



FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

STRATEGIC PLAN

2010-2014

(DRAFT)

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University of KwaZulu-Natal
Faculty of Health Sciences
Strategic Plan - 2010-2014

Executive Summary

The Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of KwaZulu-Natal envisions becoming the African Faculty of choice for Health Sciences research, education and training globally by excelling in student-centered, research-led teaching and learning, innovative and socially-responsible research, and, evidence-based practice, service and community engagement in order to optimize the healthcare of all health-seeking communities by critical engagement with and review by national and international stakeholders in the higher education and healthcare arenas.

The Faculty is unequivocally committed to redressing the scarcity of healthcare professionals in the academic and healthcare sectors in the country, congruent with the imperatives of the National Departments of Education and Health, by producing undergraduate and postgraduate healthcare professionals, reflective of the country's demographic profile, equipped with knowledge, skills, professional ethics and attitudes to achieve optimal health for all within the continuum of health promotion, prevention, screening, diagnosis and treatment in the spirit of "ubuntu" and "batho pele".

The following are goals for the period 2010-2014:

- **Goal 1: Underpinning and Overarching Research Ethos**
To create and underpinning and overarching research ethos that facilitates credentialing up to PhD level, engenders the generation and dissemination of knowledge and innovation, enhances the recruitment and optimizes the success of postgraduate students and inculcates research-led teaching and evidence-based practice.
- **Goal 2: Excellence and Engagement in Teaching and Learning**
To entrench excellence in teaching and quality student engagement with learning through contextualized, student-centred curricula with integrated academic development, innovative pedagogies and congruent assessment practices to translate equity of access into equity of outcome.
- **Goal 3: Community Engagement as Beneficiary and Benefactor**
To proactively institute and maintain mutually-beneficial engagement with select local, national and international communities to advance teaching, learning, research and scholarship in the Faculty and to develop capacity on the African continent.
- **Goal 4: Enabling and Collegial Academic Leadership and Management**
To develop transformational leadership that engenders a collegial, nurturing, supportive academic environment that enables staff and students to realize their full potential in an operational framework epitomized by efficacy, efficiency and effectiveness.

The Faculty of Health Sciences Strategic Plan which cascades from the UKZN Strategic Plan will be implemented individually using the performance management system and collectively by annual planning workshops which will identify strategic priorities and appropriate implementation mechanisms, responsible office/rs and time frames.

University of KwaZulu-Natal
Faculty of Health Sciences
Strategic Plan - 2010-2014

1. Purpose

This Strategic Plan provides a framework for the implementation of the vision and mission of the Faculty of Health Sciences which translates the vision and mission of the University of KwaZulu-Natal in the Health Sciences context.

It assumes an annual planning cycle intended to prioritize/restate/re-iterate goals with their corresponding targets and performance indices taking cognisance of progress and changes in the higher education, health and institutional strategic and operational environments.

2. The Health Sciences Higher Education Milieu

The Faculty of Health Sciences acknowledges that it works within the following higher education and health-related frameworks:

- The Higher Education Act which inter alia provides for the regulation of higher education, provides for the establishment, governance and funding of higher education institutions and provides for quality assurance and quality promotion in higher education¹,
- The Department of Higher Education and Training Strategic Plan 2010/11-2014/15 which prioritizes an increased participation in undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in science (including health sciences) engineering and technology, an increase in the size and credentials of the academic workforce to generate the requisite knowledge for economic and societal development by addressing the challenges of access, success, translating equity of access into equity of outcome, quality teaching and learning and relevant knowledge production to support the country's growth plans².
- The National Health Act which redresses the inequities of the past in the distribution of healthcare and seeks to create a national health system that is patient-centred and for the benefit of all³.
- The Strategic Framework for the Human Resources for Health Plan which promotes access to health services by the equitable distribution and use of skilled healthcare professionals and which seeks to render accessible, appropriate, high quality healthcare at all levels by healthcare professionals equipped with the appropriate capacity and skills⁴.
- The National Department of Health Strategic Plan 2010/11 – 2012/13 which implements a 10-point plan aimed at creating a well-functioning health system capable of producing improved health outcomes consisting of 20 deliverables in 4 key areas, viz., increasing life expectancy, combating HIV and AIDS, decreasing the burden of diseases from tuberculosis, and, improving health systems effectiveness.⁵

