

The University Teaching and Learning Office

Cordially invites you to a

Series of Mentorship Capacity Building Workshops for emerging academics

Workshop 1

ETHICAL ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE INTEGRATION IN ACADEMIC RESEARCH

As academic databases expand exponentially and interdisciplinary research becomes increasingly complex, generative AI offers transformative approaches to every stage of the research process: from initial literature discovery through proposal development to final thesis completion. This intensive, full-day workshop brings together graduate students, early-career researchers, and faculty to explore how artificial intelligence can enhance scholarly productivity while maintaining the highest standards of academic integrity and ethical practice.

What You will Learn

This comprehensive workshop addresses the full spectrum of AI-assisted research workflows:

Literature Discovery & Knowledge Synthesis

- Formulating sophisticated search queries and identifying cross-disciplinary keywords
- Uncovering hidden connections between disparate research areas
- Extracting targeted information and evaluating source credibility
- Generating comprehensive literature reviews while avoiding plagiarism

Proposal Development

- Crafting compelling research questions and robust methodologies
- Analysing successful proposals and tailoring to funding agencies
- Generating drafts while maintaining your authentic voice
- Strengthening arguments and logical flow

Thesis Writing & Academic Communication

- Organising complex arguments and maintaining coherence across chapters
- Overcoming writer's block and refining academic style
- Identifying structural weaknesses and integrating evidence effectively
- Adapting thesis chapters for journal publication

Ethical Frameworks Throughout Every session explicitly addresses transparency, originality, intellectual contribution, bias awareness, and institutional policies for responsible AI use.

Facilitator: Professor Amin

Date: 27 November 2025

Time: 09h00 to 16h00

Venue: Protea Hotel Marriott, Umhlanga

Workshop 2

UKZN EARLY CAREER ACADEMICS MENTORING PROGRAMME

This interactive full-day workshop invites early-career academic staff to reflect critically on their teaching philosophies and explore innovative, context-responsive approaches to enhancing learning and student engagement. Through a series of thought-provoking and practice-oriented sessions, participants will engage in dialogue about the values and assumptions that underpin their teaching, consider the influence of co-curricular factors on learning experiences, and share strategies for creating inclusive, stimulating classroom environments. The programme also highlights the importance of supporting both underprepared and exceptional students, selecting appropriate teaching materials and tools, and rethinking knowledge through inter-, multi-, and transdisciplinary perspectives that promote deeper, more connected forms of learning.

By the end of the workshop, participants will have refined their personal teaching philosophies, identified practical strategies for effective and inclusive pedagogy, and gained fresh insights into fostering meaningful, engaged, and innovative teaching and learning practices.

Facilitator: Professor Ansurie Pillay & Dr Vosloo

Date: 28 November 2025

Time: 09h00 to 16h00

Venue: Protea Hotel Marriott, Umhlanga

Workshop 3

SOCIAL IMPACT USING DESIGN-THINKING METHODOLOGY

Design-Thinking is a valuable skill to benefit both classroom-based practice, and to develop an epistemology that links education to its social context. Design-Thinking is an approach to problem-solving, business development and innovation. It is anchored around human-centeredness. It entails empathizing with the learner, co-defining the problem, ideation, prototyping a solution and testing.

The reason for the Design-Thinking approach is because creating solutions to problems is one of the biggest challenges in business and society.

Join us for an engaging and hands on journey through empathy, creativity and innovation to transform classroom practice and connect education meaningfully to its social context.

Facilitator: Professor Amin

Date: 29 November 2025

Time: 09h00 to 16h00

Venue: Protea Hotel Marriott, Umhlanga

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OR Scan the QR Code

MEET THE FACILITATORS



Professor Amin's academic career at the University of KwaZulu-Natal began in 2006 when she joined the Leadership Equity Advancement Programme (LEAP) as a lecturer. She was appointed in a permanent capacity as lecturer in 2009 and achieved full professorship in 2021.

Her leadership roles at the University include the position of Cluster Leader in 2016 and Academic Leader of Research for the periods 2012 and 2020-2022.

She is co-founder and an editor of the journal African Perspectives of Research in Teaching and Learning (University of Limpopo). She is also an editor of Alternation (UKZN), Africa Education Review (Unisa) and serves on the editorial board of the Journal for Health Research and Society (University of Mindanao – General Santos, Philippines).

Professor Amin is a recipient of a Fulbright Scholarship at Michigan State University, the Tripartite Alliance Scholarships at the University of Liège in Belgium in 2009 and 2010 and the "Best Research Engagement" award at the University of Pretoria. Her teaching excellence earned her the title of Distinguished Teacher from UKZN in 2011 and commendation of excellence from HELTASA. She is also an NRF rated scientist.

Her commitment to scientific peer review is evident in her role as a reviewer for the National Research Foundation as well as for six international and 18 national journals. She has successfully supervised 16 doctoral and 21 master's students and three post-doctoral fellows. She has co-edited two books and published fifty research articles, book chapters and editorials. She currently supervises eight PhD and eight MEd students at UKZN and two MPhil students at the Mauritius Institute of Education.

On the international stage, Professor Amin has given keynote lectures in Belgium, the UK, India, the United States and South Africa. She is an active contributor to research panels, public lectures, colloquia and conferences. Her leadership roles include chairing the Education Association of South Africa and membership of organisations such as the South African Education Research Association, the Oxford Symposium on School and Family-Based Counselling, the Disaster Coping Research Team and BRICS Sociology



Professor Ansurie Pillay has a PhD in Education and is an Associate Professor in English Education at the School of Education. She teaches at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, and supervises Masters and PhD students. She is a Distinguished Teacher Awardee.



Dr Vosloo has a PhD in Zoology (Animal physiology/ecotoxicology) from North-West University and is a senior lecturer in the Discipline of Biological Sciences, School of Agriculture and Science and former Academic Leader in Cellular Biology. Her teaching experience includes module development, module coordination and teaching in level 1, 3, Honours and PG supervision.