

A photograph of a student sitting at a desk in a library, reading a book. The student is in the foreground, looking down at the book. In the background, there are other students and a large window with a grid pattern. The lighting is warm, suggesting a sunset or sunrise.

One Tweak at a Time: University of Johannesburg

Supported by a grant from Carnegie Corporation of New York

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Background



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University of Johannesburg 2005 – 2018

- Merger 2005: RAU/Vista/TWR
- In 2005, very few written policies
 - Oral traditions in departments and faculties
 - Strong tradition of tutorials
- Comprehensive university (diplomas to PhDs)
- Four campuses (APK, APB, DFC & SWC) – travel by bus
- 9 Faculties (now 7 plus a College)
- 2000+ academic staff
- 50,000+ students
- Most students live off-campus

Faculties ▼

College of Business and Economics

Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture

Faculty of Education

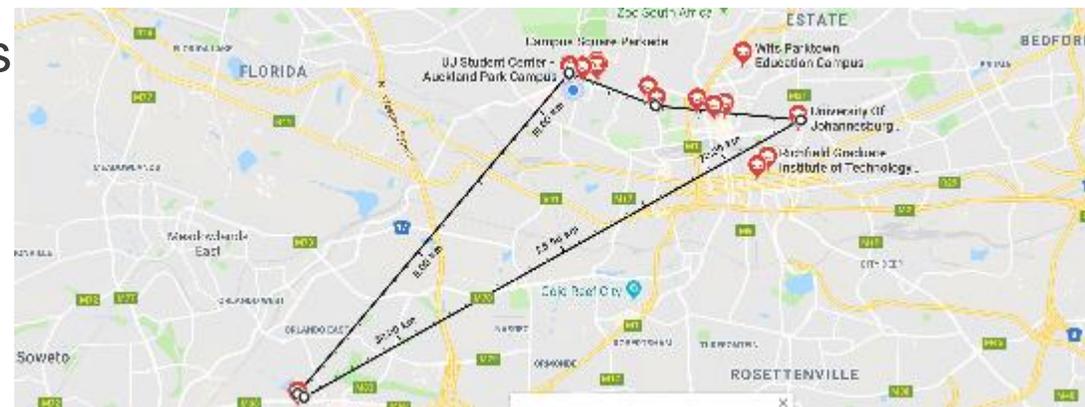
Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment

Faculty of Health Sciences

Faculty of Humanities

Faculty of Law

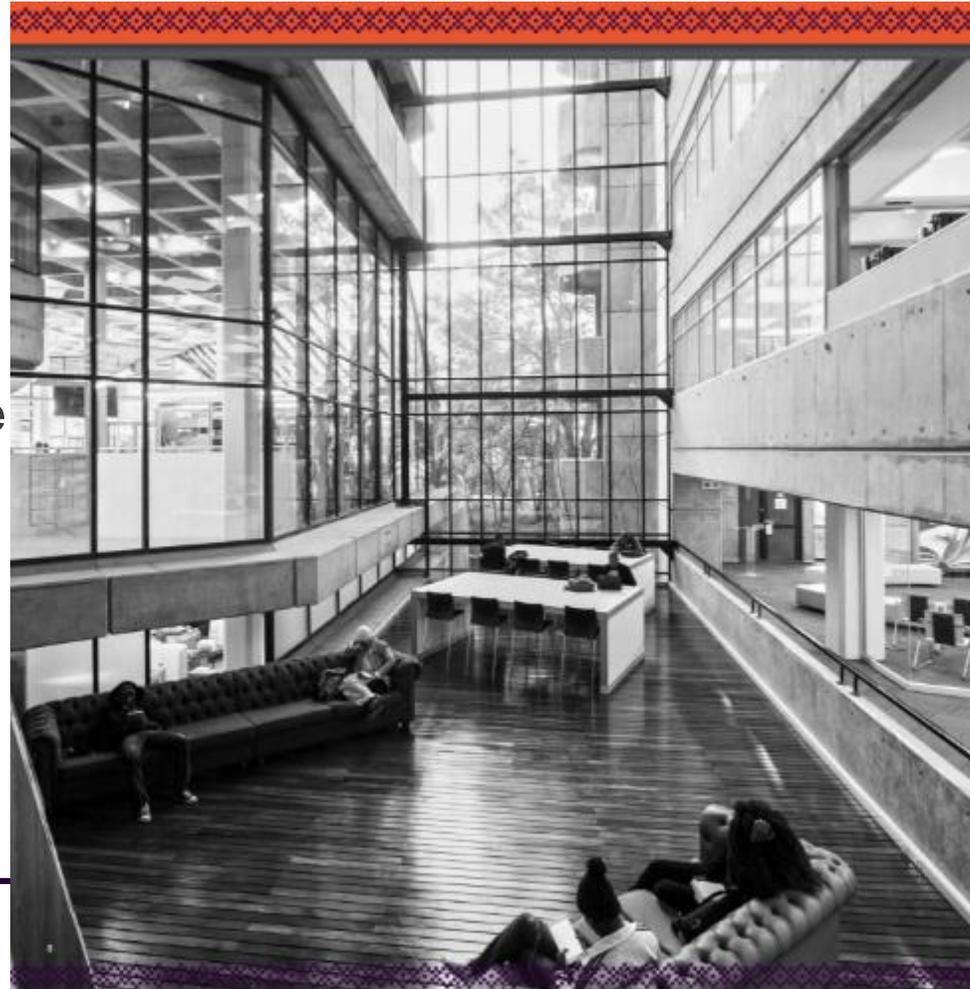
Faculty of Science



Corporatisation shaping the nature of universities

Values underpinning corporatisation:

- Branding & controlling *the image*
- Creating an institutional narrative
- The media is very useful
- Ranking & internationalisation to be competitive
- An audit culture for accountability
- Access is not for everyone – APS scores/
Biometrics
- Outsourcing is cheaper
- Students are clients



VISION

An international University of choice, anchored in Africa, dynamically shaping the future.

MISSION

Inspiring its community to transform and serve humanity through innovation and the collaborative pursuit of knowledge.

