Vision

The College of Education (CEDU) strives to be the first-choice provider of high-quality Open Distance Learning (ODL) education programmes in South Africa and beyond. CEDU also strives to be a recognised centre of excellence internationally for teaching, research and community engagement. CEDU focuses on the initial and continuing development of teachers.

Mission

The College of Education is committed to contributing to the broader education system by providing scholarship, initial and continuous professional development for teachers. It also provides learning opportunities for education managers, policy makers, and other professionals involved in education.

In pursuit of its vision, the college furthers a range of learning opportunities, knowledge and skills through a variety of formal and non-formal Open Distance Learning programmes. These programmes incorporate cutting-edge learner support systems and approaches, innovative research initiatives and responsive community development interventions.

Values

The curriculum and practical implementation of the College of Education aligns with the values, norms and standards of the University of South Africa (Unisa) as the African university in the service of humanity.
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As one of the newest colleges in Unisa, the College of Education (CEDU) supports the university’s quest for excellence in research and innovation. Our institution’s vision of being the leading African university in the service of humanity requires so much more of us as researchers and academics in the field of teaching and learning. CEDU identifies with this vision and are committed to increasing the university’s research output.

The research we do in CEDU is by its very nature futuristic, in that it directly impacts on the future of millions of children in our country’s schools. The academics in CEDU are engaged in research across the many facets of education. This research is aimed at improving learning and teaching, the achievement of learning outcomes, as well as the quality of life and livelihoods. It is innovative in exploring technologies and ways of enabling our children to actualise their aspirations to become tomorrow’s intellectuals, tomorrow’s leaders – our future researchers and innovators. Educational research and innovation are by their nature directed at South Africa’s future, and therefore contribute to ensuring that our economic, social, cultural and environmental wellbeing is in good hands.

CEDU academics conduct accountable Multi, Inter and Transdisciplinary (MIT) research. They apply their intellectual capacity and research in ways that contribute meaningfully to bettering the lives of all in South Africa, Africa and beyond.
About the college

CEDU has approximately 68 000 students, making it the second largest college at Unisa. Its large footprint means that the college is responsible for the professional education and training of close to 50% of all teachers in South Africa.

The college plays a critical role in improving the quality of teaching and learning in schools, particularly in the fields of science, mathematics, Early Childhood Education, special needs education, educational management, science and technology and languages education.
CEDU is also engaged in transdisciplinary research that will inform the curriculum, student learning, assessment policies, teacher practice and educational reform in general. CEDU strives to address the needs of learners, schools and communities through its provision of well-qualified and excellent teachers.

**Strategic focus**

Aligned with Unisa’s institutional goals and the Department of Higher Education’s imperatives, the College of Education provides both initial professional education of teachers and continuous professional teacher development. The college offers programmes for educators across the different school phases including Early Childhood Development (ECD), Grade R, foundation, intermediate and senior phases, as well as for educators in the Further Education and Training (FET) and Higher Education (HE) bands.

Through the departments, specific focus is given to the areas of critical importance:

- Early Childhood Development (ECD)
- Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) and youth development
- Mathematic education
- Science and technology education
- Education in languages, arts and culture
- Inclusive education

The college emphasises the need for staff and students to become engaged in community projects in education as a discipline and its related fields.

**Empowering our team**

CEDU encourages staff development through a mentorship programme, which acts as a catalyst for the effective integration and professional development of new staff.

The mentorship programme is designed to assist mentees to become accomplished academics as well as to enhance their capacity in teaching, research, community engagement, leadership and academic citizenship. During the programme, mentors support mentees in their personal development and offer them guidance in a process of continued growth. The mentorship initiative comprises a semi-structured programme extending over a period of two to three years.
Flagship initiatives

Although CEDU is Unisa’s newest college, a number of exciting flagship initiatives are already under way, with more in the pipeline.

Unisa Centre for Early Childhood Education

The Unisa Centre for Early Childhood Education (UCECE) at the university’s Sunnyside Campus has recently been placed under the umbrella of CEDU. The child/play-centred curriculum caters for all children’s learning and development needs. UCECE also acts as a research site for improving Early Childhood Education in South Africa and the rest of the African continent.

UCECE’s broad objectives are as follows:

• Being a centre of excellence for Early Childhood Education and inclusive education
• Providing the best pre-school education possible in an ideal, healthy, friendly and stimulating environment and thereby serving as a model school for teaching practice
The centre is ideally situated for collaboration and has the broad interdisciplinary knowledge base of the college as well as the legal, financial and other academic expertise available in the broader Unisa organisation.

UCECE complies with Unisa’s three business areas: Tuition, research and community engagement. This means that the research conducted at the UCECE supports evidence-based ECD practices. UCECE also provides pedagogical grounding for ECD practices and has national and international networks where scholars and practitioners are linked. This initiative is also in line with efforts to re-curriculate the BEd Hons (ECD) and BEd (ECD and Foundation phase) degrees, as well as the postgraduate certificate in ECD education (PGCE) and certificate programmes offered to Unisa students.

