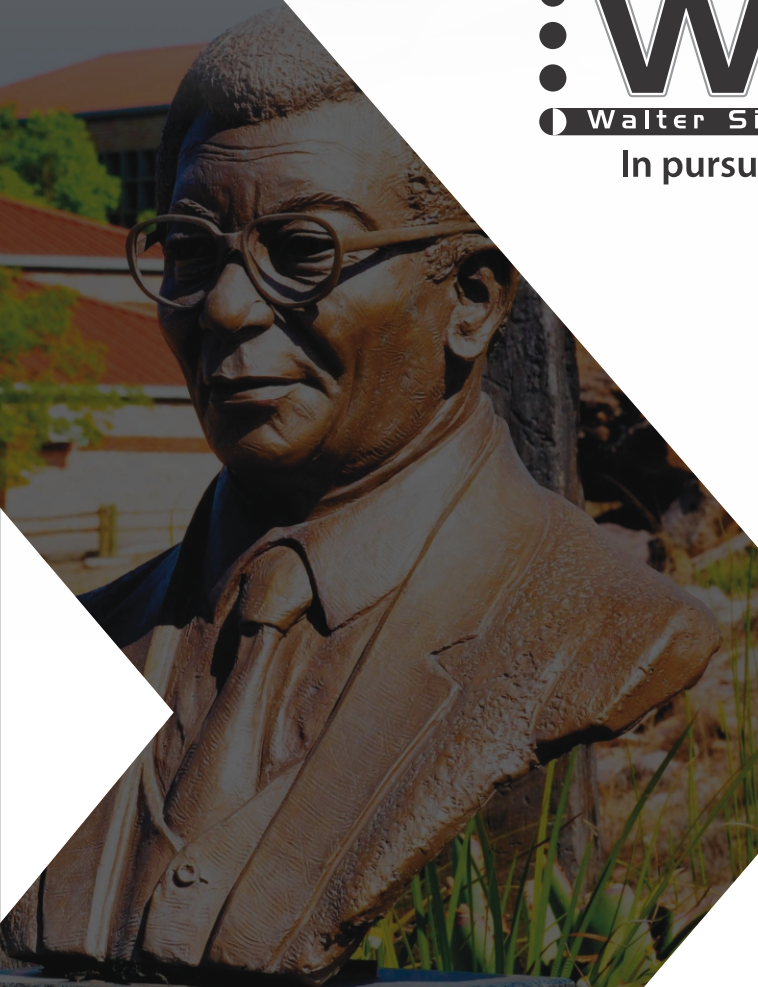


FACULTY OF NATURAL SCIENCES
NEWSLETTER: JANUARY 2024



Walter Max Sisulu

Excellence,
Integrity,
Wisdom

FACULTY OF NATURAL SCIENCES

NEWSLETTER: JANUARY 2025

We embrace respect for **ethical beliefs, values, rights and dignity** of others and ourselves.



CONTENTS

DEAN'S COMMENT

As the first month of 2025 ends, the faculty of Natural Sciences is on a positive path. The amount of work done in January must be recognised for its significance with regard to all the aspects of our collective endeavour and WSU purpose. We look forward. We embrace the commitment to treat our students with love and respect, succeed in our goals in teaching, research, research-led community engagement and stakeholder relations. This year will be better than any other year before. We acknowledge that our success also relies heavily on a new purposeful accountability stance to enhance access to the support of the WSU executive management. We are committed to self-evaluation and external review.

- 1 Deans Comment
- 2 Administration
- 3 Teaching & Learning
- 4 Research
- 5 Acknowledgments



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ADMINISTRATION

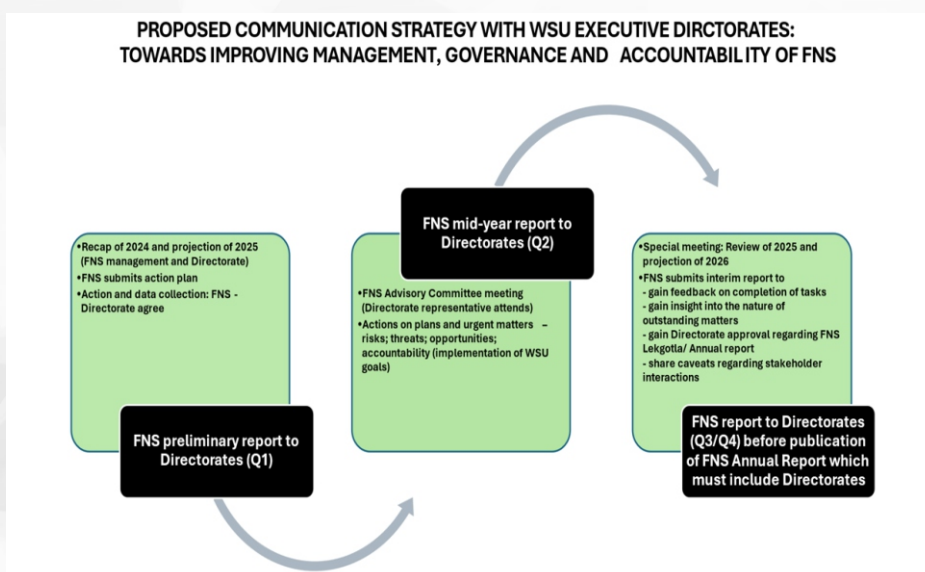
This month, our main focus has been to assist the Office of the Registrar with respect to student management affairs. The support of all affected WSU Directorates is highly appreciated. The Faculty Student Representative Council members did a sterling job of providing information from individuals and groups of students in a manner that enhances our response to challenges. We learned great lessons for the future, especially as we are getting ready to