¹ http://www.che.ac.za/documents/d000004/Higher_Education_Act.pdf

² http://www.pmg.org.za/files/docs/100310HETStratPlan_0.pdf

³ <http://www.info.gov.za/view/DownloadFileAction?id=68039>

⁴ <http://www.doh.gov.za/docs/discuss/hr2005/main.html>

⁵ <http://www.doh.gov.za/docs/misc/stratplan/201011-201213a/index.html>

- The National Human Resources Plan for Health which implements a national guideline for human resources policy and planning to ensure that the entire health system obtains the quality and quantity of staff required, makes optimum use of its human resources, anticipates and manages changes in staffing and develops a multi-skilled, representative and flexible workforce to meet the healthcare needs of its diverse communities experiencing several and diverse disease burdens⁶.
- Health Research Policy in South Africa which creates a framework and environment to enable health research to contribute effectively to health development with the aim of improving human health, welfare and quality of life of all South Africans by *inter alia* advancing knowledge that underpins health and equitable quality health care through research and nurturing talent and developing capacity to conduct research and utilize its findings⁷.

The Faculty of Health Sciences endorses planning, funding and quality assurance as steering mechanisms that facilitate the delivery of high level professional skills, research and innovation that contribute to national economic growth and development as contained in the Ministerial Statement on Higher Education Funding⁸.

3. The Faculty of Health Sciences

The Faculty of Health Sciences consists of 6 Schools and 13 disciplines, viz., the:

- School of Audiology, Occupational Therapy and Speech Language Pathology,
- School of Dentistry,
- School of Medical Sciences (comprising of the disciplines of Anatomy, Medical Biochemistry and Physiology and the Biomedical Resource Unit),
- School of Nursing,
- School of Pharmacy and Pharmacology,
- School of Physiotherapy, Sports Science and Optometry

The Faculty is unequivocally committed to redressing the scarcity of healthcare professionals in the academic and healthcare sectors in the country, congruent with the imperatives of the National Departments of Education and Health, by producing undergraduate and postgraduate healthcare professionals, reflective of the country's demographic profile, equipped with knowledge, skills, professional ethics and attitude to achieve optimal health for all within the continuum of health promotion, prevention, screening, diagnosis and treatment in the spirit of "ubuntu" and "batho pele".

3.1 Teaching and Learning

The Faculty trains Audiologists, Biokineticists, Dental Therapists, Nurses, Occupational Therapists, Optometrists, Oral Hygienists, Pharmacists, Physiotherapists and Speech Therapists.

All undergraduate and postgraduate programmes exemplify academic excellence, relevance to the South African and African healthcare contexts, diverse education and training platforms ranging from rural to urban and primary to tertiary healthcare, community-based education, experiential learning/externships,

⁶ <http://www.doh.gov.za/docs/factsheets/guidelines/hrplan/index.html>

⁷ <http://www.doh.gov.za/docs/policy/healthresearch-2001.pdf>.

⁸ <http://www.cepd.org.za/files/pictures/Ministerial%20statement%20of%20Higher%20Education%20Funding%202009-10%20to%202011-12.pdf>

diverse, learner-friendly pedagogies, community outreach and service, innovative research that informs teaching and international and national collaboration.

3.2 Research

The Faculty boasts cutting edge discipline-specific and multi-disciplinary research relevant to the South African and international contexts, has entrenched research partnerships at national and international level, enjoys large grants from national and international funders and has postgraduate training opportunities at Honours, Postgraduate Diploma, Masters and Doctoral level with some Masters programmes available in both contact and on-line/web-based formats.

