped how we connect and share information. They have also enabled new ways of bridging old divides – of geography, culture, language and experience. The Faculty of Commerce is harnessing new technologies, not only to reach out to potential students across Africa, but also to reach across gaps experienced by students who currently form part of the UCT community.

### Accounting gets YouTube treatment

Complex accounting concepts don't get lost in translation, thanks to a collaborative project with Wits and Walter Sisulu universities.

UCT's College of Accounting is using online video clips to explain difficult concepts not only in English, but also in Xhosa and Zulu.

The clips are an attempt to facilitate not only a thorough understanding of a concept, but also to assist students in their understanding of the concept in English – the language of business and assessment.

This project is headed by Jacqui Kew, a senior lecturer in accounting, and funded by FASSET, the Finance and Accounting Services Sector Education and Training Authority. UCT's university partners are Walter Sisulu and Wits universities, whose staff are responsible for the Xhosa and Zulu translation and presentation. Video clips are intended not only for UCT students; they will be hosted on a website accessible to students and lecturers throughout South Africa.

Each clip contains a scripted lecture combined with an explanatory graphic. Staff from the College of Accounting identified the problematic concepts, scripted the

English lectures, and devised the graphic. GetSmarter, the private-sector partner, was responsible for filming and designing the graphics for each video, helping to make the concepts come alive.

Kew asserts that through initiatives like these, as well as Across Africa, the faculty "hopes to reach a far greater number of students than we are able to at UCT itself. The college acknowledges there are going to be changes in how we approach young people. If we want to access more people, and access them in a way that is relevant to the younger generation, we're going to have to make use of technology."

### Success a mere click away

Class participation is not high on students' to-do lists – especially first-years, who could find themselves in class with up to 400 other students.

Tim Low, a senior lecturer in the Faculty of Commerce's Education Development Unit, ensures he gets feedback from his students by employing 'clickers' that electronically and anonymously convey students' answers to class questions, thereby promoting class participation.

Low, recipient of a Distinguished Teacher Award in 2011, teaches mathematics and statistics, and

has been using this innovative teaching tool for the past four years. With it, he is able to identify almost instantly where students' understanding of a concept or process is lacking.

"Instead of talking down to students in the class, the constant interaction creates an environment of 'we're in it together,'" says Low, whose biggest classes have up to 250 students. For the most part, the 'clickers' are used for revisions, where they not only provide an understanding of students' knowledge, but also teach time management, especially where multiple-choice questions are involved, explains Low.

### Mobile app to promote safe sex

A need for information about contraception has given rise to the development of a mobile application to help students practise safe sex.

The UCT Safe Sex App was developed at the UCT Samsung Mobile Innovation Laboratory, in conjunction with students and mentors from Baxter Residence.

Associate Professor Sinegugu Duma, Baxter's warden, found in her interaction with Baxter mentors (senior students giving guidance to their younger counterparts) that the question that kept coming up had

to do with acquiring the morning-after pill. "This was surprising, as I was asking them about perceptions of safety and sexual violence for my research," she said.

After a series of workshops related to sex education, it was decided to approach the UCT Samsung Mobile Innovation Laboratory to develop a platform where such sensitive information could be accessed by students in a more private setting.

"All credit for this initiative must go to the students. They took the material made available through HAICU (UCT's HIV/AIDS, Inclusivity and Change Unit) and the Triangle Project [a Mowbray-based non-profit offering professional services to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals, their partners and their families] and simplified the English. They took the pictures that demonstrate the correct use of male and female condoms using models provided by HAICU, which on the app are combined with written instructions," explains Duma.

Towards the end of August 2014, the app – launched in May – had been downloaded to almost 5 000 phones. The next step is voice instruction, to go with the pictures. Duma reports that the Baxter house committee is also talking about creating awareness of the app at high schools.

### Free apps make SA languages easier to learn

Learning an African language is now as easy as switching on your mobile device, with the help of a suite of applications developed at the UCT Samsung Mobile Innovation Laboratory.

The idea for the Learn an African Language Apps (LALA) came to Professor Jean-Paul van Belle while he was attending Dr Tessa Dowling's lecture at the UCT 2014 Summer School, on learning Xhosa in 45 minutes. "I was thinking up projects for our Samsung Mobile Innovation Lab, and thought a simple app would be a perfect way to get people to talk to each other," says Van Belle, of the Department of Information Systems.

Dowling is a senior lecturer in African Languages, and her course material – which includes sound clips of common phrases in Nguni and Sotho languages – was used in the development of the apps.

Despite an extremely busy academic schedule, Van Belle wrote the application software over the course of three weekends. "It was really fun coding. It was great to be in the flow of programming. As an academic, I don't get this opportunity much anymore," he adds.

## JOIN THE DOTS

Story by Helen Swingler

When Adrian Frith, database manager for the National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS) in the Southern Africa Labour Development Research Unit, began making dot maps, he had little idea how much interest they'd elicit from the public and the media.

Dot density or dot distribution maps rely on a visual scattering of dots to show spatial patterns. Mostly, Frith's maps have used demographic data (like language, race or income) from the 2011 census to show trends and movements in an innovative way. It's easy for non-experts to understand – and the dots tell some interesting stories.

One surprise from Frith's dot map for language distribution, for example, is the "incredible" diversity and jumble of languages in urban areas such as Alexandra in Gauteng.

While not new (for example, John Snow used a dot map to show clusters of cholera cases in the 1854 London epidemic), dot maps are being used innovatively by people such as policymakers, sociologists and urban designers to pick out nuances and shifts that may not have been discernible before.

It's an interest that stems from Frith's student days. Inspired by Bill Rankin's 2009 dot-distribution map of Chicago, Frith says he was spurred to create the same kind of map for South African cities.

Rankin's Chicago Boundaries challenged ideas of homogeneity in ethnicity, class, language and income, showing where and how lines had become blurred in the city, and the kinds of urban transitions that had taken place.

Dot maps have been described as "radical cartography". In some contexts, Frith agrees.

"In the specific context of ethnicity in America, dot-distribution maps can be described as 'radical' because

they reveal the extent of segregation in American cities to a viewing population that was perhaps unaware of just how stark that segregation is. The South African context may be different, because South Africans are perhaps more aware of just how heavily our cities are segregated."

On a technical level, Frith continues, dot maps can be seen as 'radical' because the modern use of geographical information systems (GIS) software had driven most mapping towards the basic choropleth map.