VALUES

Imagination
Conversation
Regeneration
Ethical Foundation



www.uj.ac.za

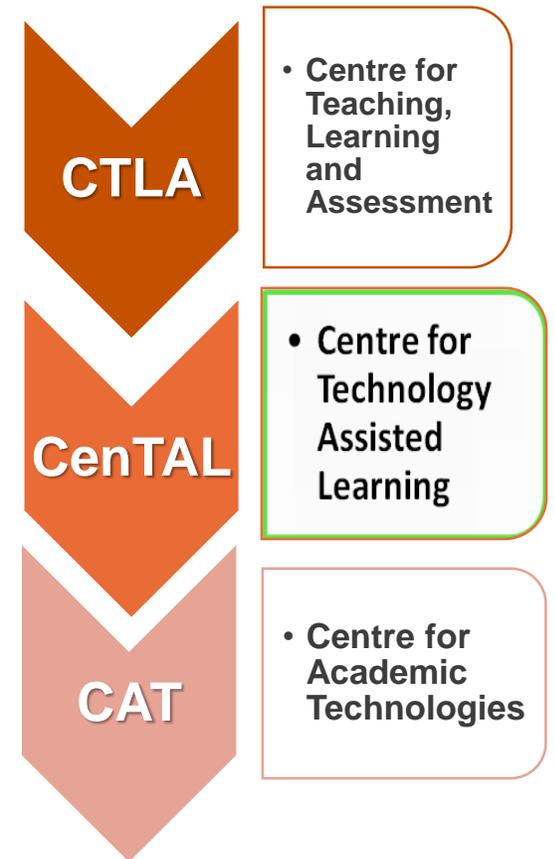
Infrastructure to support teaching and learning

- Ubiquitous Wi-Fi on all campuses
- Up to 20 GB (at no cost) per student per month and unlimited data between 19:00 and 7:00 / JoziFreeWiFi 350MB per day
- All lecture venues equipped with data projectors and bigger venues with document presenter devices
- BYOD spaces
- 4,000 seats in computer labs across campuses
- Library: learning commons, research commons, social spaces on each campus providing access to computers & unlimited Internet use
- **Learning design** and **technology** support and training for staff / **helpdesk** for students/ **training** in Blackboard and Microsoft



From multi-modal learning to blended T&L

- **2003:** Multi-modal learning material packages / Learning management system (EduLink)
- **2008/9:** Technology integrated teaching & learning/ Less hard-copy LG and CDs → more on Blackboard Learn
- **2012 – 2015:** Promoting integrated use of T,L&A / Technologies and cross-platform applets
- **2016/7:** Increased focus on blended learning
- **2017/8:** Blended and fully online, using Bb as LMS



Online learning environment



uLink – single sign-on student portal

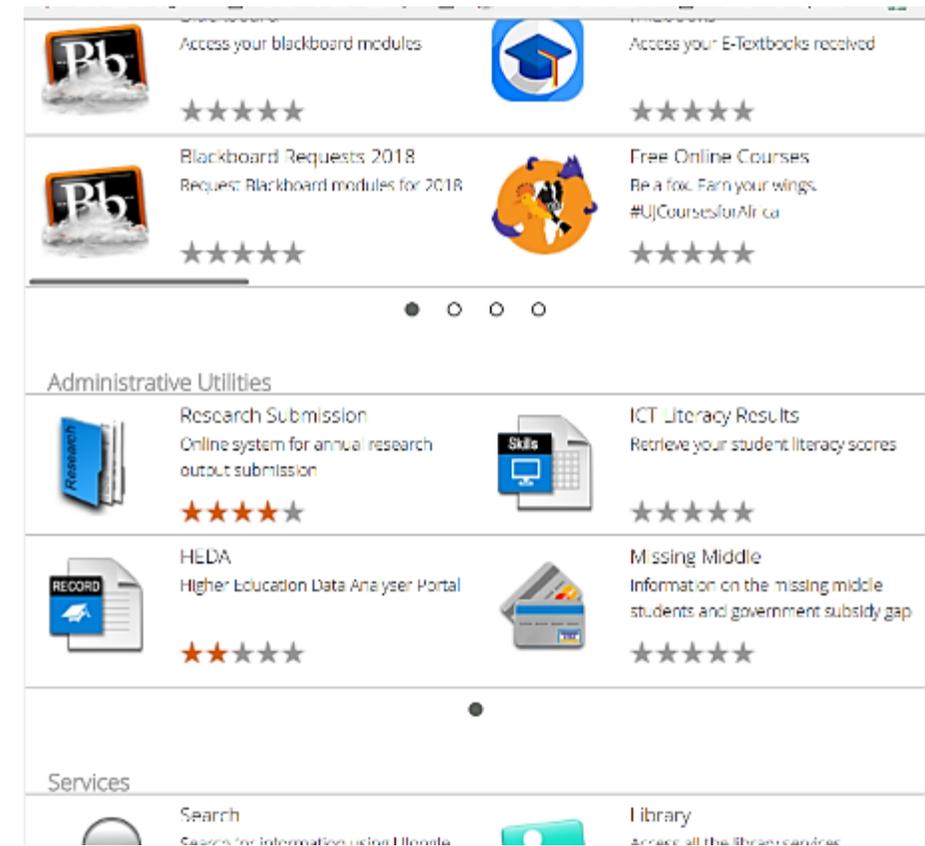
- In 2017, 10 million+ individual logins & 35,000 daily individual student logins (Access to Bb, Fin Statements, etc)
- 82% students in survey indicated that they use uLink daily.

Blackboard Learn (hosted in Amsterdam)

- In 2017, close to 7 million individual logins to Blackboard.

