

Chapter # 27

THE IMPACT OF THE EXTENDED CURRICULUM PROGRAMMES: THE NARRATIVES FROM CURRENT AND GRADUATE STUDENTS

Jeanine N. Mwambakana-Mutombo

Foundation Programmes, University of Pretoria, South Africa

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the efficacy of Extended Curriculum Programmes (ECPs) in Science and Commerce at a South African University, aimed at addressing persistent educational inequality. The ECPs provide an alternative access pathway for students who do not meet standard admission requirements, offering four streams: commerce, physical sciences, mathematical sciences, and biological sciences, with the objective of completing a three-year degree within an extended timeframe (n+1). A cohort analysis of students enrolled between 2017 to 2020 indicates a modest improvement in graduation within the (n+1) period, increasing from 17% to 19.5%. Despite this positive trend, substantial challenges remain. Approximately 32% of students discontinued their studies at the end of the fourth year, while many of those who remained required more than the prescribed timeframe to graduate. To contextualise these outcomes, the study includes a qualitative component comprising interviews with twenty randomly selected students who commenced their studies in the foundational year. These interviews explore the students' lived experiences, identifying factors that facilitated or hindered their academic progress. The qualitative findings enrich the quantitative results by providing insight into both effective practices and persistent barriers within the ECPs structure. Student-generated recommendations offer practical guidance for strengthening programme design and enhancing student success.

Keywords: extended curriculum programmes (ECPs), academic progress, educational inequality, cohort analysis, students lived experiences.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Study University offers four streams of Extended Curriculum Programmes (ECPs) on a dedicated Campus situated approximately 21 kilometres from its main Campus. The three of which are Bachelor of Science (BSc) Programmes and one a Bachelor of Commerce (BCom) Programme. The BSc Stream comprises a) BSc Extended Physical Sciences, b) BSc Extended Mathematical Sciences and c) BSc Extended Biological and Agricultural Sciences. The BSc extended curriculum programme, formerly known as the BSc Four-year programme, was implemented in 2008, whereas the BCom extended curriculum programme, formerly known as the BCom four-year programme, was implemented in 2012.

The ECPs were designed for students who are not academically prepared but who have the potential to succeed and obtain their degree (Megbowon, Palesa, Bongiwe, & Sipokazi, 2023; Mokganya & Zitha, 2024; Mouton & Rewitzky, 2025). Admitted students are those who have achieved a bachelor's degree endorsement, but they have not met the minimum requirement for enrolment in the mainstream modules. The programmes include an additional year of study for the commerce stream and an additional eighteen months for the

sciences stream, which aims to enhance students' basic knowledge and skills before they progress to more specialist studies in later years. Some students migrate to other faculties after their extended first year to do Engineering (BEng), Medicine and Dentistry (MBChB, BChD), Veterinary science (BVSc), Education (BEd) or Humanities (BA). Thus, the students admitted in the first cohort of this study, 2017, should complete their first degree in December 2020 (n+1) and their graduation take place in the subsequent year. From its inception, the programme was designed so that most of the teaching and learning activities take place in relatively small groups (50 students per group) to allow individual attention and provide sufficient time and opportunity to engage students in discussions. The lecturing staff are encouraged to use a variety of methods to deliver subject content in order to address possible gaps in content knowledge (Brits, Eloff, & Van Staden, 2025; Snyman & Kasirye, 2021). The programmes focus on understanding and developing critical thinking skills, as well as practical skills needed to continue with the more rigorous content of the subject areas dealt with later on in the programmes. The progress of the students is assessed continuously as they have to meet set levels of academic performance throughout the year.

The main idea behind the ECPs is to bridge the gap between school and higher education (Brits et al., 2025; Engelbrecht, Harding, & Potgieter, 2014; Koiko (in Hutchings & Garraway, 2010); Garraway (in Hutchings & Garraway, 2010); Mabila et al., 2006; Mouton, 2025; Pearce et al., 2015). Moreover, ECPs serve as the primary systemic social justice intervention designed to create the necessary curriculum space for talented but underprepared students (Mabila et al., 2006; Mouton, 2025). Therefore, ECPs offer foundational knowledge, academic skills, and a more gradual transition by allowing for a slower pace and dedicated developmental modules. In this paper, students who commenced their journey in the ECPs will be referred to as 'ECP students'.