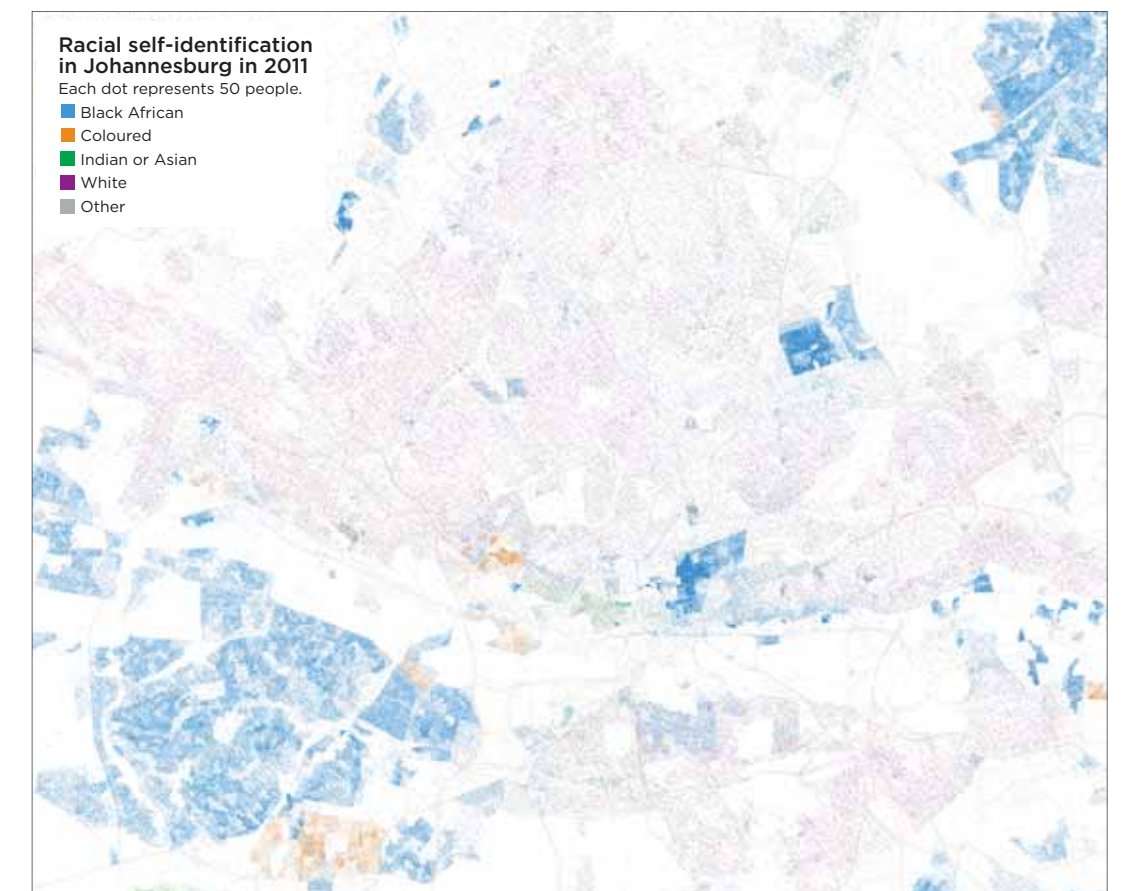
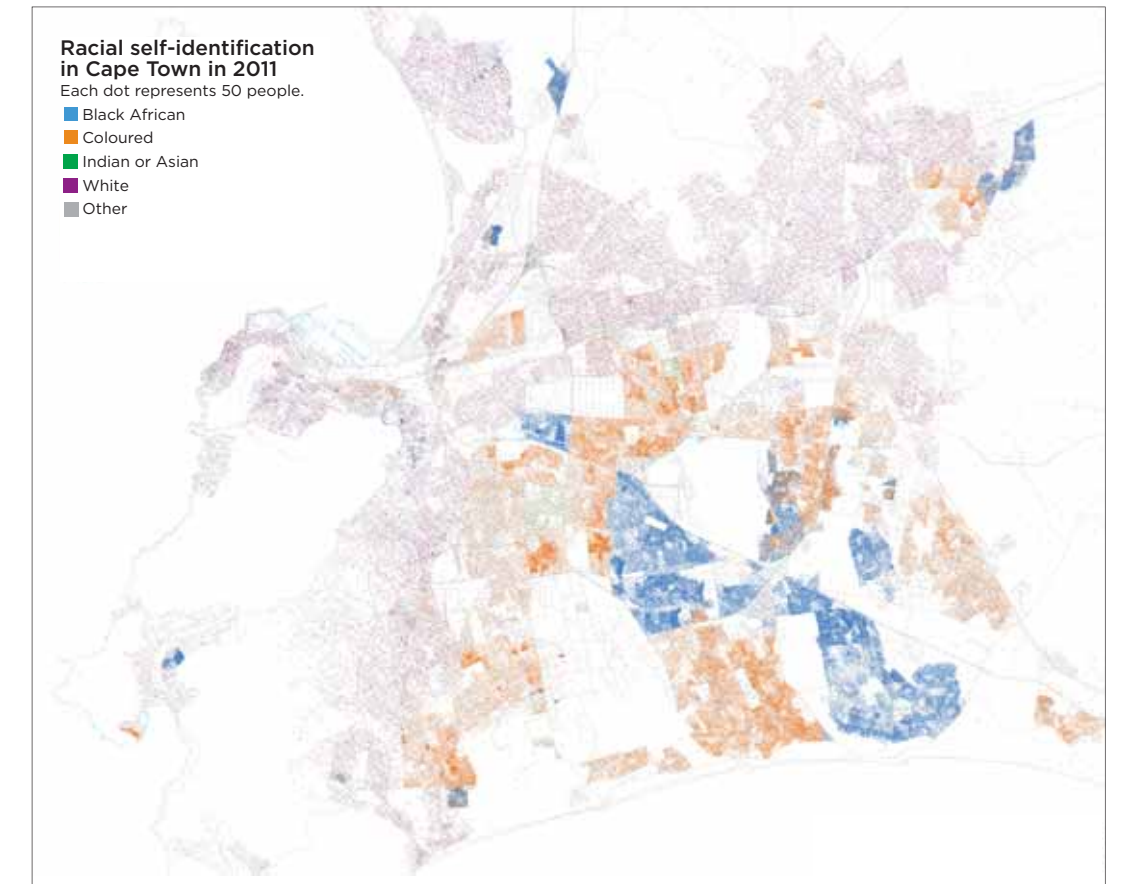
These are thematic maps where statistical variability – for example, in population density or household income in a region – is shown in shaded or patterned areas. This is easy to produce with a GIS. Dot-distribution maps are more difficult to produce, but also much more revealing for some types of data.