While all disciplines in the Faculty have established discipline-specific research areas, those related to UKZN and/or national focus areas are *inter alia* the full gamut of pharmaceutical sciences, traditional medicines from indigenous plants, biokinetics and exercise science, developmental disabilities, rehabilitation, the healthcare continuum (health promotion, prevention, early identification, early intervention, diagnosis and curative and/or palliative care), chronic lifestyle diseases and higher education in the health sciences.

3.3 Community Engagement and Outreach

The Faculty has a rich heritage of health service. Staff and students, in the process of teaching and learning run Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, Audiology, Physiotherapy, Optometry and Health and Fitness clinics. All disciplines offer professional services at clinics and hospitals within the Department of Health while outreach initiatives extend to special and mainstream schools, orphanages and homes for the disabled and aged.

All disciplines work with communities that are/were previously under-served and/or unable to access rehabilitation and therapeutic services and have established partnerships with the communities, non-governmental organizations and provincial departments of health, education and social development. The discipline of Optometry serves as the Africa Office for the International Centre for Eyecare Education (ICEE). The School of Nursing is designated the WHO's Collaborating Centre for Nursing and Midwifery and the Joanna Briggs Institute Collaborating Centre for Evidence-Based Nursing. Several disciplines ensure access to healthcare in rural areas by participation on the Transnet-sponsored Phelophepa train.

4. Vision, Mission and Principles

Vision

To be the African Faculty of choice for Health Sciences research, education and training globally

Mission

To excel in student-centered, research-led teaching and learning, innovative and socially-responsible research, and, evidence-based practice, service and community engagement in order to optimize the healthcare of all health-seeking communities by critical engagement with and review by national and international stakeholders in the higher education and health arenas

Principles

- To create and underpinning and overarching research ethos in all academic activities .
- To produce graduates with comprehensive knowledge, competencies, skills, ethics and attributes to function as excellent, culturally sensitive, reflective healthcare professionals and life-long learners who will proactively, critically and creatively engage with relevant stakeholders to achieve optimal health outcomes/status for all health seeking communities.
- To be responsive to the human resource healthcare needs in South Africa.
- To engender social transformation and redress by formulating access policies that facilitate the active recruitment of students from historically disadvantaged backgrounds.
- To enable retention and success of students by providing excellent teaching, mentoring and academic development programmes that are intellectually nurturing, cognizant and respectful of diversity and which include students as partners in learning.
- To provide for the varied learning needs for a diverse student body through high quality, annually reviewed, creative and innovative curriculum design and development and pedagogical and assessment practices.
- To foster multi-disciplinary teaching and learning, research and patient care.
- To be responsive to the institutional, regional, national healthcare contexts and internationally competitive in teaching, learning, research, scholarship, innovation and scientific investigation.
- To undertake research that informs teaching, provides evidence for best practice and is relevant to the country's needs.
- To facilitate research excellence and output by implementing capacity development in publication and grant writing, actively recruiting postgraduate students and providing research mentors.
- To foster local and international collaboration, exchanges and partnerships with the private sector and higher education institutions in teaching, research and development.
- To facilitate the attainment of a demographically representative staff and student body.
- To provide opportunities for career pathing, continuous professional development and lifelong learning for all staff and cadres of healthcare personnel in response to current healthcare challenges.
- To facilitate the personal and academic development of staff and students to their fullest potential.
- To foster an ethos of democracy, transparency, accountability and professionalism in the Faculty.
- To foster democratic consensus on the vision, mission, values and goals of the Faculty of Health Sciences in the context of academic freedom and autonomy.

5. Goals, Strategies and Performance Indicators

Goal One: Underpinning and Overarching Research Ethos

To create and underpinning and overarching research ethos that facilitates credentialing up to PhD level, engenders the generation and dissemination of knowledge and innovation, enhances the recruitment and optimizes the success of postgraduate students and inculcates research-led teaching and evidence-based practice.