Notwithstanding the noble purpose of ECPs in the South African context, there exist several challenges and complexities (Koiko (in Hutchings & Garraway 2010); Garraway (in Hutchings & Garraway 2010); Mabila et al., 2006; Mokganya & Zitha, 2024; Mouton, 2025, Snyman & Kasirye, 2021). There is a two-fold stigma associated with the programmes: the geographical location, outskirts of the city, and far from the main campus, as well as the perceived feeling by students as "grade 13" or less than their mainstream counterparts (Brits et al., 2025; Mokganya & Zitha, 2024; Ogude, Meyer, Mwambakana, & Mthethwa, 2019). Mabila et al., (2006) reported that evidence consistently shows that ECP students, once they complete their foundation phase, often outperform mainstream students in later years of study.

In the 2017 academic year, the University launched a strategic campaign termed FLY@UP, to constantly encourage students to complete their degrees in the minimum time indicated for the programme in which they were enrolled. FLY stands for 'the Finish Line is Yours. This motivational as well as inspirational message to students was designed to encourage them to take responsibility for their progression to graduation in the minimum period. This campaign encouraged students to keep up with their classes, choose their modules carefully, manage their time, work consistently and aim for good semester marks.

The narratives of both current and graduate ECPs students are crucial for understanding the true impact of these programs. By exploring their lived experiences, researchers can move beyond mere statistics on pass and retention rates to uncover the personal and academic journeys of these individuals. These stories shed light on how ECPs affect students' identities, their social integration, and their long-term academic and professional success. Listening to these voices provides a powerful, human-centred perspective on the effectiveness and future of extended curriculum programmes (Mouton & Rewitzky, 2025). In this paper, students who commenced their journey in the ECPs will be referred to as 'ECPs students'.

2. METODOLOGY

With over a decade of implementation, this research seeks to evaluate the impact of Extended Curriculum Programmes (ECPs) on their student population. Thus, the study aimed to: a) determine the degree to which ECPs have significantly influenced students' trajectories and achievements. b) explore the experiences of a twenty-randomly-selected group of current (ten) and graduate (ten) ECPs students, providing qualitative insights into the perceived effects of these programmes. c) analyse the movement of ECPs students across different qualifications and faculties to identify preferred pathways and destinations associated with graduation.

The main objective of this research is to provide a comprehensive analysis of the impact and experiences related to the ECPs. Specifically, it seeks to quantify the effect of ECPs on graduation trends, illuminate the lived experiences of participating students, and map the academic trajectories of these students through various qualifications and faculties leading to graduation. This understanding will contribute valuable insights into the future of ECPs at the University.

A mixed method was used in this research to assess the effectiveness of ECPs by looking at factors like time to graduation, first year progression, and overall completion rate. This quantitative part of the study will thus provide a clear, data-driven picture of the academic outcomes of the ECP students. The analysis of the narratives to the open-ended questions of the twenty randomly selected students will provide insight into ECPs students' lived experiences, their emotional and psychological journey, their academic and social integration, as well as their perceived value of the programmes.

Quantitative data were collected from institutional records databases, and the enrolment number per year and per specific stream, the graduation rate per year, degree, and faculty, the time to graduation, and the dropout rate will be the key variables. Cohort analysis was performed from our database platform systems.

Qualitative data were gathered through a purposive sampling strategy that included ten current ECPs students in order to understand their ongoing experiences and ten ECPs graduates to capture a longitudinal perspective on the programmes' impact.

3. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Through a collaboration with the Department of Enrolment and Student Administration (DESA), crucial data of the ECPs students who commenced their academic journey on the outskirt Campus since 2017 has been accessible. Of the cohort that started in 2017, approximately 17% completed their studies in time, in December 2020, and their graduation took place in the following year. There was a drop out of 11% at the end of year one. The analysis captured in Table 1 further revealed a 54.4% of a cumulative number of students who graduated and a further 35% of students dropping out at the end of the year (n+4), that is, the end of 2023. The results were similar for both 2018, 2019, and 2020, with a noticeable steady increase in the percentage of graduates at the end of the year (n+1) reaching 19.5% in 2024. In their study, van Broekhuizen, van der Berg, & Hofmeyr (2017) stated that: "only a small percentage of all matriculants complete any undergraduate qualification (whether a degree, a diploma or a certificate) within the first four to six years following matric". These authors reported that from the 2008-2010 cohorts of learners, only a small portion, between 5% and 6% of learners, completed their undergraduate studies within four years. Our results are fairly high, although the authors warned us not make further conclusions about university programme completion or dropout rates from the above percentage. Their study took into

consideration all candidates in the respective matric cohorts (van Broekhuizen et al., 2017). This study's results reveal similar findings, in general, with the majority of the students taking a longer time frame to graduate.

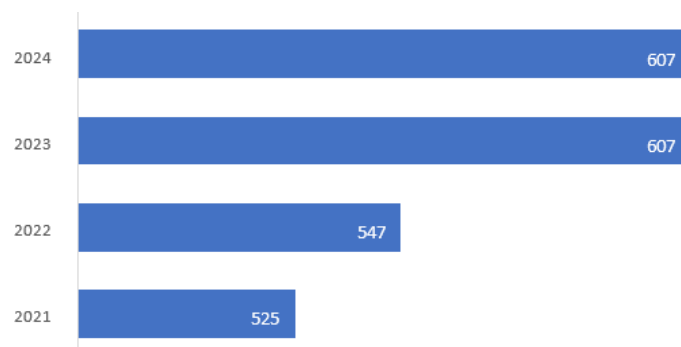
Table 1.
Cohort analysis of ECPs students who started their studies journey in 2017.

	Enrolment in 2017 (%)	Numbers end of 2020	Graduates end of 2020 (n+1)	Graduates end of 2023 (n+4)	% drop out end of year1	Cumulative % of drop out end of year (n+4)
BSc: Ext Biological and Agricultural Sciences	328(51)	173	59	184	15	105(32%)
BSc Ext Physical Sciences	116(18)	53	10	40	25	60(52%)
BSc Ext Mathematica l Sciences	84(13)	46	5	30	10	29(35%)
BCom Ext Programme	116(18)	52	37	77	18	30(26%)
Total	644(100%)	324(50.3%)	111 (17.2%)	333(54.4%)	68(11%)	224(35%)

By embracing the Extended Curriculum Programmes (ECPs), the University has opened doors to a significant number of aspiring students who might otherwise have been denied access to higher education (Brits et al., 2025, Kioko, in Hutchings & Garraway, 2010). A rising number of ECPs graduates are successfully completing their degrees and embarking on fulfilling careers (Mouton & Rewitzky, 2025). This is a testament to the transformative power of education and the dedication of our students, faculty, and staff. By providing a supportive teaching and learning environment and tailored academic support, students have been empowered to overcome challenges and achieve their dreams.

Of the cohort that started in 2017, only 17% completed their studies in December 2020, and their graduation took place in the following year. This percentage demonstrated a steady increase, reaching 19.5% in 2024. The bar graph presented in Figure 1, utilising data from University Graduation Ceremonies between 2021 and 2024, reveals a noteworthy pattern of consistent and substantial growth in the annual number of graduates. Although the data is cumulative, including students who take more than n+1 years to graduate, this upward trend is clearly evident. This achievement underscores the transformative impact of the ECPs and the dedication of our students and faculty. However, the cohort analysis also highlights significant challenges; approximately 32% of ECPs students are discontinuing their studies by the end of year four (n+1).

Figure 1.
Total number of ECPs Graduates during the 2021-2024 Graduation period.