Blackboard Predict

- Learning analytics: real time, early warning system for students in need of additional academic and social support
- Currently piloted in Law; next semester Humanities



“Learning to be”, handheld devices & e-textbooks

- UJ has an explicit teaching and learning philosophy of ‘**learning to be**’ spelled out in the official T&L policy
- Personal **mobile devices** made compulsory for undergraduate students since 2014
 - From **2015**, annually 2500 tablets are being distributed to first-year NSFAS recipients) R10 million
- In **2015** – before the *#feesmustfall* – formally adopted ‘blended learning’ as the mode of delivery.
- Annual provision of R18 million for free e-textbooks to first-year students since **2015**



Methodology



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The UJ case study methodology

- **Interviews** with lecturers – Carina van Rooyen
- **Interviews** with students – Maria Frahm-Arp and research assistant – 38
- **Focus groups** with students – Maria’s research assistant and Thea – 4
- **Documentation** from UJ: Senate, website and intranet, media statements, circulars, reports, etc.
- UJ **policy** documents
- 400+ pages of text from **WhatsApp group** (15,000 lines)
- **Blackboard Learn** data for 2015 to 2018
- **Student learning with technology surveys** 2015 to 2018
- **Staff teaching with technology surveys** 2014-2015
- **Media & journal articles** and reports



#FeesMustFall and #EndOutsourcing Events at UJ



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#FeesMustFall and #EndOutsourcing events – 2015 & 2016

“The movement shifted focus to material demands, with an increasingly bold and expansive nature, from no fee increase in 2016 and no registration fees, to the cancelation of all students’ debts, free education, and the insourcing of all work at the university.”

October 2015

- 6 October movement
- Wits students protesting on 14 October 2015 in response announcement of 10.5% fee increase for 2016. Many UJ students join
- Rhodes & UCT - #RhodesMustFall
- 5000 protestors march to Parliament in Cape Town
- 23 October national day of action and demonstration in Pretoria in front of the Union Buildings
- **UJ protests: altercations between students / workers and private security guards**

May 2016

UJ auditorium burnt down – students suspended

August 2016

UJ DFC protests, set alight bins and tyres. Police called in

September 2016

UJ protests with heavy security presence

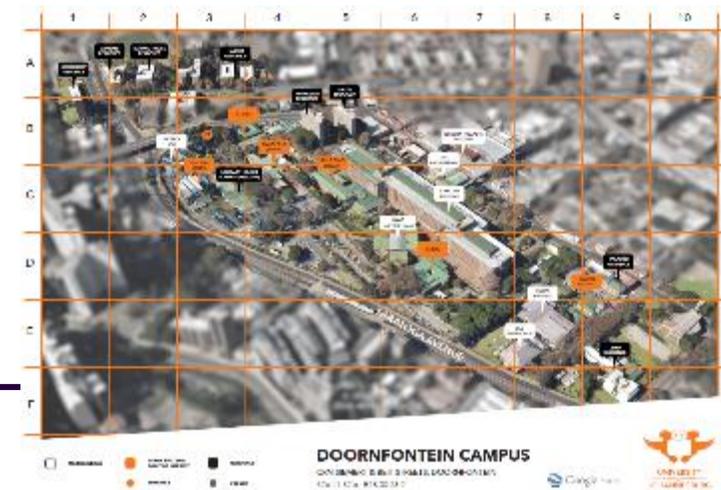
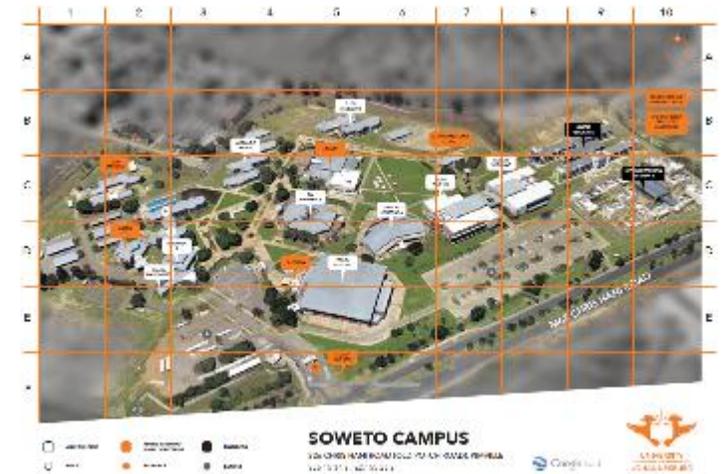
October 2016

- Wits bus torched in Braamfontein
- Wits students gather. SAPS fire rubber bullets, stun grenades, smoke grenades. 2 students injured and 11 arrested.
- **UJ APB lecture hall fire**



Not much disruption at UJ at end 2015 and throughout 2016

- While there were student protests at the UJ - **did not lose significant contact time**, as the University did not close for extended periods of time.
- Some campuses were closed briefly for a few hours, or for a day, a handful of times.
- The **different experiences** on the various campuses were noticeable.
- **APK** campus, where student access was very tightly controlled, there were very few student protests on campus, although the main auditorium was burned down in May 2016
- The **APB** campus, which has smaller numbers of students, also had no on-campus protests.
- **SWC & DFC campuses**: Protests on- and off-campus



General Responses: Management, Lecturers and Students



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Summary of responses

Management

- Immediate “wall of security”
- Bouncers to implement strict access control
- Car searches
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- Behind the scenes meeting with various groups of student leaders
- Sent out various online statements / “daily” updates
- Many media statements/interviews
- Interdicts against trouble makers
- BUT refused to have any on-campus conversation with students/staff

Lecturing staff

- Many carried on as if nothing is happening
- Others very supportive
- Progressive staff met off-campus and formed a WhatsApp group
- Became “witnesses” – photos/videos – talking to students
- Signed petitions
- Meeting with VC in council chambers
- Marched in support of students
- Organised seminars (focus decoloniality / debated possibility of free education)

Students

- Some indifferent
- Others silently supportive but scared to participate
- Many UJ students joined Wits events
- Really scared / fearful of security and stayed off-campus
- Active on social media
- Expanding demands:
 - Outsourced workers must be insourced
 - Transformation of UJ
 - Changes to / decolonising curriculum
 - Interdicts lifted
 - Bouncers to go



Management: Controlling the narrative

Reminder: While students and staff have the right to support the Fees Must Fall cause please be aware of the legal repercussions of certain actions which could result in loss of life, injury to fellow students/staff or damage to property, on or off campus.

- UJ is **image conscious** – controlling story lines, images and voices very important
- “All out” response from management externally and internally
- **Media blitzes** clearly themed and packaged:
 - Disruption not tolerated – heightened security & disciplinary action
 - Criminals and instigators
 - “*Tiny minority*” (1%) *disrupters* with *dubious agendas* creating chaos for the majority (90%) who only wants to get on with studying
 - Small group disrupting
 - Holding the university to ransom
 - *Outside forces* controlling student protests
 - Look at everything we do for them: Future walk/ food/ ebooks/iPads



Examples of responses 2016

“...the university has now obtained an interdict to prevent protests on campus.