Other dot maps include one showing electrification throughout the country, and another showing party gains and losses in the last elections.

Who else might find these dot maps useful?

"Well, anyone who wants to get a feel for the demographic characteristics of an area might like them. For analysis, researchers would need to turn to the original census data to get the actual numbers."

All maps available at [www.adrianfrith.com/projects](http://www.adrianfrith.com/projects)



## UNIQUE INSIGHTS INTO SOUTH AFRICA'S INCOME DYNAMICS

The National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS), implemented at UCT and funded by the Presidency, collects data on the same 28 000 South Africans wherever they move in the country. Individuals are visited and information on their income, education, family, health and wellbeing is collected. NIDS has been doing this in 'waves' of every two years since 2008, and by also interviewing all the people living with the target sample, contacts over 40 000 people at a time.

"NIDS exists to tell a unique story about who is getting ahead in South Africa and who isn't," says Mike Brown,

the director of operations. "And not just who, but also why; by following the lives of individuals and their families, it offers a unique insight into what makes positive and negative impacts on the lives of South Africans. It is there as a robust tool to inform economic research and the policy-influencers and -makers who shape the lives of South Africans."

In addition to reaching the academic community, NIDS has an outreach programme to government departments and other learning institutions, helping inform policy and further research.

By recording the story of individuals over time, NIDS has shown, for example, how dynamic poverty is. Whereas the data shows a slight aggregate fall in the poverty rate, NIDS shows that nearly half of the people below the poverty line in 2008 were above it in 2010 and/or 2012. At the other end of the scale, one in three of those above the poverty line in 2008 fell below it in 2010 and/or 2012.

"It is only with longitudinal data that one can observe the extent of the fluctuations in people's incomes," says Brown.

# APPLYING BUSINESS SKILLS TO SOCIETY'S ILLS

Stories by Helen Swingler  
Photo by Je'nine May

Much of the commerce faculty's research and work has society at its heart; whether in transforming a professional sector; helping a country understand the connection between entrepreneurship and employment; or supporting early childhood development initiatives. How are commercial and business skills being applied to address some of society's persistent problems?



Former economics student Salma Kagee was one of the Faculty of Commerce's volunteers helping to extend the Philippi Children's Centre in 2013 as part of the Starting Chance Campaign.

## EARLY START IS A HEAD START

It's a bold vision – 30 centres of excellence for early childhood development in five years: a proposal to herald a lasting change in education, starting with the province's preschoolers.

Enabling and supporting this vision became the goal of the Faculty of Commerce's Transformation Committee in 2012 when they adopted the Southern Africa Sustainable Development Initiative's (SASDI) Starting Chance Campaign as their social responsiveness focus for the next five years.

It's well-known that the first 1 000 days of a child's life are paramount to their physical, mental and emotional development. In the Western Cape, however, 78% of the children under the age of four don't have access to pre-school education. The province has 1 025 registered preschools that provide for 80 000 children and over 2 000 unregistered preschools catering for 30 000 children. In all, some 390 000 children don't have access to vital preschooling. This is where the SASDI Starting Chance Campaign aims to make a difference.

"Children need cognitive stimulation from a very young age if they are to become university graduates with good employment prospects," says Stuart Hendry, director of the faculty's Development Unit for New Enterprise (DUNE) and course convener and lecturer on the Genesis Project. He is also the main fundraiser for the Starting Chance Campaign and a SASDI board member.

SASDI's integrated approach, developing physical infrastructure while at the same time upskilling and empowering teachers and principals who will operate the centres, will enable registration under the new regulatory requirements.

Two revenue streams – government support grants as well as fees from parents (the average fee per child per month in a township early childhood development centre is R150) – will not only radically improve the quality

of early childhood education, but also make it possible for centres to run as sustainable, community-based social enterprises.

In 2010 and 2011, the Faculty of Commerce collaborated with the SASDI Foundation, the City of Cape Town, and local and international donors to deliver the Mfuleni Centre for Early Childhood Development. In 2012, volunteers from the faculty helped to build a similar centre in Philippi.

In 2013 and 2014, the faculty's information technology unit was instrumental in delivering a world-class computer training centre in Mfuleni. This year the team at DUNE worked with the SASDI Foundation to unlock a pledge for R8.5million from Tower Property Fund. This will be used to build an early childhood development hub plus four ECD 'Shack to Chic' upgrades in New Crossroads.

Reflecting the SASDI model, each hub becomes a node in a network of ECD community excellence and by doing so can support up to four satellite centres, which are normally shack-based, says Hendry.

"What we have begun to see is that after a decent upgrade and some intensive training and development, even the shack-based centres become support nodes in their ECD networks – this has a powerful multiplier effect, with positive consequences for potentially thousands of early learners."

To enhance the greater initiative and with a view to influencing better ECD policy development at both local and provincial levels of government, UCT is also developing an innovative, longitudinal research study that will be the first of its kind in South Africa and will aim to understand how better policy initiatives can drive 'pro-education' values among the parents of young learners in low-income communities.

“What we have begun to see is that after a decent upgrade and some intensive training and development, even the shack-based centres become support nodes in their ECD networks – this has a powerful multiplier effect, with positive consequences for potentially thousands of early learners.”

Stuart Hendry

# YOUNG AND UNEMPLOYED

Why do South Africa's youth lag in entrepreneurial intention, despite SMMEs contributing more than 35% of the country's GDP and just over 50% of employment opportunities? And what can be done about it?

Part of the answer lies in low-quality education (for example, only 35% of the 2002 school intake made it to matric) and a lack of knowledge about the support government offers young (15 to 34) entrepreneurs, says the College of Accounting's Jacqui Kew.

As for what can be done, strategy, policy and planning is hampered by lack of data on what young people think and believe about entrepreneurship, she adds.

Kew and her colleague Dr Mike Herrington, executive director of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM), are the UCT team that is leading a pan-African study on unemployed youth and entrepreneurship, under the auspices of the commerce faculty's Development Unit for New Enterprise (DUNE).

