



DEPARTMENT OF
CHEMISTRY

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Faculty of Applied Sciences
Durban University of Technology

S10, Level 3, S Block, Steve Biko Campus,
Durban, 4001
P O Box 1334, Durban, 4000, South Africa

Tel: +27 31 373 2300/2914
Email: SihleN3@dut.ac.za

www.dut.ac.za

PROPOSAL: Strengthen the presence and the visibility of women

Preamble

The low number of women in academic careers is a major concern, especially in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics subjects. This is partly ascribed to the lack of visible role models for women in academia. There is also a vast number of studies that show that women's scientific contributions are underrated compared to those of men (Long & Fox, 1995; Wennaras & Wold, 1997; Goldin & Rouse, 2000; Lincoln, Pincus, Bandows Koster & Leboy, 2012). Both men and women give more credit to men than they do women, even those who have similar, identical credentials (Correll et al., 2007; Steinpreis, Anders & Ritzke, 1999; MossRacusin et al, 2012). Women are less likely to request to be nominated, apply for grants due to them feeling and being viewed as less intelligent. Consequently, women's accomplishments are less visible and less valued than men's. This workshop will be aimed at raising awareness in ensuring that women participate fully and effectively and get equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life.

The Department of Chemistry at the Durban University of Technology would like to host a workshop about increasing the presence and visibility of women. This will be in line with addressing the Sustainable Developmental goals through economic empowerment. The first being "Gender Equality" and the second being "Reduced Inequalities". Gender equality by 2030 necessitates urgent action to eradicate the many root causes of discrimination that still diminishes women's rights in private and public spheres. The workshop will also deal with empowering women with sources of opportunities for productive employment and promote the economic and social inclusion of women. The main focus of the workshop will be the challenges that female academics experience in Higher Education in reaching the Professorial or Executive Management positions.

As part of one of the Durban University of Technology's ENVISION 2030 DNA strands/perspectives, "SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES", has Innovative Curricula and Research as one of the strategic objectives which aims at building an enabling environment that supports dynamic curricula that inspires innovation and entrepreneurship. The department will extend an invitation to DUT alumnus women entrepreneurs and successful women entrepreneurs in the country at large. This is to give a platform for presentations on tools and ideas required for understanding entrepreneurial leadership requirements.

Interventions during the workshop

1. Inspire

Invite female role models in academia to share their stories of success and how they overcame obstacles to reach the top of their careers. Speakers such as VCs, DVCs, Deans and Head of Departments will be invited.

2. Recognizing women's successes

This will be done by presenting awards for teaching and learning, research, community engagement projects, promotions, grants awards, professional society roles, publications and any other notable achievements.

3. Give particular attention to the status of women in STEM

During the workshop, this will be achieved by inviting visiting scholars from multidisciplinary fields to form panel discussions and address topics related to women in STEM.

4. Dramatizing the issues

The department will use videos at the workshop, for instance, videos that illustrate bullying in the workplace especially of females. This will be followed by a discussion of the issues raised and how to deal with them.

The invitation to the workshop will be extended to both males and females, senior management staff, students, researchers in different fields such as gender equality, STEM and social sciences. This will enhance inclusive participation in science which is aligned with the requirements for the International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development.

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DUT
DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
INYUVESI YASETHEKWINI YEZOBUCHIWEPHESHE

DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

DR P NTOLA
Lecturer
Department of Chemistry
Faculty of Applied Sciences
Durban University of Technology
P O Box 1334, Durban, 4000 South Africa
Tel: +27 31 373 2299
Fax to email: +27 86 688 6673
email: pinkies@dut.ac.za
www.dut.ac.za

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