UJ commends majority of students, warns criminal minority

Publishing Date: 9/28/2016 2:30 PM

The University of Johannesburg (UJ) has noted with concern attempts by a tiny minority of students to disrupt the University's academic programmes on its campuses, even as the overwhelming majority of students have shown a commendable determination to get on with their studies.

UJ Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Ihron Rensburg, warned that all those who were instigating and participating in criminal activities would be held accountable under the law.

“We are determined to proceed with our academic programme and allow students to prepare for their end of year examinations. Indeed we are not going to be sidetracked by the dubious agenda of the less than 1% of students who seem adamant to disrupt the University's activities,” he said.

Prof Rensburg added that all academic programmes and other activities such as graduation ceremonies would proceed as scheduled.

To this end, and to ensure the safety of staff, students, visitors and property, UJ had also implemented heightened security measures, and is currently monitoring those students who had been identified as being at the heart of the current disturbances.

In the meantime and in light of the current climate at universities around the country, UJ's Future Walk, an initiative aimed at raising funds for the “Missing Middle” which was planned for Sunday 2 October 2016, had been postponed until further notice.

“The safety and security of our staff, students and community is of utmost importance to the University. Communication regarding the rescheduled event will be issued in due course,” Prof Rensburg said.

<http://witsvuvuzela.com/2016/09/29/uj-probes-rock-throwing-private-security/>

UJ DAILY UPDATE

13 October 2016

After assessing the current situation at UJ, please note the following:

- On Wednesday (12 October 2016) lectures continued as scheduled although a small group of students attempted to disrupt the academic programme.

A number of protesting students were apprehended by SAPS for public violence and for the contravention of a court order at the Soweto and Auckland Park Kingsway campuses.

The University has noted the circulation of misinformation on social media platforms and appeals, once again, to all stakeholders to acquire their information from UJ's official channels.

- The University is still receiving threats of the interruption of the academic programme. Please be alert at all times as there is always the potential for disturbances at any of the campuses in the current higher education environment.
- UJ's academic programme will continue as scheduled today and security remains heightened to ensure the safety of UJ staff and students.

In case of any disruption or emergency please alert UJ Protection Services:

- o Auckland Park Campus - 011 559 2555
- o Doornfontein Campus - 011 559 6450
- o Bunting Road Campus - 011 559 1312
- o Soweto Campus - 011 559 5555

- Intercampus buses will again be running directly between campuses with no stops in-between.
- At APB buses will continue to drop off and collect students outside the gates.
- Reminder: While students and staff have the right to support the Fees Must Fall cause please be aware of the legal repercussions of certain actions which could result in loss of life, injury to fellow students/staff or damage to property, on or off campus.



More response examples: VC

The most immediate concern for the University was to secure the completion of the academic year which now shifts to securing examinations. In this respect, a fairly detailed risk plan was in place and the VC commended the ongoing engagement and vigilance of Student Affairs and the Protection Services.

In discussion, the point was made that what had started as a noble cause with substantial support was now driven by a small part of the total student body that is holding other students and the University to ransom. Small factions within it are determined to sow division and anarchy as a way of responding to the political crisis in the country. While these groups lacked majority support, the University remained vulnerable, especially to threats of arson.

The VC responded by saying that the University was in the closing stage of disciplinary proceedings against three students implicated in the arson attack on the auditorium, which could lead to expulsion

Other speakers repeatedly pointed out that the interest of the general student population is to study and graduate. So how should the University ensure that they could do so? The important thing is building a feeling of belonging in students and continuing to put the message across that this is a mutual relationship. We need to look after students' interests and in turn they must look after the University. The University's long term investment in students has been realised over the years. At UJ, former students or SRC members testified to how their roots were embedded in the institution.

It was important to keep open channels of communication with the majority group. Parents are thankful for the communication. Lack of communication leads to negative ideas, so communication with all stakeholders has been important.

The efficiency and effectiveness audit will be an internal, multi-faceted process whereby a UJ team will look at functional areas while focusing on critical touch points in the value chain. The "good" and "bad" will be identified, shared and addressed. A 360 degrees approach will be followed. The audit team will drill down into problem areas. It will also consider innovation as a solution. Online tools will be used in the audit steps. This "internal audit" will inform possible changes to structures.

The single point access for staff and students to multiple systems and processes will address the problem of the integration/interface of systems. The key benefits include a simplified one-stop engagement model, speedy resolution of issues and trend analysis.

In relation to the optimal use of current technology, the first step will be to create a functional inventory. This will answer the question of what technology is already available at UJ. All the users (staff and students) will then be exposed to programmes to create awareness of what is available and to provide assistance on how to use it. In addition, an "Ideation Group" will be established. The Ideation Group will consist of a multidisciplinary group of individuals who share a passion for educational technology (academics, administrative staff and students). The group will frequently showcase new technology via newsletters and short videos.



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Students

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- Others silently supportive but scared to participate
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- Really scared / fearful of security and stayed off-campus
- Active on social media
- Free education
- Expanding demands:
 - Outsourced workers must be insourced
 - Transformation of UJ
 - Changes to / decolonising curriculum
 - Interdicts lifted
 - Bouncers must leave



Marches and protests by UJ academic and support staff – linked to student demands



“Students have responded to the attacks by referring to the security as the “UJ Bouncers” on social media. UJ SRC have said that the security company “don’t belong on campuses” and “aggravate an already tense situation. UJ academics Rubina Setlhare, Shahid Mathee and Tariq Toffa have called on university management to engage with the students and remove the private security guards.”



Started a WhatsApp group on 18/11/15 UJ progressive Staff and Academic Forum (UJ PS&AF)



- We have access to 400+ pages of text from WhatsApp group (15,000 lines)
- Both students and staff on group – all through 2016/17 at least 50 people in group
- The postings on the WhatsApp group were about:
 - **Organising and communication** – own & others' meetings/events/protests/workshops; feedback on decisions at meetings; progress on own statements/docs; personal messages
 - **Clarifying** of events and information across campus & universities
 - **Sharing** media reports, articles, readings, and internet links.