The Study University offers a wide array of academic programs across various faculties, providing students with numerous pathways to success. A total of 2286 ECPs students who started at the Study University received their degrees from the 2021 to 2024 graduation ceremonies, as undergraduates or postgraduate students. Table 2 below showcases the movement of ECPs students across different faculties, with Natural and Agricultural Sciences and Economic and Management Sciences being in the lead with more than two-thirds of students (68%) graduating from various degrees within these two faculties.

Table 2.
Degrees awarded to ECPs students at 2021-2024 Graduation Ceremonies.

Faculties	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total number of graduates: 2286
Natural & Agricultural Sciences	220	204	220	208	37.3%
Economic and Management Sciences Engineering, Built,	107	156	219	219	30.7%
Environment and Information Technology	88	77	64	66	12.9%
Health Sciences	76	61	64	72	11.9%
Education	18	12	12	12	0.24%
Humanities	8	7	13	12	0.17%
Law	6	13	7	8	0.15%
Veterinary Science	1	15	8	9	0.14%
Theology and Religion	1	1			0.01%
GIBS Business School		1		1	0.01%

Students were asked to share their lived experiences, identifying factors that facilitated or hindered their academic progress and areas necessitating improvement.

In general, all the students appreciated the slower pace, smaller classes, and the opportunity for reflection and adjustment to university life. Student 1 stated: “It provided a crucial foundation that facilitated my later success in mainstream programmes. Students 2 and 3 initially felt some disappointment about being in the Extended Curriculum Programmes, but later they recognised its value in preparing them for their chosen fields. All students recalled the shift to online learning during the pandemic (COVID-19), leading to a feeling of isolation. The pandemic presented significant challenges with online assessments. They had to increase self-discipline.

All students emphasised the necessity of hard work, dedication, and perseverance to succeed in their studies. They acknowledged that the university journey can be challenging and requires consistent effort. They also valued the support systems available to them: family, lecturers (faculty members) and tutors, friends and peers played a crucial role in supporting them through difficult times, especially during the pandemic and when facing academic challenges.

Students 4 and 5 mentioned the importance of taking breaks, pursuing extracurricular activities, and making meaningful connections to enhance their overall university experience. Below are four synopses from two current and two graduate ECPs students.

Student A

Looking back, the extended programme was one of the most important stepping stones in my journey to becoming a medical student. It gave me the space to adjust academically and personally, while still challenging me to grow. The support from tutors was consistent and encouraging, and the class sizes created an environment where I could really engage with the material and build a solid understanding of each module. Even though we were all aiming for a spot in medicine, there was a real sense of community among us—we helped each other through the tough parts and celebrated the small wins together. The way the syllabus was structured and paced made it easier to retain information without feeling pressured to cram. In many ways, it was the perfect bridge between high school and university, and it helped me feel confident and prepared when I finally entered the MBChB programme. Now, in my final year, I can clearly see how much that foundation has shaped the student and future doctor I’ve become. I am forever grateful and genuinely hope

Student B

The day I was admitted into the Extended Programme, I chose to see it as an opportunity rather than a setback. From the very first day, I knew I had to work hard to get into my desired programme.

I set clear goals, knowing exactly what I was working towards. One of the things I valued most about the campus was the smaller class sizes, which meant I could get more attention from lecturers and tutors.

The support was invaluable, especially when I encountered academic challenges. However, my journey was not without its setbacks. In my first semester, I failed one of my core modules. This failure was a significant blow, forcing me to alter my study plans. I reassessed my study habits and sought additional support from the Academic Success Coaches. The late-night study sessions, consulting with the academic staff and the frequent visits to the Student Support Office eventually paid off. When I got the opportunity to write the special exam in January, I made sure not to waste it. This experience taught me the importance of resilience and the power of perseverance.

Today, I am a BCom Statistics and Data Science student; a testament to the belief that, with dedication, you can achieve your dreams. Do not let anyone demotivate you about starting with an

that more students get to experience the programme

extended programme. At this University, the finish line is yours, and the staff at this Campus ensure that you reach it. The journey may be longer and more challenging, but the rewards are well worth the effort.