The pan-African study, with nine participating countries – Angola, Botswana, Ghana, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Uganda, South Africa and Zambia – will provide the first consolidated youth study on entrepreneurship in sub-Saharan Africa, serving as a regional baseline report: a starting point to understanding young people's view of entrepreneurship. Given the growing levels of unemployment worldwide, the report will provide a vital window on youth and entrepreneurship in Africa.

UNICEF's *Generation 2030/Africa* report indicates that the continent is sitting on a population time bomb. The report says that Africa, the world's second-most populous continent, with over one billion inhabitants, is experiencing a demographic shift "unprecedented in its scale and swiftness".

In the next 35 years, 1.8 billion babies will be born in Africa; the continent's population will double in size; and its under-18 population will increase by two-thirds to reach almost one billion. And if current trends are indicative, by the end of the century, Africa will have almost quadrupled its population to over four billion, and will be home to almost 40% of humanity.

The majority of sub-Saharan African countries already have a significant youth bulge, where a growing proportion of their population is under the age of 34, says Kew. Currently, between 60% to 65% of South Africa's youth are unemployed (using the broad definition of unemployment or under-employed, ie working part-time or intermittently).

And it's not that there are no opportunities.

"A lot of exciting things are happening entrepreneurially; in the Western Cape, for instance, the film and biotechnology industries are growth points. There are enormous opportunities for young people."

She adds, "Hopefully this study will give us an idea of where the country is doing well; some of the preliminary information shows that, in comparison to other countries in the study, we have more high-growth businesses; young business owners who believe that in the next five years they will employ 20 or more people. So we tend to have a larger number of our entrepreneurs that are high-growth entrepreneurs. These businesses are key to reducing unemployment levels."

"Conversely, we have a high percentage of young people with no entrepreneurial leanings at all, who don't believe they have

the skills or knowledge to start businesses; neither do they see good business opportunities. This is higher than most of the other countries in the study."

When measured against other African countries, South Africa has a lower level of youth businesses or potential entrepreneurs.

"What is driving South Africa's youth entrepreneurial patterns, and issues such as gender, urban versus rural living areas, and access to technology, as well as macroeconomic issues, will form key components of the regional report, intended for release at the end of the year," says Kew.

Importantly, the nature and scope of this pan-African study will foster regional research capacity and greater links between the participating countries, she says.



In addition to her role in transforming actuarial science and heading the department, Shivani Ramjee (right) has a rigorous research schedule. She recently won a 'best in category' prize at the 2014 International Congress of Actuaries (ICA) in Washington for a paper co-written with research assistant Matan Abrahams (left) on healthcare costs in the final year of life.

In the actuarial sciences, an amalgam of advanced mathematics and statistics, UCT's Shivani Ramjee is rare as hen's teeth. In 2009 she became the first woman and the first black professional to head up actuarial science in the commerce faculty's School of Management Studies.

As with many developing countries, South Africa has too few qualified actuaries (mirroring a worldwide shortage). Fewer than 1 000 are registered here. Much of the progress in guiding black and woman actuaries through to qualification, via a rigorous and highly competitive degree, rests on a coherent – if not resolute – transformation programme with mentorship at its core.

Transformation was top of Ramjee's to-do list when she became section head and will remain a priority for her successor.

"We have a clear strategy to guide our role in meeting transformation objectives," says Ramjee. "Our

approach is integrated: we look at the students' financial, academic and psycho-social needs as well as the need for diversity in our academic staff."

They work closely with the South African Actuarial Development Programme (SAADP) where Ramjee is a board member and UCT is the institution of choice for SAADP scholarship holders. In 2012 ten of the 12 first-year scholarship holders chose to study at UCT.

"It's a highly successful scholarship programme that's produced more than 130 black actuarial graduates and 13 black qualified actuaries," adds Ramjee.

She and Billy Enderstein, who heads up a SAADP office in UCT's actuarial science department, are driving these initiatives. They have both been singled out for their personal contribution to transformation.

On 4 September, UCT's actuarial science hosted their inaugural transformation conference together

with the Association of South African Black Actuarial Professionals (ASABA). This follows on from the 2013 ASABA University Award received by UCT for its role in accelerating professional transformation.

ASABA's mentorship programme is also playing a transformative role, pairing actuarial students with mentors in the marketplace. This kind of mentorship – which incorporates career awareness and networking – gives previously disadvantaged students better understanding and insight into the workplace.

Contributing toward transformation is the Faculty of Commerce's nationally respected Education Development Unit, which has offered a spread of student support to actuarial science students since 2010.

Intake has multiplied from fewer than 10 students in 2010 to over 90 in 2014, close to one-third of the overall actuarial science first-year intake. But, as a notoriously well-paid profession, there's not a lot

## RESOLUTE TRANSFORMATION

With a corps that is 82% white and almost 78% male, the actuarial profession in South Africa faces formidable transformation challenges. UCT's Shivani Ramjee, with the support of professional associations and mentorships, is working to change this.

to attract many to frugal academia, where preparation starts for the supply chain.

The team at UCT is "extensively involved" in the Actuarial Society of South Africa, with board and council representation. They've also played an important role in the localisation of actuarial education. Before 2010, local actuaries obtained their qualification through the UK professional body. Since then the local profession has been able to offer its own qualification.

There is also a research path to qualification, offering students the choice of submitting a dissertation in the final stage of their professional qualification.

"This has great potential for building research and attracting people back to academia," says Ramjee.

"It also means we can teach students content that it relevant to practising in South Africa."

Awareness of the local context is invaluable in developing solutions for the poor. As an example, a UK-trained actuary has very little exposure to social security, social-solidarity principles or micro-insurance."

They also participate in a sweep of teaching and learning initiatives that tap into student diversity and grow graduate competencies relevant to South Africa. Tutors and guest lecturers are appointed with an eye on diversity.

She's upbeat about ASABA's contribution to this process. The association didn't exist when Ramjee was a student at UCT.

"I wish it had!" she jokes. "They play a critically important role in driving transformation in the actuarial profession – and providing a voice for black actuaries in a notoriously competitive field. We can't underestimate the powerful effect of role models and 'safe' spaces provided by ASABA."

Proud Faculty of Commerce graduates, after being capped and hooded during the June 2014 ceremony.

## TAPPING INTO SOUTH AFRICA'S HUMAN POTENTIAL

Story by Ambre Nicolson  
Photos by Je'nine May

Considered an economic hub of Africa, South Africa is a country of many contrasts and home to a diversity of talent. How is the Faculty of Commerce tapping into this human potential to build capacity and develop leadership skills in the Western Cape and further afield?