Violence and threats by UJ management: a unified voice of condemnation from staff



- **Violence and securitisation** are frequently mentioned by staff and students; on the WhatsApp group a constant presence.
- A general discourse on student violence is: management uses the **labelling of ‘violence’ of student and worker protests as tool to delegitimise and criminalise these**. This then allows management to call for enhanced security to protect property and life, hence securitisation of universities.
- **Threats** made by senior management, line managers and even colleagues.
 - For example, after a faculty board meeting someone on WhatsApp group wrote: “Found the behaviour and tone of some colleagues, fortunately a small minority, very unsettling.
- Some lecturers **reported fear** as not only about coming onto campus, but also **about speaking freely** in class/tutorials and online discussions forums on any topic related to #feesmustfall.



Big men in black



- “What struck me was the security, the amount of security guards and how they would all look like bodybuilders. And the black uniform was very intimidating, and they just had ...uh...they were not friendly, to anybody. You show them your staff card; they didn’t care. Everyone was a potential suspect. [They were] very rude.” (interview with lecturer)
- “Okay, they [the private security] are all prepared for battle, but who are they fighting? ... you come fully armed to teeth, what...who is the enemy? ... I witnessed them harassing a couple of girls. These were small girls who had small bags that couldn’t have contained anything, and they were really pushing them and shoving them and telling them to go to the back of the line. ... they said, ‘Listen, I’m talking. You better move.’ It was a power issue.” (interview with lecturer)

Difference in securitisation between UJ and Wits at different times during 2015 and 2016.

- A WhatsApp message on 27/1/16: “Jees, at Wits - the security here makes UJ look tame - very frightening - groups of guards all over with batons and shields still.”



UJ spending and decoloniality



- A clear theme from staff on WhatsApp group is UJ's finances
- Two broad areas of comments related to UJ wasteful spending money, and hints at financial mismanagement.
- UJ was spending R2 million per month of extra private security was condemned on the WhatsApp group as wasteful, especially in light of student needs and workers' demand for insourcing.
- Not as prominent as one would think for this kind of grouping, postings to seminars on decoloniality, shared texts in Google Drive.
- But no much discussion on group on content. On 9 Feb: "how can the curriculum be decolonized without worker voices?"



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Students

- Some indifferent/ Others silently supportive but scared to participate
- Many UJ students joined Wits events
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- Emotionally disruptive
- Active on social media
- Expanding demands:
 - Outsourced workers must be insourced
 - Transformation of UJ
 - Changes to / decolonising curriculum
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Many voices, competing narratives



- Most students appreciated that there had been **very few class disruptions and all exams took place** as scheduled - some attributed this to the extra security personnel that made it almost impossible for students to protest on campus.
- Many of students were **angry that they were not 'privileged enough to fight the crisis'** and upset that at UJ the security clamp down was so strong that students could not mount any significant protests on campus.
- A sense of **camaraderie** and of students coming together as one group.
 - One student from Humanities said 'the movement brought us so close as students, we were standing together like Apartheid or something'.
- **Others critical** of the movement. Mostly those about to graduate.
 - A student from Accounting said 'I was not happy to be honest with FEESMUSTFALL because I was about to graduate and I just felt like these people are about to delay me'.



Management refocused in 2016



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Capitulation and accommodation to neutralize radicalism

Management fairly quickly agreed to sets of demands from students, at same time pointing out how much already doing **materially**

- Insourcing of all staff plus once off payments and allowances
- Additional funds to support financially struggling students – but not writing off debt
- Raising funds for missing middle (Future Walk)
- Free bus services / Meals support programme/ eTextbooks and iPads to 1st years

Symbolic actions

- Addressing decoloniality – a committee/task teams/policy paper/discussion tour around campuses/champion appointed/senate discussion/ KPIs of deans to decolonize curricula
- African Insights module for first year students
- Transformation of the institution's image – adding regal purple and African patterns



Revisiting the UJ 2025 Strategy & Transformation Plan/ Task teams

The University Management, also taking into account the changed higher education context as a result of the #FeesMustFall movement, recognised the need to revisit the UJ's 2025 Strategy (including the "university model") and to determine the relevancy of the strategy within the changed context. This was interrogated through a Design Thinking process during two workshops that took place during 7-18 May 2016 with a follow-up on 20 July 2016. The purpose of the workshops was to identify the "wicked problems" and to find ways in which UJ can re-orientate its offerings and services to meet the changed circumstances in the local and global higher education arena. Relevant issues included: the decolonisation of knowledge; advancing academic freedom and a democratic culture; providing affordable access; providing an enabling environment to staff and students to flourish; being agile in terms of new opportunities (e.g. online learning).

The UJ Response

The University of Johannesburg's management takes the transformation mandate as a serious priority. As a result of this, even before the second Higher Education Summit, the university had already started with intervention strategies in response to the results of the 2014 Culture and Climate Survey. The outcomes of the Higher Education Summit and the #FeesMustFall movement resulted in various other actions taken by the University of Johannesburg. After extensive deliberations within Senate on the student protests and UJ management's responses, Senate recommended that Senators needed to participate more actively in finding solutions by focusing on the critical themes identified from the student protest movement. Senate approved the constitution of a special Senate Ad Hoc Committee and the committee commenced its work with great commitment, passion and focus. Four task teams were established to deliberate and advise Senate on the following matters:

- 1. Diversity, institutional culture and traditions**
- 2. Decolonisation of the curriculum, teaching and learning**
- 3. Protest and academic freedom**
- 4. Funded access to the university system and how UJ should position itself**

This was also further interrogated through a Design Thinking Process Workshop, to find ways in which UJ could re-orientate its offerings and services to meet the changed circumstances in the local and global higher education arena. Relevant issues included: the decolonisation of knowledge; advancing academic freedom and a democratic culture; providing affordable access; providing an enabling environment to staff and students to flourish; being agile in terms of new opportunities.

Higher Education Institutions once again experienced student protest after the announcement of fee increases by the minister of Education in September 2016. On 7 October 2016 some UJ academics demonstrated at the Auckland Park Kingsway Campus on Government to increase funding for Higher Education.