Embrace the process and stay focused. My advice to anyone facing similar challenges is to never let setbacks discourage you. Set your goals clearly, work towards them diligently, and remember to take care of yourself along the way. Do not neglect your social life; the friends you make can provide essential support and joy. And if you have a spiritual belief, lean on it for strength and guidance.

I can proudly say that I am an alumna of this Campus.

Student C

At first, I was upset because most of my peers were in the mainstream programme on Main Campus. But, looking back, I am grateful that I followed the extended programme.

I got an extra year to reflect on the career path I wanted to follow and the degree programme that would get me there. I also made lots of friends due to the smaller classes. Additionally, I was able to complete the same modules as the mainstream first-year programme at a manageable pace.

In my second year, I managed to qualify for the BSc Medical Sciences programme.

The transition to Main Campus was easy thanks to the study skills I learnt in the extended programme. By managing my

time, I was able to join the Student Culture Committee and the University Women's Chorale, which allowed me to have fun and experience more of university life. With hard work, determination and support from my family and friends, I was also able to join the Golden Key International Honours Society and graduate on time.

I am currently completing my honours degree in Pharmacology. I am looking forward to working in the University's Clinical Research Unit to gain integrated work experience.

Student D

I was unsure about what I wanted to study, and initially applied for both the BCom Business Management programme and the BCom Extended Programme. After being accepted into the Extended Programme, I was disappointed because it was not initially what I wanted. However, I was grateful for the opportunity and took it. Throughout my time on this Campus, I worked as hard as I could to get into a mainstream programme, and to figure out what I wanted to do.

This Campus allowed me to adjust to university life more easily, as the modules were broken down in a way that was easier to consume. This prepared me for the mainstream programme. I chose BCom Informatics (Information Systems), and that has led me to become a graduate. This degree programme was the best decision for me. Coming from my Campus, I understand how the extended programmes prepare us to handle the workload in the mainstream degree programme.

I am currently pursuing my honours degree in BIT Information Systems and I was blessed to get into an internship programme at a leading IT company.

My biggest challenge at university was adding on a year of study. The fear of being

For me, working online during the COVID-19 pandemic was the most difficult time I have experienced at university. Without the routine of attending classes and opportunities to destress with friends, I felt isolated from the university community. During this time, I relied heavily on my family to support me. It made me feel better knowing that they are always there for me. It was also helpful to reach out to my friends who were also struggling with school, and to talk to peers for help with academic work.

My advice to prospective students is to work very hard. University is very difficult, so put in lots of effort into everything you do.

However, working hard does not always give the intended results. When this happens, remember how far you have come and all the things you have achieved so far. Being at this University is a huge accomplishment! Remember that you are worthy, regardless of setbacks. Take a break, and start again.

During my studies, I prepared for my classes, and asked questions (even if they felt like dumb questions). It is also important to take a break when you need it. This can prevent burnout. Just forget about work for a bit – and then get back to it!

a failure and just another statistic really got to me. I did not have the perfect university story, but I overcame it through my faith and belief that everything will work out in the end if I just continue playing my part to the best of my ability.

Personally, I would have liked more access to a student faculty advisor on the campus, but the support from the lecturers and tutors was really great. I would not have been here had it not been for them.

The advice I can offer students starting at this Campus now is:

"Be curious!" Constantly consult your lecturers and tutors, and apply yourself to what you are doing. Most importantly, do not give up! Visualise yourself in that graduation outfit.

I wish to encourage the Campus to continue doing what it is doing to support the students that come through the extended programmes. Continue making this path an option for students, as it can be a vital point in any young person's life.

The following were the advice and suggestions made by the students: a) have different tutors for maths and physics tutorials who can offer alternative explanations to the lecturer, b) improve the facilities with faster computers and more diverse seating areas in the library, c) do not discontinue the programmes due to their positive impact on students' journeys, d) expand the range of events, clubs, and sports on the study campus to foster a stronger sense of community, and e) implement a programme to help students navigate the increased workload and pace when transitioning to a different campus and faculty.

