

# Research Support Services at the University of Cape Town Libraries

Amina Adam  
Research Commons Librarian

- UCT Libraries in collaboration with the Research Office planned an exciting Research Week in May 2014
- To address the unique interests of research students and researchers
- Sessions included Research and Publication, Open Access and Research Ethics
- Research Expo provided students the opportunity to promote their own research
- Topics emerging from an “**Inspire Idea Tree**” included: supervisor relations, loneliness, funding, ethics clearance and data management



# Researcher Loneliness

- Research is a lonely activity
- Creating student support groups for postgraduate students working on their own
- Balancing studies and work is challenging – “wish I had classmates”
- Networking with other postgraduates in different faculties (but may be doing similar work)



# Researcher Loneliness

- Services offered at UCT to combat loneliness and isolation:
- **Research Commons** at UCT Libraries offers a well- appointed workspace
- Creating a conducive environment to producing quality research
- Develop a community of practice that young researchers will aspire to join

# Researcher Loneliness

- **Research Commons Blog:** a new initiative to connect with those who feel isolated can be accessed at <http://researchcommonsblog.uct.ac.za/>
- **Student Wellness Service:** [www.uct.ac.za/students/health/wellness/clinical/](http://www.uct.ac.za/students/health/wellness/clinical/) offers short-term counselling to students encountering personal, emotional or psychological problems
- **Postgraduate Students Association (PGSA):** an academic association of all postgraduate students at UCT  
[www.uct.ac.za/apply/funding/postgraduate/association](http://www.uct.ac.za/apply/funding/postgraduate/association)
- To foster an active, vibrant and diverse postgraduate culture
- Contributing towards the development of the University of Cape Town as a world-class research-driven institution.

# Supervisors

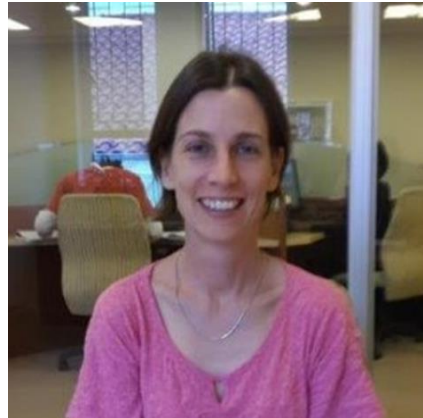
- Supervisor – supervisees relationships amongst postgraduate students: personality clashes, rigid interpersonal relations, delays in receiving feedback, lack of supervision guidelines
- Often leads to students becoming demotivated
- Supervisor has varied roles including those of an adviser, teacher, guide and critic
- Giving criticism is one of a supervisor's main activities



# Supervisors

Services offered at UCT to support students with academic writing:

- **The Writing Centre:** offers a one-on-one and group consultancy to students who want to talk about their writing located at : [www.writingcentre.uct.ac.za/](http://www.writingcentre.uct.ac.za/)
- **Research Commons Writing Centre Consultations:** a collaborative effort with the UCT Writing Centre making themselves available in the Research Commons to further support postgraduate students
- **Writing Centre consultant Libby Eaton** is available to students in the Research Commons Seminar Room weekly, on Tuesdays from 9:00 – 13:30.





To book an appointment at the Writing Centre is to register and make use of their online booking system at: <http://www.writingcentre.uct.ac.za/writing/booking>

- **Savvy Researcher Series:** aims to meet the evolving needs of postgraduates
- Hosted annually by UCT Libraries, the Savvy Researcher is a collective series of seminars and workshops aimed at postgraduate students.
- The series targets all aspects of the postgraduate experience, covering numerous topics that feed into the research cycle.
- Workshops take place every Thursday from 15h00 – 16h30 in the Ulwazi Training Room in the Chancellor Oppenheimer Main Library and will run until October 2015.
- The programme for 2015 is available at: <http://www.lib.uct.ac.za/lib/savvy-researcher-series-2015>

# Interlibrary loans



- Another useful service for postgraduate students is that of the **Interlibrary Loans Department** situated on [level 4 of the Chancellor Oppenheimer Library](#)
- Staff will source research materials that are not available at UCT from other libraries in South Africa or beyond.
- All UCT staff and students may use this service. There is no cost for items obtained in South Africa - See more at:  
<http://www.lib.uct.ac.za/lib/interlibrary-loans#sthash.NbYcNeQy.dpuf>

# Referencing and Citation challenges

- Is an essential component of academic writing
- Feedback received from attendees at Research Week indicated students experienced countless problems with referencing



# Referencing and Citation challenges

- UCT offers the following interventions to support their students overcome these challenges:
- Harvard UCT: Handbook on citation available at:  
[http://www.lib.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image\\_tool/images/25/resources/Harvard%20UCT%202015.pdf](http://www.lib.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/25/resources/Harvard%20UCT%202015.pdf)
- LibGuide on referencing for the UCT community
- UCT Writing Centre and avoiding plagiarism
- Citation Managers: RefWorks and EndNote
- Savvy Researcher Workshops on “Academic writing skills for postgraduates and citation management

# Dealing with your data

- At UCT a Research Data Management Plan is underway. More information is available at the following link:  
<http://www.lib.uct.ac.za/research-data-management>
- Partners such as :
  - UCT Libraries,
  - UCT ICTS,
  - Research Office,
  - Deputy Deans of Research for each faculty at UCT,
  - UCT Contracts,
  - Intellectual Property Services
  - DataFirst

# Dealing with your data

- Supporting researchers is a multi-layered approach:
- LISC & the MLIS (Masters in Library and Information Studies) Digital Curation course
- Savvy Researcher Series
- eResearch portal <http://www.eresearch.uct.ac.za/>

# Research Ethics

- Ethics clearance help
- Ethics clearance

**Postgraduate Research Office for ethics assistance**

<http://www.researchoffice.uct.ac.za/>



# Research Engagement Evening

- A new initiative that the Library would like to host once a term
- The purpose of hosting this *Research Engagement Evening* is to grow a culture of research at UCT
- To get prominent researchers to share principles/experiences/ methodologies and such with younger researchers.
- It is more in the mode of an elder sharing research knowledge with a new generation of researchers.



Thank you!

[Amina.Adam@uct.ac.za](mailto:Amina.Adam@uct.ac.za)