Impact on teaching and learning



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“Just-in-case”: contingency plans immediately in place at end of 2015

- As protests spread around the country, and campuses closed - UJ very nervous
- With UCT as example, Centre for Academic Technologies (CAT) asked for a **contingency plan** in case UJ suddenly needs to accommodate the teaching and learning off-campus.
- Plans were circulated – focused on **going completely online** for T&L
- Also, there were plans ready to have the exams in a massive venue off-campus

Online teaching and learning off-campus – November 2016

CAT has a contingency plan in place for the possibility that UJ suddenly needs to accommodate the teaching and learning process off-campus.

1. Students will be able to access their learning material on Blackboard (Bb) Learn through an [uLink](#) login as usual.
2. The Bb LMS is remotely hosted i.e. off-campus, and therefore communication with students will not be disrupted.
3. Email alerts, Bb announcements and bulk SMSs will be used to alert students regarding details of the contingency plan. In addition, large numbers of UJ students and staff are linked via WhatsApp and Facebook [groups](#), requiring low data usage.
4. Students will need data for off-campus use which may present some obstacles. Students will be notified concerning free [WiFi](#) hotspots.
5. There are a number of simple ways that online teaching and learning can continue:
 - a. **Lecture pdf slides** can be loaded on Bb (low data use);
 - b. A **video or a voice recording** of a lecture can be created and imbedded in Bb (“self-made” – instructions are available) as MP3/4 (high data use if this is, for example, a 45 minute lecture);
 - c. [Soundcloud](#) for audio postcasts (low data usage);
 - d. **Office Mix in PowerPoint** (see below) can be used to do the same as [ZoomRooms](#) but in an asynchronous manner (e.g. pre-recorded). The exported media combination can be uploaded in Blackboard and accessed from any remote location. Medium data use.
6. Students and lecturers can “meet” online with free software:
 - a. **Google Hangouts via YouTube**: This is an excellent option because large numbers of users can be accommodated simultaneously (low to medium data use).
 - b. [ZoomRooms](#) – [The](#) is free visual casting software that can accommodate audio, video, slides, and screen casts (only need a Google account). This involves direct streaming with medium data use.
 - c. **Skype** conferencing can be used for up to 25 students in a group. Students will require a Skype account (medium data use).
 - d. **TOUCHCAST** is an app wherein camera, voice, slides, Internet and many more online applications can be “casted” to students in real time and asynchronously. Possible to use on a PC, smart phones

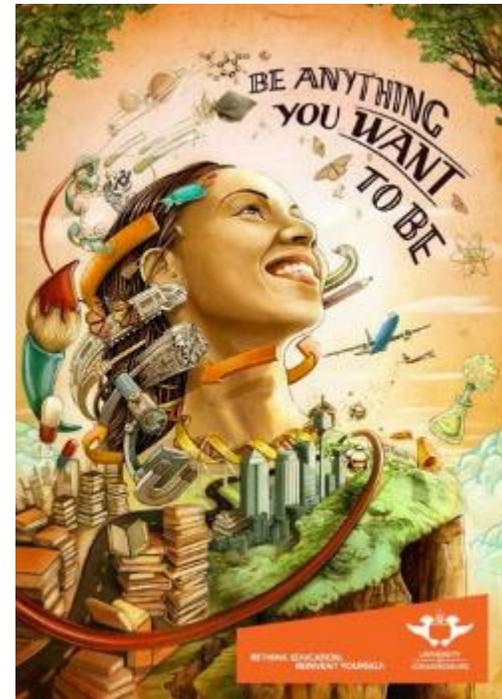


2017 staff survey: How responded to FeesMustFall?

UJ Staff survey (n=395) lecturers responded primarily in four ways to fees-must-fall:

1. **Changes in their curricula by focusing more on African contexts** in terms of learning material prescribed (“I’ve also started to include more African theory into the content of my lectures.”), and **examples** used for clarification of ideas and concepts during lectures. **Students** have also been **involved** in “curricula improvement”, for example:

“ [I] provided students with tasks designed to get an African perspective (and African examples) of the course work being dealt with and incorporating it into the course content for the next year.



Adjustments in modes of delivery



2. **Adjustments in modes of delivery** by preparing **voiced over lecture slides, audio** and/or video recording of lectures. There is some evidence of **teaching innovation and an increase of overall commitment to blended learning partially** as a result of deliberate preparation for disruptions in lectures or in case students could not come to campus.

“Access to online resources is not always available to all students at all times, so I try to make online activities "supporting learning activities" just in case there are times when at least one student is not able to access the material, or at least I try to give ample time for students who do not have easy access to online resources.”

“I converted a number of core teaching lessons into online videos that incorporate the PowerPoint presentation and my voice. These are supplemented by additional online references that would facilitate experience and understanding as well as providing students and opportunity to learn in a different environment at their own pace. Questions on content can then be posted via email or at the next face to face session.”



Assessments and communication



3. In addition to an **increase in online assessments**, there is also evidence of changes in the way **assessments were conceptualised and implemented**, for example:

“I set the final assessment on Blackboard for the students to reflect on their learning over the past semester with a focus on specific aspects in the subject in solving South Africa's developmental problems.”

Increased communication with students via social media and the Bb LMS. Comments from staff also highlight an **enhanced understanding of UJ students' personal circumstances**.