The current students were encouraged to be curious, seek help, persevere, enjoy the journey, and maintain a clear sense of purpose.

4. FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Tracer study of the full cohorts of students from inception till 2022, and student feedback or voice on their learning experience.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The analysis clearly shows that ECPs do give access to students who could not have been admitted to science and commerce fields due to their matric results not meeting the minimum criteria for mainstream degrees (Mouton, 2025; Mouton & Rewitzky, 2025; Brits

et al., 2025). These 2286 students would not have graduated if they had not started their studies at the Study Campus. Moreover, in the paper by Ogude et al. (2019), previous and successful students attest that during their time at this Campus, they received the necessary support from the lecturing staff, the student advisors and the tutors, which enabled them to successfully complete their degrees.

More than a decade after its inception, the study University's ECPs continue to give students access to higher education and to lay a solid foundation by equipping them with the knowledge and skills necessary for success in mainstream higher education. Although the number of successful students is below 20%, this success could not have been possible if access had been denied to them. The Council on Higher Education (2024) argues that the discussion on educational inequality and institutional interventions in South Africa highlights a shift from viewing students' underpreparedness as an individual deficiency to recognising it as a systemic articulation gap that requires institutional transformation. ECPs put into practice the shift of policy emphasis from "access to success" (Lubben et al., 2010). International Journal of Educational Development Factors influencing access students' persistence in an et al., 2010; Mabila et al., 2006; Slabbert & Friedrich-Nel, 2015), which is the main drive of the university in the South African context.

Providing a supportive teaching and learning environment, along with tailored academic support, individuals are empowered to overcome challenges and achieve their dreams. However, approximately 80% of ECPs students take longer than n+1 timeframe to successfully complete their studies, and about 32% of students drop out of the programmes by their fourth year (n+1) of studies. The study also revealed that the majority of students migrate to other Faculties and in 112 various qualifications at the university. Based on the graduation trends and students' narratives, the management of the University reviewed the ECPs offerings and has introduced, in 2025, 11 new programmes; ten in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences and one in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences. To resolve the stigmatisation and sense of belonging (Brits et al., 2025; Ogude et al., 2019), the ECPs have relocated to the main Campus.

REFERENCES

- Brits, G. P., Eloff, I., & Van Staden, S. (2025). Using Extended Curriculum Programmes to Improve Student Success at Universities. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 11(2), 58-83. <https://doi.org/10.6017/ijahe.v11i2.17771>
- Council on Higher Education. (2024). *Understanding Epistemic Access and Success of Students from Historically Disadvantaged Backgrounds in South African Universities* (Higher Education Monitor No. 16). Council on Higher Education. Pretoria: South Africa.
- Engelbrecht, J., Harding, A., & Potgieter, M. (2014). Evaluating the Success of a Science Academic Development Programme at a Research-intensive University. *African Journal of Research Mathematics, Science and Technology Education*, 18(3), 287-298.
- Garraway, J. (2010). Field Knowledge and learning on Foundation Programmes. In C. Hutchings, & J. Garraway (Eds.), *Beyond the University Gates: Provision of Extended Curriculum Programmes in South Africa. Rhodes University Foundation Seminar Proceedings* (pp. 31-39).
- Hutchings, C. & Garraway, J. (Eds.). (2010). *Beyond the University Gates: Provision of Extended Curriculum Programmes in South Africa. Proceedings of January 2009 Rhodes University Foundation Seminar*. June 2010. ISBN: 978-0-620-46968-5
- Koiko, J. I. (2010). Foundation Provision in South African Higher Education: A Social Justice Perspective. In C. Hutchings, & J. Garraway (Eds.), *Beyond the University Gates: Provision of Extended Curriculum Programmes in South Africa. Rhodes University Foundation Seminar Proceedings* (pp. 40-49).