Strategies

The Faculty will:

- Institute teaching relief to allow significant progress towards PhD credentialing and NRF rating as appropriate.
- Develop capacity in grantsmanship and pro-actively highlight funding calls from national and international funding agencies.
- Formalize multi-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder research collaboratives/ groups/units/ centers/institutes within and between cognate Faculties and Colleges in niche research areas.
- Develop capacity in writing diverse types of publication including but not limited to original research, case studies, position papers, concept papers, literature reviews, systematic reviews and meta-analyses and enhance capacity by writing mentorship programmes.
- Actively promote the publication format for theses and dissertations, ensure publications from Honours, Masters and Doctoral research and create databases from campus-based clinic records to provide research publication material.
- Recognize and reward quality publications in high impact/quality, SAPSE and ISI-rated journals.
- Offer unique postgraduate programmes using on-line/web-based teaching platforms where appropriate on the basis of gap analysis and/or market need.
- Enhance and outsource supervision capacity and optimize postgraduate administration to provide a quality postgraduate experience.
- Provide formal and informal postgraduate cohort supervision, networking and support groups.
- Offer undergraduate and postgraduate programmes that are either research led (curriculum is structured around content which is selected on the basis of specialist research interests of teaching staff), research-based (curriculum is largely centered around inquiry-based activities/evidence-based practice) research oriented (curriculum emphasizes understanding the processes by which knowledge is produced as on learning) or research-informed (implementation of systematic enquiry into the teaching and learning process) as appropriate.

Performance Indicators

- Year-on-year increase in PhD credentialed/NRF-rated staff.
- Year-on-year increase in the number of and funding amounts from research grants.
- Creation of at least 3 multi-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder research collaboratives/ groups/units/centers/institutes in the 5-year period.
- Staff meet and exceed the productivity unit benchmarks in increasingly higher impact/quality journals annually.

- Year-on-year increase in the postgraduate student recruitment and throughput within minimum time.
- Approval and delivery of at least 3 new unique/niche postgraduate programmes in the 5-year period.
- HPCSA/SAPC/SANC accreditation commends research-led/based/oriented/informed curricula and pedagogy.
- Year-on-year improvement in postgraduate student opinion surveys.

Goal Two: Excellence and Engagement in Teaching and Learning

To entrench excellence in teaching and quality student engagement with learning through contextualized, student-centred curricula with integrated academic development, innovative pedagogies and congruent assessment practices to translate equity of access into equity of outcome.

Strategies

The Faculty will:

- Offer a comprehensive range of health sciences programmes from bachelors to research-based Masters PhDs/Doctorates in all disciplines with certificates, postgraduate diplomas and coursework Masters programmes in selected niche areas ascertained from gap analyses and/or market need.
- Design curricula that are student-centred and consist of authentic and contextualized indigenous content, challenging tasks relevant to students' life experiences, adequate, appropriate orientation and induction and the integration of learning and other skills together with active and interactive learning paradigms and formative assessments for academic development⁹.
- Promote pedagogic shift from the traditional didactic model to interactive pedagogies based on the connectivism and constructivism learning theories including but not limited to problem-based learning, cases-based curricula, community-based education and outcomes-based education, all of which create "rich environments for active learning (REALs)"¹⁰.
- Develop, implement and monitor formative, continual, continuous and summative assessment practices congruent with outcomes and pedagogy.
- Develop staff capacity in Faculty-prioritized curriculum design, pedagogy and assessment practices.
- Implement supplemental instruction (SI) and structured learning assistance (SLA) via peer mentoring and/or tutoring programmes.
- Implement and monitor a comprehensive and holistic student support programme coordinating and integrating the activities of peer mentors/tutors, academic development officers (ADOs) and the Student Counseling Centre.

⁹ Crosling, G., Heagney, M. and Thomas, L. 2009. Improving student retention in higher education. Australian Universities' Review 51 (2): 9-18.

¹⁰ Kilfoil, W.R. 2008. A model for learning development. South African Journal of Higher Education 22 (5): 1019-1028.