start lectures one week from now. The majority of measurable outcomes for January cannot be published until we receive executive approval. We highlight the positive trends in student admissions and registration of students for 2025 at this stage (Table 1). The Office of the Registrar, Planning Monitoring and Evaluation, DLT, RASA and ICT provided immense support which will be used as lessons for the future

Table 1. Registration statistics, 31 January 2025

DEPARTMENTS AND LOCATIONS	Quota	Registered (FTENS)	Status (FTENS)	Spaces (FTENS)	RS	Registration (Total)	Applicants
Natural Sciences (BCC)	160	115	72% ●	45	2	117	2 887
Applied Sciences	160	115	72% ●	45	2	117	2 887
Natural Sciences (NMD)	500	497	99% ●	3	33	530	3 755
Biological And Environmental Sc	185	183	99% ●	2	11	194	1 489
Maths, Science, and Computing	200	198	99% ●	2	15	213	1 909
Physical Sciences	115	116	101% ●	- 1	7	123	357
Total	560	612	85.5%	48	35	647	6 642

With the approval of the Faculty Board, in 2025 we propose to embrace a faculty communication for accountability strategy to enhance our relations with the university executive management (Figure 1).



TEACHING AND LEARNING

Three departments used the holiday period for summer school to assist undergraduate students in modules with the highest failure rates in 2024. Results will be assessed to evaluate the potential impact of our future winter and summer schools as well as extracurricular activities as approved by Senate. Comprehensive final examination results are still in the process of Senate approval. It is notable that the faculty has to increase efforts for student and staff support by making the most of the available university resources, especially the UCDP programmes.

The faculty is pleased to announce new staff appointments. We welcome our colleagues to the family of FNS.

Department of Applied Sciences:

- Dr. Noluntu Dyantyi (Senior Lecturer)
- Dr. L Ndlwana (Lecturer)
- Mrs Nombongo Mtimba-Danster (Admin)

Department of Biological and Environmental Sciences:

- Ms Babalwa Mbolekwa (Lecturer)
- Mrs Nomanjoni Matiloshe (Lecturer)
- Ms Zinzisa Nokwali (Lecturer)

Department of Mathematical Studies and Computing:

- Dr J Mutumbayi (Senior Lecturer)
- Mr L Jubane (Lecturer)

Students and staff are reminded to adhere to our communication protocol, which was approved by the Board in 2024 (Figure 2). We are pleased to announce that this intervention improved integrity and ethics in our work environment, including the way it assisted management to manage resolution of conflicts easily.