- Lubben, F., Davidowitz, B., Buffler, A., Allie, S., & Scott, I. (2010). International Journal of Educational Development Factors influencing access students' persistence in an undergraduate science programme: A South African case study. *International Journal of Educational Development (on-line)*, 30, 351-358. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2009.11.009>
- Mabila, T. E., Malatje, S. E., Addo-Bediako, A., Kazeni, M. M., & Mathabatha, S. S. (2006). The Role of Foundation Programmes in Science Education: The UNIFY Programme at the University of Limpopo, South Africa. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 26(3), 295-304.
- Megbowon, F., Palesa, M., Bongiwe, K., & Sipokazi M. (2023). Challenges of First-Year Extended Curriculum Programme Students at a University in South Africa. *International Journal of Learning Teaching and Educational Research*, 22(4), 178-194.
- Mokganya, G., & Zitha, I. (2024). Exploring the impact of the Extended Curriculum Programme (ECP) as a crucial motivating landing space: a Study on Student Transition in Higher Education. *International Journal of Research In Business And Social Science*. 13(10), 154-164.
- Mouton, M. (2025). Finding Purpose in Opportunity: Evaluating the Extended Curriculum Programme Through Former Students' Perspectives. *Cogent Education*. 12(1), Retrieved September 03, 2025, from <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2025.2497146>
- Mouton, M., & Rewitzky, I. M. (2025). Opportunity and Outcome: A Quantitative Evaluation of The STEM Extended Curriculum Programme at a Research-Intensive University. *South African Journal of Higher Education*. 39(2), 157-171.
- Ogude, N. A., Meyer, I. J., Mwambakana, J., & Mthethwa, N. E. (2019). Can Extended Curriculum Programmes Be Improved Through Engagement With Students Using Appreciative Inquiry? *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 33(4), 219-236.
- Pearce, H., Campbell, A., Craig, T. S., leRoux, P., Nathoo, K., & Vicatos, E. (2015). The Articulation Between the Mainstream and Extended Degree Programmes in Engineering at The University of Cape Town: Reflections and Possibilities. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 29(1), 150-162.
- Slabbert, R., & Friedrich-Nel, H. (2015). Extended Curriculum Programme Evolution: a Road Map to Academic Success? *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 29(1), 45-59.
- Snyman, L., & Kasirye, M. (2021). The Impact of Science Foundation Programmes on the Success Rate of First-Year Students in a Blended Teaching and Learning Environment. *South African Journal of Higher Education*. 35(5), 277-295.
- Van Broekhuizen, H., van der Berg, S., & Hofmeyr, H. (2017). Higher Education Access and Outcomes for the 2008 National Matric Cohort. *SSRN Electronic Journal (online)*. Retrieved from <https://www.ssrn.com/abstract=2973723>.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My colleagues from the Department of Enrolment and Student Administration (DESA) used a service indicator to backtrack the cohorts that started at the Study Campus from 2017. The data of ECPs graduates in Table 2 and Figure 1 were pulled from the University-Graduation Ceremonies from 2021 to 2024.

Assistance received from my colleagues from the Department of Institutional Planning (DIP) and Institutional Research and Analytics (IRA).

AUTHOR INFORMATION

Full name: Jeanine Ngalula Mwambakana-Mutombo

Institutional affiliation: University of Pretoria

Institutional address: Room 2-44 Akanyang Building, Private Bag X20, Hatfield 0028

Short biographical sketch: Dr. J. N. Mwambakana-Mutombo is an accomplished academic with a diverse background in mathematics and public health. She holds a DTech in Mathematical Technology from Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) and an MPH (Master of Public Health) from Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University (SMU). She taught both undergraduate and postgraduate students and has supervised to completion six master's and two PhDs candidates. Dr. Mwambakana has held various academic leadership roles, such as the coordinator for mathematics module evaluations at the African Virtual University (AVU) and an external chair for a program review at Durban University of Technology (DUT). She is currently the Head of the Foundation Programmes. She has reviewed academic papers, served as an external examiner for multiple universities and published articles in peer-reviewed journals and conference proceedings. For over 10 years, she has served as the Head of Residences at the University of Pretoria.