When it comes to building capacity locally and continentally, the Faculty of Commerce's aim is clear: to help equip people at all levels of society and across all economic sectors to be responsible leaders and active citizens. How the faculty is going about this, however, is as diverse as the departments, projects and people who call it home.

### Investing in future experts

In 2012 Professor David Taylor met with some of the biggest players in South Africa's financial services sector. He asked them a question: would they support the establishment of a world-class academic institute that would provide in-depth industry research and a steady stream of graduates to help deepen expertise and transform the fields of quantitative finance, risk management, insurance and banking? The answer was a resounding yes, with FirstRand, Barclays Africa Group and Liberty all putting their money where their mouths were to the collective tune of R30-million.

On 29 January 2014, UCT launched the result: the African Institute of Financial Markets and Risk Management (AIFMRM). Speaking at the launch, Dean of Commerce Professor Don Ross called AIFMRM a first in Africa.

"No similar academic institute, aimed at creating a sustainable pipeline of African university graduates with sophisticated knowledge in banking, insurance, risk management and quantitative finance, exists on the continent."

Taylor, who previously led Wits' programme for Advanced Mathematics in Finance, is the director of both AIFMRM and its research arm, known as ACOuFR (African Collaboration for Quantitative Finance and Risk Research). According to Taylor, the institute will be focusing on three key areas: research, teaching and expanded industry interaction. "With the establishment of our postgraduate qualifications we will be turning out 40 highly trained experts in financial risk management each year, and we will be doing so with a specific transformative agenda. Too often students leave the field after their four-year undergraduate studies due to a poor understanding of what a career in risk management really means. We want that to change."

Given the institute's express aim of transforming the demographic profile of these industries, the Western Cape government has also lent its support to the initiative. "Currently, finance and business services contribute 32.4% to the province's gross domestic

product," says former Department of Economic Development and Tourism Minister Alan Winde. "This institute will play a key role in growing the Western Cape's pool of black professionals in the finance and business industry."

### Tackling Africa's key challenges, together

When Dr Marianne Camerer accepted the position of programme director of Building Bridges, a new, policy-focused research and outreach initiative of the Graduate School of Development Policy and Practice (GSDPP), one of the things she was most excited about was its focus on developing leadership skills. As an independent governance expert, co-founder of the international anti-corruption NGO Global Integrity, former applied ethics lecturer and Yale World Fellow, Camerer sees the relationship between an ethical commitment to public service and the development of strategic leadership skills as key. Promoting strategic leadership for Africa's public sector is the focus of the GSDPP through its various programmes.

"In many cases, Building Bridges will be working with high-level decision-makers, but we will also be providing a learning space for young leaders from several African countries to critically engage with the most important issues facing the continent," explains

Camerer, "one of these being regional integration."

Building Bridges aims to "bring together influential Africans to deepen understanding around key challenges plaguing the continent and seek solutions to these issues, which often evoke competing narratives and widespread disagreement on their causes and impact." Or, as Camerer puts it: "We are hoping to create a safe space where changemakers from around the continent can collaborate on finding innovative solutions."

With African economic integration the focus of the 2014 to 2015 Building Bridges programme, a series of events will be structured around this theme. These include an expert symposium in November 2014 for leading African thinkers on the political economy of integration, a high-level meeting of political stakeholders, a young leaders programme, and knowledge-sharing events for politicians, policymakers, parliamentarians, business leaders and members of the media.

### Supporting social innovation

It is perhaps not surprising that when Dr Francois Bonnici describes the work that the Bertha Centre is doing around leadership development, he starts out with a question. After all, as an academic centre dedicated to research, teaching, dialogue and

support of social innovations, the Bertha Centre's mandate includes the injunction to "change and challenge rules, policies, technologies, structures, beliefs and institutions."

"What is leadership?" asks Bonnici. "Is it the top-down approach traditionally favoured; or, as we believe, is it something that should also come from the bottom up, and from the inside out?" As an example, Bonnici points to the work that the Bertha Centre, based at the Graduate School of Business (GSB), is doing in healthcare. "One of the ways that we are building capacity is by looking beyond technology or new drugs to empowering and supporting the people on the frontline of healthcare, like nurses and hospital cleaners. These are people who are often on the margins but who have an essential role to play in helping solve the massive challenges facing our healthcare system."

The Inclusive Healthcare Innovation initiative (IHI), as a joint venture between the Faculty of Health Sciences and the Bertha Centre, is also inherently interdisciplinary. Along with a summit held in January of this year, which brought together local and international experts drawn from all aspects of healthcare, IHI also provides a platform for research and thought leadership related to healthcare innovation, action-learning, workshops, internships and a fellowship.

### Developing entrepreneurship

"Do you know," asks Dr Mike Herrington, "that in sub-Saharan Africa, 50-65% of youth are unemployed?" In the case of Nigeria, with a population of 180 million, and assuming that half the population are youth, then this amounts to more jobless people than the entire population of South Africa. As co-author of the GEM (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor) report for South Africa and founder of the UCT Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Herrington is well placed to explain the implications of such a fact. "Studies such as GEM in South Africa allow us to get an accurate picture of early-stage entrepreneurial development in this country, and allow us to compare the results to other countries around the continent. This information is invaluable in terms of planning for governments, business and the NGO sector."

Entrepreneurship is also at the heart of DUNE (UCT's Development

Unit for New Enterprise). The unit, headed up by Stuart Hendry, is developing a master's in technology-based entrepreneurship in collaboration with donor MerSETA (Manufacturing Engineering and Related Services SETA). Hendry is currently organising an international colloquium on technology-based entrepreneurship (to take place during mid-October), which will see six of the world's top professors of entrepreneurship (all of them successful entrepreneurs in their own right) travel to Cape Town to work with local experts to help develop the master's curriculum.

Entrepreneurship is a theme which runs across departments and disciplines. In the case of tourism, head of the Tourism Research Unit (TRU) and senior lecturer Richard George also points to the need for tourism students to be well versed in entrepreneurial skills. "In a sector such as tourism, which is dominated by small and medium enterprises, it is essential that students are taught about enterprise development," he says. "The TRU undertakes industry-

specific research so that we can better understand what capacity-building requirements exist in the industry."