Performance Indicators

- Year-on-year improvements in graduation rates, cohort completion rates within the minimum time, pass rates, average pass mark, percentage of curriculum passed and percentage of curriculum passed in the first sitting.
- Decrease in exclusion and drop-out rates.
- Year-on-year increase in modules taught using diverse pedagogies and assessment practices.
- HPCSA/SAPC/SANC accreditation commends innovative curricula, pedagogy and assessment practices.
- Year-on-year improvement in student opinion surveys.

Goal 3: Community Engagement as Beneficiary and Benefactor

To proactively institute and maintain mutually-beneficial engagement with select local, national and international communities to advance the teaching, learning, research and scholarship in the Faculty and to develop capacity on the African continent.

Strategies

The Faculty will:

- Ensure that mutually beneficial, ethically-sound, sustainable community engagement occurs within the context of teaching and learning, and, research and scholarship, prioritizing under-resourced communities in the rural, peri-urban and urban areas.
- Identify and institute formal collaboration with the national and/or provincial Departments of Health, Education and Social Development for the training and skills and competency development of students who render health services in the process of teaching and learning, and, research and scholarship.
- Optimize the Joint Health Services and Education Agreement to create a framework that allows both academic and service delivery needs to be met.
- Proactively institute memoranda of agreement with select national and international partners to advance the Faculty's research agenda.
- Enter into memoranda of agreement with African partners to advance capacity in postgraduate training and research on the African continent.
- Work with the DoH, relevant SETAs and professional societies and organizations to generate/grow third stream income by offering *inter alia* continuous professional development, short courses and training for mid-level workers.
- Seek corporate social investment to grow the Faculty's Endowment portfolio to advance the Faculty's strategic goals.

Performance Indicators

- Internally and externally conducted School, programme and research reviews evidence mutually beneficial, ethically-sound and sustainable community engagement.
- Well-functioning Joint Health Services and Education Agreement with the KZN DoH.
- Year on year increase in active memoranda of understanding that advance the research agenda.

- Year on year increase in active memoranda of understanding that advance capacity development on the African continent.
- Year on year growth in the disciplines' "Income Generation Fund".
- Year on year growth in the Faculty's Endowment Fund.

Goal 4: Enabling and Collegial Academic Leadership and Management

To develop transformational leadership that engenders a collegial, nurturing, supportive academic environment that enables staff and students to realize their full potential in an operational framework epitomized by efficacy, efficiency and effectiveness .

The Faculty will:

- Develop transformational leadership in existing and potential Deans, Dean's Assistants, Heads of School, Discipline Chairs and Academic Coordinators congruent with their job profiles.
- Comprehensively induct and orientate all new staff.
- Institute effective communication that allows transparent, consultative and informed decision-making.
- Institute a performance management system that recognizes and rewards excellence within a developmental paradigm.
- Create professional development plans to facilitate upward mobility.
- Create a database of all University, College and Faculty policies and procedures that govern/inform the job profiles of all staff.
- Create a non-hierarchical, non-bureaucratic committee structure that facilitates efficacious, efficient and effective day-to-day Faculty operations.
- Profile the Faculty as a Faculty of choice for staff and students by profiling the achievements and accolades of past and present staff and students, using them as ambassadors.

Performance Indicators

- Annual leadership development workshops held for Dean's Assistants, Heads of School, Discipline Chairs and Academic Coordinators engender transformational leadership evidenced from 360 evaluation and feedback.
- Positive feedback on evaluations of annual induction and orientation programmes for staff.
- Meaningful engagement with performance management system.
- Annually updated database of policies and procedures.
- Efficacious, efficient, and effective committee structure.
- Prolific Faculty publicity profile.

6. Implementation

The Faculty of Health Sciences Strategic Plan which cascades from the UKZN Strategic Plan will be implemented individually via the performance management system and collectively via annual planning workshops which will identify strategic priorities and appropriate implementation mechanisms, responsible office/rs and time frames.