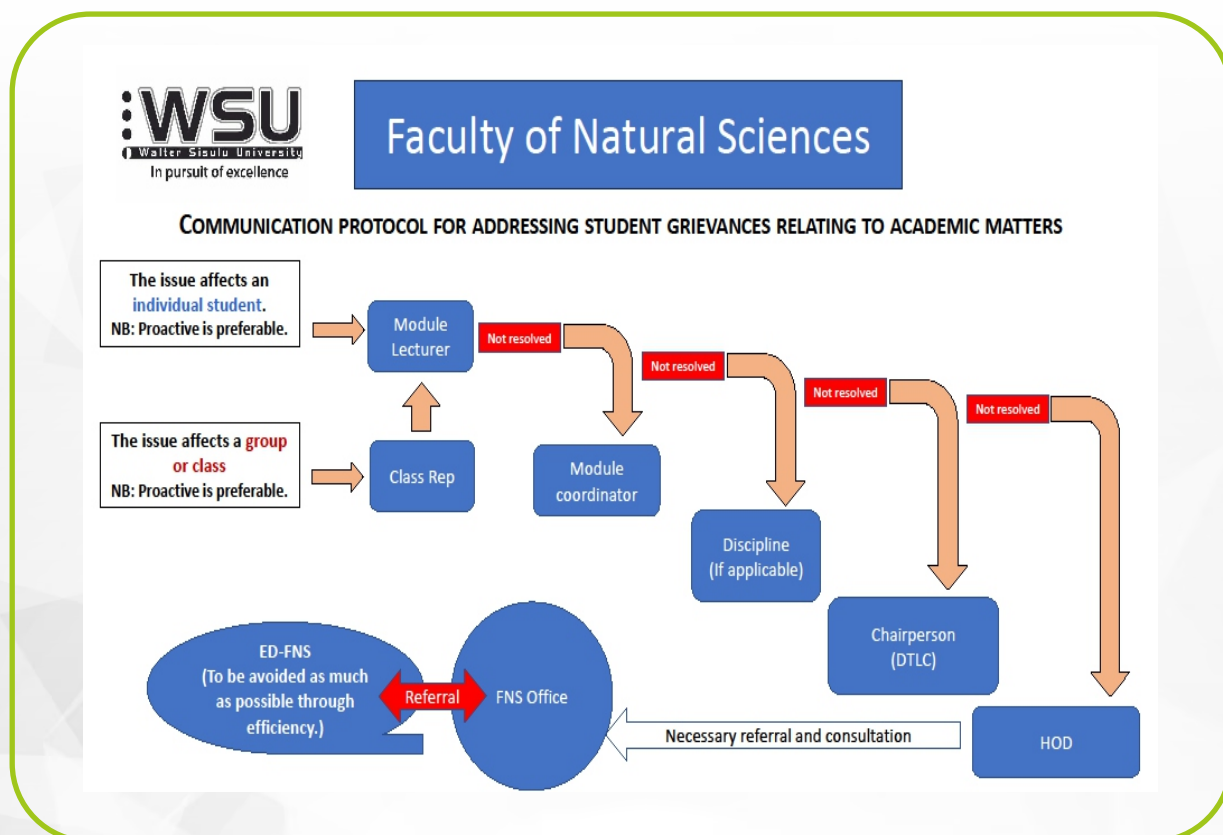


Figure 2. Student-staff communication protocol

RESEARCH

The preliminary draft of our 2024 research outputs has been submitted to the Research Office (Figure 3). The record is a clear indication of improvement across departments. However, we need to work harder on mentorship strategies towards greater and more widespread research and publication activities. This year, we shall review the role of our research centres and Research Niche Areas.

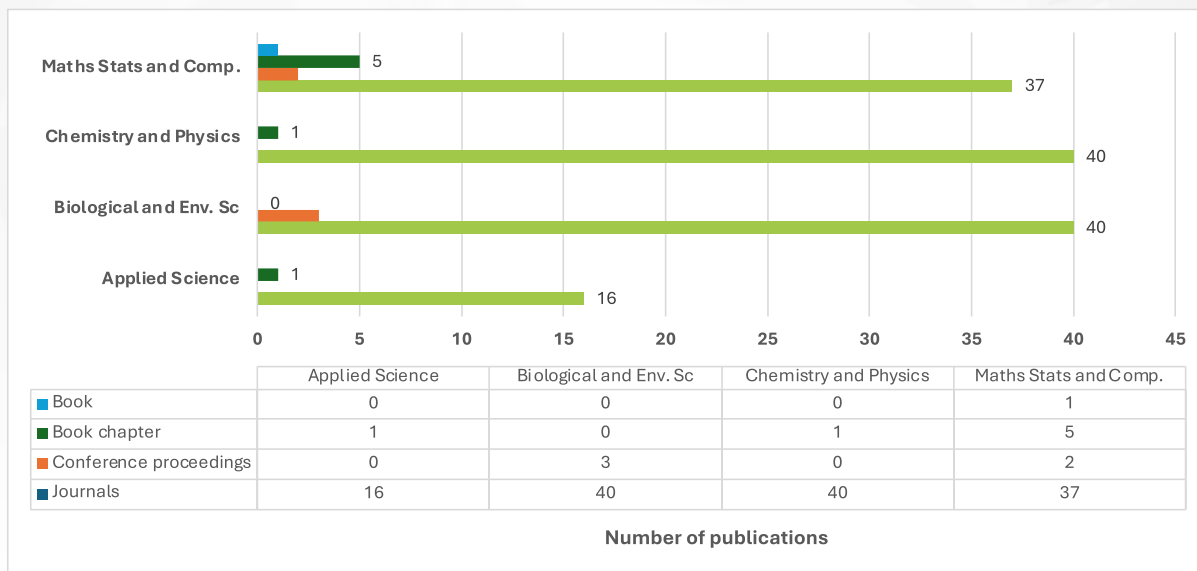


Figure 3. Preliminary report of 2024 research outputs.



Figure 4. Founding staff, postdocs and postgraduate students of CSFS. Missing: Prof. Oyedeji, Prof Okuthe, Prof Egbichi; Dr Maseme Mametsi, Dr Soviti, Dr Mngeni, Mrs van Heerden, Mrs Magayiiana.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We note the outstanding support of the WSU Executive leaders who played a direct role in our January success: Dr L Ntonzima (WSU Registrar), Professor M Linington (DVC: Teaching & Learning), Professor E Cishe (Acting DVC: Research), Professor C Ndebele (Director: DLT), Mr S Mnyaiza (Executive Director: HR), Mr S Mpambane (DVC: Institutional Development and Support), Dr I Mohasoa (ED: Student Affairs), Dr F Kwahene (Director: PEM) and Dr Gerard Verhoef (IP Specialist Attorney, Barnard Inc.)