### Staying connected

While specialised research units, institutes and academies are essential to its ability to remain innovative, the Faculty of Commerce is also committed to building capacity on the broader scale of its undergraduate studies.

According to Head of Actuarial Science Dave Strugnell, maintaining close relationships with professional bodies is essential if students are to graduate with skills that are relevant to their particular field. "In the case of professional disciplines such as actuarial science, it's essential: ASSA (Actuarial Society of South Africa) determines the educational requirements of actuaries, which inform our curriculum, and the overwhelming majority of our graduates will become members of ASSA, to whose code of conduct they will subscribe in their practice."

Goolam Modack, deputy head of the College of Accounting, agrees. "Our vision is to be a centre of excellence in professional accounting education. This is closely connected to building and maintaining relationships with professional associations that include a wide range of local and international accounting bodies such as SAICA [the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants], SAIPA [South African Institute of Professional Accountants] and others.

"Our liaison with the profession is necessary to ensure that our graduates have the necessary skills to meet the changing demands of both the public and private spheres. An example of this is our introduction of a Postgraduate Diploma in Public Sector Accounting in 2015, aimed at helping to address the accounting skills shortage in the public sector."

Strong professional ties also encourage collaboration through public-private partnerships, as is the case with the Enterprise Systems Education for Africa

(ESEFA) project, which aims to develop an enterprise systems education platform, curriculum and community for sub-Saharan Africa. Launched in September 2013, this is a partnership between the Department of Information Systems, the Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg in Germany, and leading software firm SAP (Systems Applications Products) with its SAP University Alliances programme.

In July the first ESEFA train-the-lecturer workshop took place at UCT, with lecturers from universities in South Africa, Tanzania, Kenya and Zambia attending. Karin Reissenauer, ESEFA project manager in the Department of Information Systems, says, "Being a part of the ESEFA initiative is incredibly rewarding, as there is such enthusiasm from the academics and the students to participate in this programme. As Nelson Mandela so aptly said, 'Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world.'"



## COMMERCE EDU 'LIKE FAMILY'

Story by Abigail Calata

Credited with being one of the country's most successful academic development programmes, the Faculty of Commerce's Education Development Unit is a space where students form bonds akin to those found among families and are given the freedom to develop their own culture.

"The EDU (Education Development Unit) programmes go beyond academic support, providing students with a space where their identity is acknowledged and they can authentically be themselves," says Daniel Munene, EDU's programme coordinator, commenting on how some of the successes of these programmes are gradually being mainstreamed at the Faculty of Commerce.

In addition to curriculum and psycho-social support, Munene and his team work closely with a network of partners and organisations to offer additional assistance, such as bursaries to students.

"We've shifted the perception of 'otherness' and the deficit model that comes with this. We're now showcasing what good teaching and student support should and could be. As a testament to this, we're now inundated with requests from mainstream students wishing to shift to the EDU."

EDU students often come away from the programme with life-long bonds, and EDU staff work hard to provide students with a home away from home and a sense of family in which they can thrive. And this, maintains Munene, is one of the main reasons why students ask to join the EDU programme.

### The first-year experience

EDU also facilitates the first-year experience (FYE) on behalf of the Faculty of Commerce, an extended orientation programme for first-year students that ensures they get access to a range of support essential to their all-round success at UCT.

The support offered is similar to that offered to commerce EDU students, with elements of the FYE programmes found in other faculties. In the Faculty of Commerce, FYE services include being offered a mentor: a senior student who helps the first-year student come to grips

with academic demands, while not ignoring the social aspects of campus life. An early assessment report monitors students' academic progress, flagging any issues early enough that they can be addressed, and floundering students can be helped back on their feet before the end of the semester.

Munene believes it is support like this that has seen the EDU achieve a throughput rate of more than three times the national average.

### Familial bonds

EDU student Miché Roode says that the strong sense of family is not restricted to the students,

but extends to the staff, too. "What distinguishes EDU from mainstream is that we know each other personally. We've grown together, we've failed together, we've succeeded together, and you feel as if you're part of a family."

EDU graduate Katekani Baloyi says that he felt right at home from day one: "We were made to feel special within the university through the extra support we received in the form of smaller class sizes, longer tutorial sessions and additional workshops for our courses. Our lecturers knew us by name! It really elevated my university experience, making me feel like I was more than just a number."



A farmworker pruning fruit trees on Thandi Farm in Elgin, South Africa. Photo by Trevor Samson for the World Bank.

## THE ECONOMY: We're all in it together

Story by Yusuf Omar

What should economies do for people? Is growth a question of profit über alles? Where do wages fit in? And where should the state get involved? *Monday Monthly* went back to basics with some of UCT's top economics thinkers to find out where they stand in the great debate.

That South Africa is the most unequal society in the world is the "most stinging indictment" of our democracy's deferred dream, says Professor Haroon Borhat, of UCT's Development Policy Research Unit.

While some may argue that South Africa and her people, like those of many of its developing counterparts, are at the mercy of the globalised economic system, a number of UCT scholars agree there is much the country can do to improve the livelihoods of its citizens – even in an imperfect world.

### The 'big' picture

With the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the fall of the Berlin Wall, economists wrote about 'the end of ideology' and 'the end of history' – at least as far as debate about the best economic system goes, says Professor Murray Leibbrandt.

"The ascent of capitalism was clear. But you must counterpose that with the meltdown, the financial crisis [of 2008]," adds Leibbrandt, the pro vice-chancellor for poverty and inequality and director of UCT's Poverty and Inequality Initiative.

"So the mainstream of economics got quite arrogant, in a sense, about how the market would solve all of the problems, and obviously came down to earth with a bit of a bang [with] the world financial crisis."

That crash happened just as South Africa was beginning to make progress, says Leibbrandt, and the country could do little to prevent it.

But the country's relatively good financial policies were a "classic case in point" that society had a massive say in its own fortunes.

"Our regulatory policies towards finance protected us

from meltdown. Certainly we've suffered hugely because of the downturn of the international economy, but we didn't ever become Spain, Greece or Portugal," says Leibbrandt.

"[Just] because America was liberalising and doing stupid things with their financial regulation, we didn't follow suit. We had the strength to believe, 'no, we've got some really good regulatory policies in place'. They're very market-friendly, but they're not ridiculously market-friendly. There's the protection of the citizenry here, and it was just incredibly important."

### Growth – and how

South Africa has been locked in a three- to three-and-a-half percent annual growth morass for the past two decades – compare that to China and India, with recent growth of as high as 12 percent. For Borhat, a key challenge is to find out what is constraining South Africa's growth, and how those shackles can be broken.