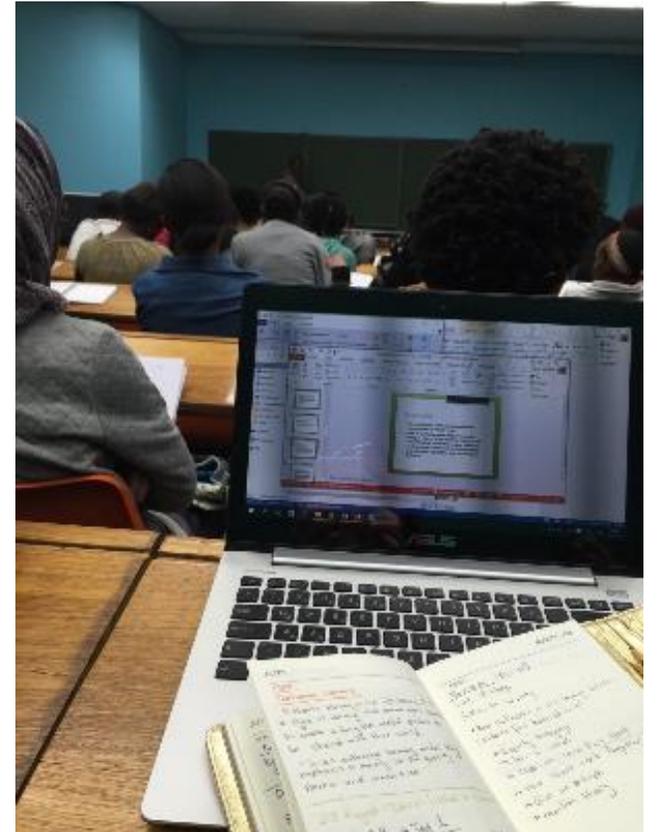
“...I used social media to check the general "feeling" of students as that impacts their performance in class. This was done via Twitter or Facebook. If a lot was going on, students were either scared or distracted and this impacted their performance in class as well as in tests. This better prepared me with dealing with student on a personal level.”



A final response from staff...

- Some lecturers referred to more drastic realisation of the **importance of context** in teaching, and that **teaching is political**:

“I came to a Freirean understanding of teaching. It’s not about the content you do; it’s relevance to your context and [students] taking action, which is what learning is about. It’s not memorising a book or a text or the words or the ideas of someone. It is being...what is the word?... conscientisation – being made aware of your context and issues and understanding that and then acting.”



Technology disrupting the protests?



- Some staff continue to view use of technology as distracting students in class, leading to less attention being given to ‘listening’ in class – **not allowing any devices in the lecture**
- Small number of lecturers **saw usefulness** of technology during #feesmustfall due to situation, but **now back to how they’ve done before** (little tech use).
- A few indicated that they are **now aware that can use tech to create spaces not only for academic engagement, but also for emotional support**, and for collaborative spaces. Moving from using the LMS for administration and information towards more communication and collaboration.
- One lecturer responded that the **turn to online learning was disruptive of the student protests and their power during #feesmustfall**: “I am also concerned that the online teaching is a combative response to student protests, which are genuine.”



Priority positioning



Something that appears to be linked to lecturers' tech response during #feesmustfall, **was their teaching orientation / pedagogy beforehand.**

- Those who used more tech, and responded with flexibility about due dates, and class attendance, and more care and more availability in office and online, already had a more student-oriented pedagogy before #feesmustfall.

Another example of the influence of pre-existing pedagogy and tech use during #feesmustfall: one lecturer indicated using tech (through posting recordings of lectures online) during #feesmustfall, but don't do so now given belief that students have to take notes in class.

The response from a lecturer sympathetic to #feesmustfall, and known for an engaged pedagogy, is illustrative: In explaining her flexibility and responding to comments from other staff that students were simply taking advance of the situation, she said: "Whether or not they were milking the system was not a question, because they were already criminalised enough [through the institutional response to #feesmustfall]".



Fine-tuning pedagogy



For lecturers who used tech in teaching before #feesmustfall, the student protests led to a fine-tuning of their pedagogy (and tech use in teaching), **rather than a massive shift in pedagogy**. Some responses about such changes:

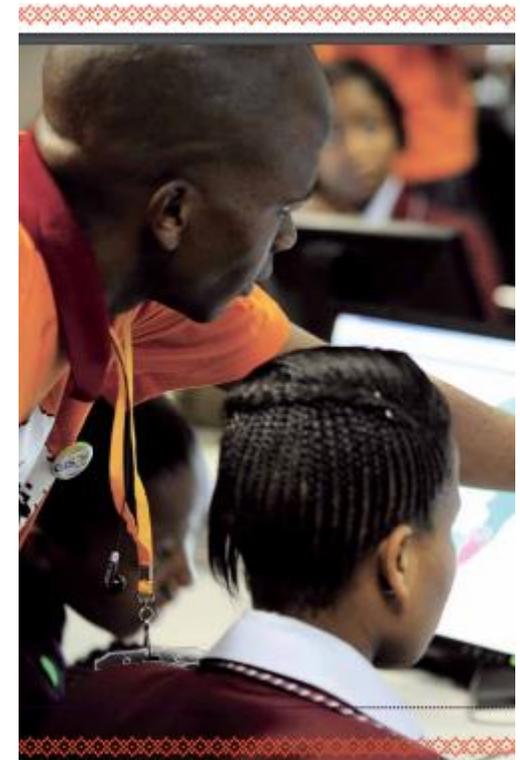
- One lecturer reported how in a project of gated communities a student group compared the exclusionary behaviours of gated communities **with what they experienced at UJ** due to Fidelity guards (bouncers).
- Some lecturers gave examples of how they **enhanced and enriched their teaching** in different use of tutors: ad hoc extra group classes, smaller groupings, online discussion forums, more one-on-one, etc.
- More use of **online assessment** through multiple choice, but also more collaborative group tasks.



Student voices

In the experiences of the students the overarching themes that emerged were three fold:

- a) they **supported the protests but not** the violence and class disruptions,
- b) they felt that **few lecturers changed the way they taught** and if there was a change it was mostly that lecturers communicated more with the students and
- c) the key impact of the protests on their studies was that students found the it **emotionally disruptive** as they did not know what would happen next, how their studies and classes would be affected, and if they would be able to write their exams.



Student learning experiences in 2015/16



1. Most lecturers **did no change** their teaching practices significantly although some did
2. More **recordings** of lectures available
3. The most positive change that students experienced was that many lecturers became what they called '**more communicative**' – using Blackboard or WhatsApp
4. Lecturers extended **consultation times** and increased availability to students BUT students were generally only able to identify one or at most two of their lecturers doing so
5. #FeesMustFall became a **topic of discussion** and debate in classes and in the 2nd year of protests lecturers actively began to incorporate discussions of the movement in their classes.
5. Students said: 'the **decolonization stuff** came to the fore because they (the lecturers) were listening to us".
6. However students noted that some of their lecturers were **sarcastic and racist** about the #FeesMustFall movement. "At least half our lecturers did not care about the movement or its impact on the students and their studies".