Centre for Community Training and Development

Education, training and development are important aspects of a democratic, vibrant and prosperous society. The Centre for Community Training and Development provides opportunities for individuals to gain access to training and community development opportunities. The centre offers certificate courses and programmes, which provide specific practice-oriented, career and in-service education and training.

These certificates are aimed at:

- Education and training for practitioners in industry, organisations and institutions
- In-service training for practising teachers
- Short courses of interest to the general public

Research

CEDU provides a supportive environment for basic and applied research. The college has five NRF-rated professors conducting research in the following areas:

- Continuing professional development for education professionals
- Co-operative learning
- Curriculum studies
- Educational leadership and management
- Female leadership in disadvantaged schools
- Knowledge management in higher education
- School governance and democracy
- Strategies to deal with violence in schools
- Exploring reasons for school under performance
- Accentuating both qualitative and quantitative research methods

The college promotes Multi, Inter and Transdisciplinary (MIT) research in both national and international contexts.

Dynamics of violence in schools

Ten CEDU researchers are involved in the dynamics in schools project. It is a major research project and forms part of an international project with participating countries the United Kingdom, Brazil, Pakistan and South Africa. The aim of the project is to facilitate international comparison of school violence through the generation of school-based indicators of violence and of security measures. It uses a comparative framework across the four countries.

The SA-based project at Unisa investigates the dynamics of school violence in six provinces of South Africa. The project explores the underlying reasons for, and types of violence, as well as initiatives for the prevention thereof. The aim is to identify indicators that may inform a common framework for comparison within the country and across the four countries. The overarching motivation is to assist in providing violence-free schools and societies where quality education can be achieved.
CEDU staff have contributed to and authored a number of publications, including:

- **Financial Management and Leadership for Schools** (RJ Botha. 2012)
- **A History of Schooling in South Africa: Method and Context** (Booyse, JJ, le Roux, CS, Seroto, J & Wolhuter C. 2011)
- **School Leadership in a Changing Context** (RJ Botha & RN Marishane. 2011)
- **The Acquisition of Academic English Language Proficiency, Addressing the Needs of South African Second Language School Leavers** (Manyike, TV. 2010)
Community engagement

CEDU is making inroads into communities and their schools. Its community engagement projects and the research emanating from these are mainstreamed into the teacher development programmes of the college so as to bring about an improvement of teaching and learning in our classrooms.

Some of the CEDU flagship projects

Teaching mathematics in Mamelodi the Asian way
Asian Pacific countries are known for their excellent mathematics teaching. To learn more about their approach, the college with the support of the Gauteng Department of Basic Education initiated a research project on mathematics teaching. The project focused on ‘lesson study’, a very successful concept of in-service training of mathematics teachers, which originated in Japan.

Together with the Gauteng Department of Education, 12 schools in Mamelodi, Pretoria were selected to form part of the project. The teachers reported that the lesson study approach to teaching mathematics was new and useful. They became more confident because of the co-operative process in the planning of lessons and also became more aware of their own classroom practices, while observing a lesson conducted by their peers.

The focus of lesson study is on what students learn. Teachers plan mathematics lessons collaboratively and teach the lesson to learners while the other teachers observe. Teachers then reflect on the lesson and on the learning that took place in the classroom. The focus is not only on what learners learn, but also on how they learn it.

From the project it became clear that teachers needed support in content knowledge as well as in the planning of lessons.

Boosting school management skills
In 2010, education managers from 30 schools in the Nkangala region participated in the Professional Learning in School Management (PLSM) project, sponsored by Anglo American.

The aims of the project were to present professional learning seminars for education managers starting in the Nkangala district of Mpumalanga and expanding to other areas. Participants reported that the programme enhanced their management skill.

Learn not to Burn
Many people in South Africa lose their lives as a result of fires, especially in informal settlements, where poverty is rife. Here few have the luxury of electricity or adequate sources of heating and residents often use alternatives such as open fires for cooking and keeping warm.

By introducing fire safety education in schools as a precautionary measure, a significant contribution to curbing the number of deaths and casualties resulting from open source fires, can be achieved. The Learn not to Burn project achieved its objectives, which were:

- Training ECD teachers and practitioners in precautionary measures relating to fire
- Enabling teachers to adapt the curriculum for learners with special needs

The content of the course will be integrated into the Pre-Grade-R curriculum by the Gauteng Department of Education, and will eventually be rolled out nationally.
Facts and figures

Some 68 000 students are enrolled at CEDU. Women students account for about 80% and almost half falls in the 25-40 age category.

CEDU student profile at a glance

Gender
- Women: 81%
- Men: 19%

Age
- <24 years old: 14%
- 25-39: 49%
- 40-49: 30%
- >50: 7%

College enrolments
- Doctorate: 319
- Master’s: 1 063
- Honours: 7 758
- Undergraduate: 59 099

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College of Education