"We're not the only country that's there, but we certainly stand out as an emerging market that's in this low-level equilibrium growth trap," he says.

Many of these constraints are at the micro-policy level: the cost of doing business, labour regulation, industrial policy and so on.

"To give you one example: telecommunications."

Businesses and households spend a "huge amount" on telecoms – unusually high when compared with the rest of the world.

"Given our pricing of telecoms, it is a significant restraint on business," says Borhat.

Pressingly, the top end of South Africa's income distribution has benefited more from what growth there has been than those nearer the bottom who needed it most. Borhat and Leibbrandt say this sparks a vicious cycle for the national economy, with poor, uneven growth worsening inequality, and inequality hampering growth.

"High returns to growth at the top end of the distribution act as a brake or constraint on long-run growth, because the gains are only going to the rich, the networked, the highly educated, and very few to those at the bottom end," Borhat explains.

What's peculiar in a South African context, Leibbrandt explains, is the persistence of the view that inequality is not actually undesirable, and the related meritocracy lens that holds that people will succeed if they have talent and work hard, and fail if they don't.

"Elsewhere in the world, nobody believes that anymore. Only free-market think-tanks argue that still. Even in the American context, nobody agrees that it's a level playing field, that it's a meritocracy ... and if you've got 'the go' in you, you can be the president. That isn't how the world works."

### People-centred growth

While Borhat and Leibbrandt agree that the social grant system has successfully relieved some people of particularly dire circumstances, they add that there needs to be a more sustainable solution to levelling distribution of wealth.

Brazil could be an act to follow, says Leibbrandt.

Despite lower education levels than South Africa, Brazil grew "quite well"; but crucially, grew in a way that created many jobs for unskilled workers.

When the financial crisis hit, the bottom didn't fall out of Brazil's growth rate, although it has since slowed.

"In the South African context, some of the agro-industries, such as agro-processing industries like in the Eastern Cape, are our Brazilian equivalent. They've really boomed. So suddenly, you're really creating jobs somewhere between East London and Port Elizabeth. That's fantastic. That's a huge one for inequality, because you're bringing people in, they're getting a wage, they're better educated. It's a very inclusive type of growth, but they've earned it," says Leibbrandt.

The growth of unskilled and semi-skilled employment is crucial, he adds. There was little social conflict around the minimum wage Brazilian workers received, showing that they were productive enough to maintain it, and even increase their wages.

"A way to think about it is it was like a more productive workforce, so the workers who were employed got better earnings. No one was complaining. It wasn't undermining profits for reinvestment or further growth. That seemed to be okay. There was a lot of employment creation taking place, and that made the growth very, very inclusive."

"You've got to earn [productivity and growth], and you earn it by the same processes with which you put the inclusivity in place. It's all about investing in your people and productivity, and the foundations for growth, really."

### We're in it together

Perhaps one way to foster sustainable growth is to embrace the idea that 'we're all in this together'.

Asked what ground each of the triumvirate – of government, business and labour – could reasonably be asked to concede around the negotiating table, Professor Ingrid Woolard responds:

"I think your language is interesting there because you talk about conceding ground, and I think the biggest problem we're facing in labour relations now is the lack of trust. You don't have unions and business feeling that they are part of the same issues."

"There's this adversarialism between business and labour, when actually, ultimately, we all want the same thing. Businesses want their businesses to grow, labour wants a fair share of the profit."

"Despite the tensions between government, business and organised labour, in reality the goal is the same – to have a thriving economy where you don't have wasted resources in terms of unemployed people; to have a more equitable income distribution. This will have a positive impact on social stability as well."

"If we think about reducing income inequality in a way that grows the middle class and makes people feel like they are really contributing to society, obviously that's always going to be first prize."

Leibbrandt shares similar thoughts: "Everybody's thinking quite defensively and short-term. When companies make profits, for example, they can use them to take a chance on further growth. If those profits have been because workers have been more productive, we really, really do need a society that then rewards those workers fully and richly."

### Work or decent work?

"As a country we've committed to the 'decent work' agenda," says Woolard. "So we're saying that actually we accept that there will be some unemployment, at least in the short run, and we don't want to see exploitation. Government is consciously saying that we don't want to see everybody employed but earning pitiful amounts of money."

"Are we the sort of country where people should be selling oranges at the side of the road and earning a dollar a day? Probably not! We're a middle-income country. We should be able to do better than that," says Woolard. "That's one of the toughest debates we have in this department: does one erode minimum wages and get more people into employment? It's complicated."

Woolard chairs the Employment Conditions Commission, which sets minimum wages in sectors with little or no collective bargaining

structure, from farm work and private security to retail and the taxi industry ("where it's unclear that anyone takes any notice").

"In farm work, what happened was you did have workers getting fairly organised. They went on strike, government tried to break that deadlock, and as part of that, promised that there would be a new wage; without proper consultation of the parties," says Woolard.

Woolard doesn't think the wage that was set was necessarily bad, but farmers felt excluded from the process, which strained their relationship with the government.

"They lost trust in government. You already had massive distrust between farmers, organised labour and government."

"We've seen 50 000 jobs lost in agriculture since the new wage came in. That's not necessarily a pure wage effect. A lot of that is just about the farmers saying, 'well, if the government can do that, who knows what they are going to do next year?'"

### What works?

Laura Poswell heads the African office of the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL), based in the Faculty of Commerce. J-PAL works closely with governments and NGOs to improve the effectiveness of social policy by evaluating 'real life' programmes, training others to do the same, and partnering with governments and NGOs to help them integrate knowledge of what does, or does not, work into their development strategies.

One project was to test if firms would change their hiring and firing practices if they knew more about SA's labour regulations.

"Would it make them respond with less fear of the labour force? Obviously with the hope that if you understand and it's not as difficult as you think, you would hire more," Poswell says. "The reason they wanted to test is that if you look at our labour laws, on a scale with other countries, they're not so terribly more restrictive. But we think they are extremely restrictive. So can we narrow the gap between the reality and the perception, and would that make a change?"

### Socialism, capitalism and the state

When asked if he's ever been accused of being a socialist, Leibbrandt says, "I'm not interested in [labels], actually. I'm interested in society succeeding. I mean, it's not a badge of honour for me, but it's not an insult, either. If a socialist is being interested in your society and social outcomes and a strong preference for equity, then I'm very comfortable being a socialist."

