

## Centre for Teaching and Learning

### NWU TEACHING AND LEARNING CONFERENCE THEME 2022

#### 1 Theme

*Digital and mobile infrastructure and technologies are tools to enable all citizens to engage with, create and access information and services from a range of sources anywhere and at any time. This assists in addressing unequal access to public and other services (such as education and health-care) and boosts opportunities for employment and economic growth. Digital transformation is by its very nature disruptive and has and will continue to change the way everyone communicates, interacts and transacts. It will transform the way societies and economies work- how citizens interact with government, how government delivers services and how consumers access goods and services.*

– National Integrated ICT Policy White Paper (2016:114).

*There is an undeniable need to train the next generation in emerging digital competencies and to be fluent in designing, developing or employing technology responsibly. At the same time, 21st-century students must learn how to approach problems from many perspectives, cultivate and exploit creativity, engage in complex communication, and leverage critical thinking. With a future of work that is constantly evolving, these non-automatable "human" skills are foundational, and will only increase in value as automation becomes more mainstream.*

– NWU Common Strategic Assumptions (NWU APP, 2021).

The theme for the NWU Fifth Teaching and Learning Conference is Digital Transformation in Higher Education. The NWU T&L Conference will be hosted from 27, 28, and 29 September 2022. The blended approach and hybrid platform allows for delegates to attend face-to-face at a venue and Campus of their choice but also allows for greater virtual attendance and experience of the three-day Conference programme. The live streaming will be broadcast through a virtual platform and DX-5 your avatar robot will guide you through the 3D platform. The following are broad explanations of the concept of Digital Transformation in the South African Higher Education sector.

*"South Africa has adopted three key pillars (i) digital transformation of government, (ii) digital access and (iii) digital inclusion to inform its approach for transforming South Africa into an inclusive digital society" (Manda & Backhouse, 2018:464).*

*"Digital transformation of the education sector in education in the industry 4.0 is argued not to be centred only on the use of a computer, but it involves the development of an ecosystem that facilitates sharing of learning materials and data analytics to understand learners and teaching needs..." (Mhlana, 2020:14).*

*"...the digital transformation of education in South Africa can present opportunities that did not exist before. Holding all other factors constant, switching to online learning can be an equalizer through improving access ... there is an opportunity to scale up access to education for many who were not able to access tertiary institutions. The other important aspect is that technology can present opportunities to promote innovation and creativity, this is in response to South Africa's history of education and political system" (Mhlana, 2020:22).*

*"The reality of the lockdown has forced many institutions of higher learning to switch to online learning. Several universities in South Africa switched to online learning ... We see this change as the beginning of the process that will move education to 4IR where learning will be mostly digital, with a few occasions of face-to-face engagements" (Mhlana & Moloi, 2020:8).*

## 2 Sub-themes

### 2.1 Digital transformation for enhanced student experience with innovative curriculum design

To support enhanced student experience, digital transformation will contribute to innovative curriculum design. NWU's drive towards digital transformation of teaching and learning starts with innovative curriculum design and using educational technologies. *Does the integration of technology into the teaching and learning process have significant effects on teaching quality and/or enhancing student performance and experience?* Showcase how the technology you use encourages your students to embrace digital transformation.

### 2.2 Why digital transformation? The links between development and engagement in teaching-learning

In South Africa, there are challenges of digital transformation in the education sector which include, the challenge of inequality and of exclusion as well as the challenge of skills requirement and resource constraints. *Do you expose your students to disruptive technologies? Have you embraced 4IR in the teaching, learning, and assessment environment?* Present on how you are teaching and your students are learning during the digital revolution for education.

### 2.3 Digital Transformation and the NWU T-L Strategy: Opportunities to foster self-directed, collaborative and cooperative learning

The NWU is working towards formalising a NWU TL Digital Transformation Plan / Strategy. The terms digitisation, digitalisation, and digital transformation are commonly used interchangeably. In applying practical and creative ways of approaching pedagogy, such as models for student learning, Self-directed Learning (SDL), Digital Cooperative Learning (DCL), Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (AR), or Mixed Reality (MR), and Game-Based Learning (GBL), it is important to develop digital content. *Do you think Digital Transformation has an impact on operational models, structures, people, processes and roles?* Share how Digital Transformation has made it possible for implementing a range of innovative teaching strategies that enhance student learning and make education 'flexible' at NWU.

### 3 References

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