"And business has a role to play; a very important role to play. Businesses are crucial – and employment-creation is the foundation of it all, really."

For Borhat, South Africa needs a "benevolent state", at least for the moment. "We need the benevolent state in terms of social grants, because those work."

For other social services like education, health and housing, Borhat sees potential in private-public partnerships: "We've got a large, dynamic corporate sector and they can assist, whether it's school delivery and so on. I think a more innovative combination of private-public partnerships is exactly what we need."

The four researchers agree that fixing South Africa's education system is essential to securing its future, but so far, money has not managed to make much difference.

"One area where there's massive failure is in education," says Woolard. "We spend a huge amount on education, we have high enrolment rates, but we don't seem to be getting it right in terms of quality education and quality input into the labour market. That's a real travesty."

That said, a few "good stories" would reassure South Africans that their tax was actually being used for the right thing, says Leibbrandt.

"If you think about the Minister of Health, Aaron Motsoaledi, and you think about what he's doing; it's turning out to be very, very hard to make improvements in our health system, but everybody's very comforted that there's somebody there 24 hours a day giving it a go and trying to get that same culture down through the system. I think we need a few stories like that."



Adderley Street flower sellers on the day UCT commerce graduate Mark Shuttleworth returned from space. Photo by Trevor Samson for the World Bank. • Assistant machine repairer April Mabe uses an angle grinder to refurbish damaged underground equipment. Photo by Graeme Williams for Media Club South Africa. • Said Multitechnic, a rustic furniture store in Woodstock. Photo by Michael Hammond.



Informal traders at the Wynberg taxi rank. Photo by John Hogg for the World Bank. • Store controller Mareka Mthokho checks underground equipment at Harmony Gold Mine in Welkom. Photo by Graeme Williams for Media Club South Africa • Half-price sale at Tokyo shoe store in Salt River. Photo by Michael Hammond.

# COMMERCE UNDER THE LENS

Story by Helen Swingler  
Photos by Michael Hammond

The commerce faculty is a multifaceted, multidisciplinary amalgam of schools, centres and units that work to understand some complex social issues. *Monday Monthly* spoke with members of the faculty to find out more about what they do and why it's important.

## Emeritus Professor Francis Wilson

"I'm a senior scholar and economist. One of the most necessary conditions for long-term political stability is a large reduction in South Africa's level of inequality, which is one of the highest and most visible in the world. Easier said than done! ... To deal with these complex issues, academics have to get mud on their boots and learn from others in government and elsewhere about the problems involved in scaling up successful projects in agriculture, education, housing and others."



Emeritus Professor Francis Wilson

## Chao Mulenga

"I lecture occupational health psychology and recruitment and selection. My teaching allows me the space to engage with students in debating issues that are relevant to their future in terms of workplace entry and their wellbeing once employed. My research focus area enables me to investigate health and safety at three critical points: the organisation; structures that exist in organisations; and individual behaviour. This focus allows me to examine how the different stakeholders interact to influence health and safety performance in their work environment."



Professor Jennifer Roeleveld

## Associate Professor Richard George

"I convene the Postgraduate Diploma in Tourism & Events Management (PDT&E). Tourism is one of the fastest-growing sectors in the South African economy, while events are also growing in popularity. The industry is dynamic and rapidly changing, requiring effective managers, consultants, planners and researchers for both private and public sectors."



Cecil Mlatsheni

## Professor Jennifer Roeleveld

"I convene the postgraduate taxation programmes. My main focus is international tax, a highly collaborative field. This means I get to travel abroad. The difficult part is keeping pace with the rapidly changing international tax environment. There's a serious shortage of skills in this space in South Africa, and this is what I've been addressing; by introducing the Master's in International Tax, and collaborating with other countries. Through that I've ensured that South Africa's much more visible in the international tax space. One of the spin-offs is short-term staff exchanges, giving younger researchers a chance to experience other universities, and group country research projects,

which extend and highlight the voice of developing countries."

## Meke Shivute

"I lecture information systems (IS) on the Academic Development Programme, helping students from previously disadvantaged backgrounds. Most come with no prior computer knowledge, so I design tailor-made activities to develop academic and digital



Chao Mulenga



Meke Shivute



Associate Professor David Priilaid

literacies. I enjoy it. It allows me to bridge the gap between the theory and the practice of information systems. IS is vital to almost every modern organisation, and a foundation for conducting business."

## Dr Wallace Chigona

"I head up postgraduate studies in the Department of Information Systems. The field is multidisciplinary



Associate Professor Richard George



Dr Wallace Chigona



Joanna Legutko

and works on the interface of information, information technology, and business. Increasingly, we're recognising that information and information technology should work for individuals and communities, as well as for business. My research focuses on information technology and disadvantaged communities, a sub-field called Information Communication and Technology for Development (ICT4D). The question that drives my research is: what is the

value of technology if it doesn't make the lives of the ordinary people more fulfilling and exciting?"

## Cecil Mlatsheni

"I'm a lecturer in the School of Economics. The main focus of my research is the labour market – and youth unemployment in particular, which has serious consequences for the country's development. It's rewarding when the research I do receives wider exposure. In the course of my research I've worked with organisations such as the Centre for Development and Enterprise, the Human Sciences Research Council, the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, and the National Youth Development Agency."

## Associate Professor David Priilaid

"I convene the Postgraduate Diploma in Entrepreneurship (PDE). Each year we take on 60 graduate students from all walks of life, and through a combination of action learning and theory, we teach them how to start up a business. For the students, the best part of it is that whatever money they make, they keep. Right now the world is desperately short on new ideas and creativity. More so, because of the pace of change; old business models are rapidly being overtaken, and the shelf life of most businesses is becoming increasingly limited. The result is that we have to figure out new and better ways of doing business, something many businesses seem to find difficult. The country needs to create meaningful employment, and the best engine for job growth is through entrepreneurship."

## Joanna Legutko

"I'm an actuary and lecturer in actuarial science. My niche is retirement funding, and particularly what it takes to be happy in retirement (I'm trying to take it a bit wider than just money!). South Africa is a unique country; a mix of first and third world, with very well-developed private sector institutions (our medical aids and employer-sponsored retirement funds) – but they don't cover the majority of the population. The government is creating large-scale projects to address this through services such as the mooted NHI and the National Social Security Fund. But integrating state initiatives with the private sector is a challenge."