Students perceived impact of #FeesMustFall on their learning

1. **Poor communication** from the University -- Faculties in particular bad ('We would come to class and then it was cancelled and no one told us' (a third year student from Science)).
2. No knowing if class was going to happen or not, or if classes would get disrupted was '**discouraging and disruptive**' ("After a bit I just wanted to give up on the whole thing' said a third year student from Humanities").
3. Many students talked about feeling particularly **unprepared to study on their own** at home – no guidelines of what to do
4. Difficult to get on campus to do **group work**
5. **Internet access** a problem when off-campus
6. The biggest impact that all the students felt that #FeesMustFall had on their learning was the **emotional impact of feeling unsettled and confused.**



Social justice: Participatory parity



Fraser's notion of social justice in terms of three elements of 'participatory parity, namely access, representation and voice.

Access (economic distribution)

- Never huge disruption to physical access to campus and classes at UJ; did lose a few days only on DFC and SWC.
- Quite a bit of postings on WhatsApp group regarding physical access, mostly in light of few students barred from campus due to suspensions. But also after evictions on 22 May 2016 of "homeless students who stay in SRC offices at APK ... UJ sent about 50 bouncers and protection service officers and assaulted the students.
- Most lecturers reported turning towards Blackboard and doing more there, seemingly mostly to help students who could not come to campus.
- Few lecturers raised concerns about online access to students who were not on campus.



Voice / political representation

Whose voices were heard during #feesmustfall?



- Lecturers responded that the **institution was not listening to the student protestors**, or to those students too afraid to come onto campus.
- Very little in terms of **institutional support systems were put in place** (criminalisation and victimisation of students seemed rather at the forefront); was on individual lecturers to do things.
- Acknowledgement by few lecturers of importance of not only students' voices, but also hearing them.
 - “I was very happy to accommodate those students that sat in the classes and wanted to be a part of the protests, because I believed in the protest as well, but it wasn't my fight; it was their fight.”
 - “What is important is that the students find another space, their own space, away from the lecturer's gaze, and beyond the silences of the library, to be together as a body of students, to test each other, to search and to collaborate with each other as individuals with names, backgrounds and identities.”
- This is a very strong element in the WhatsApp group postings, and allowing voice for everyone was clearly important principle.



Evidence for change 2014-2017



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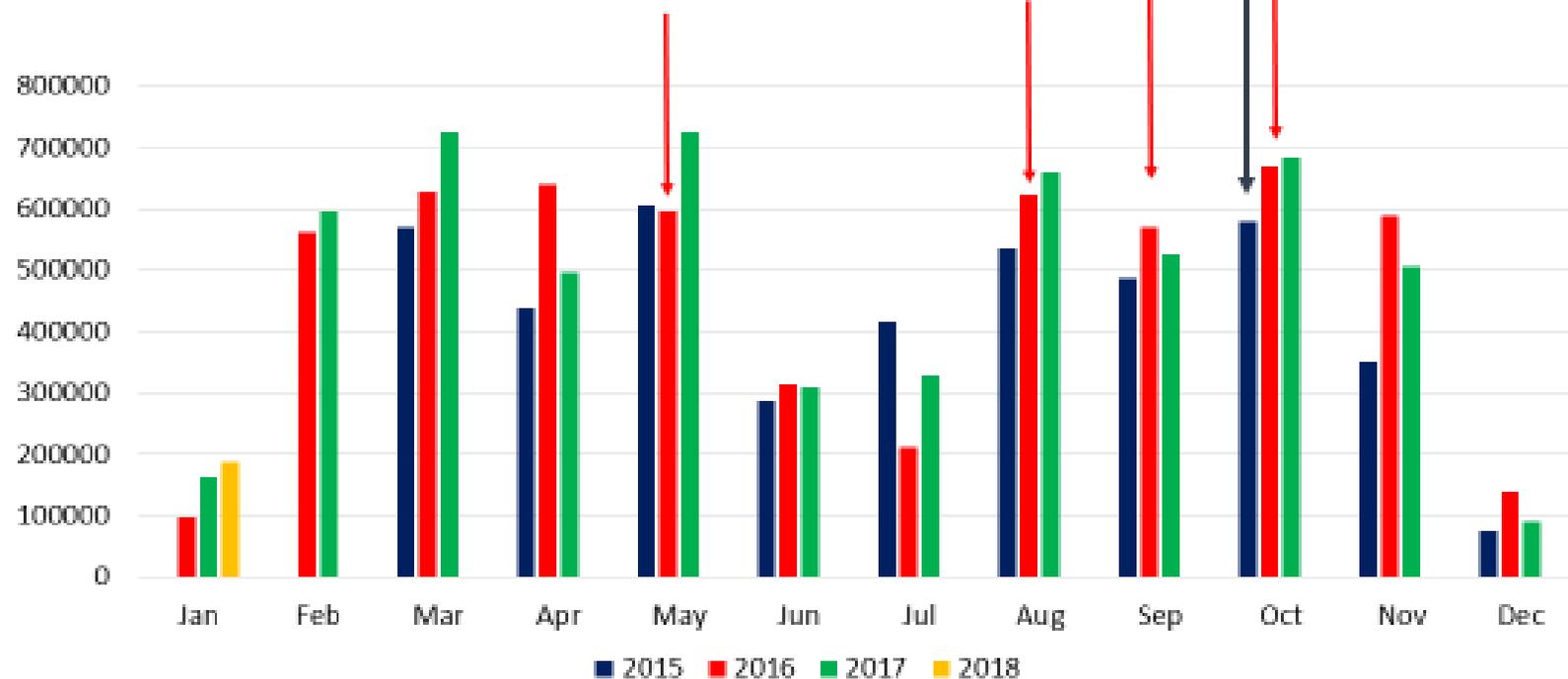
Evidence of increased use of Blackboard during critical months

- Some evidence of increased use of Blackboard Learn
- During months of intense protests
- During the exams of 2015 and 2016
- However, very difficult to be certain because an overall increase in use
- Can see increase in tool use



Logins compared to eventful months over time

Total monthly logins per year

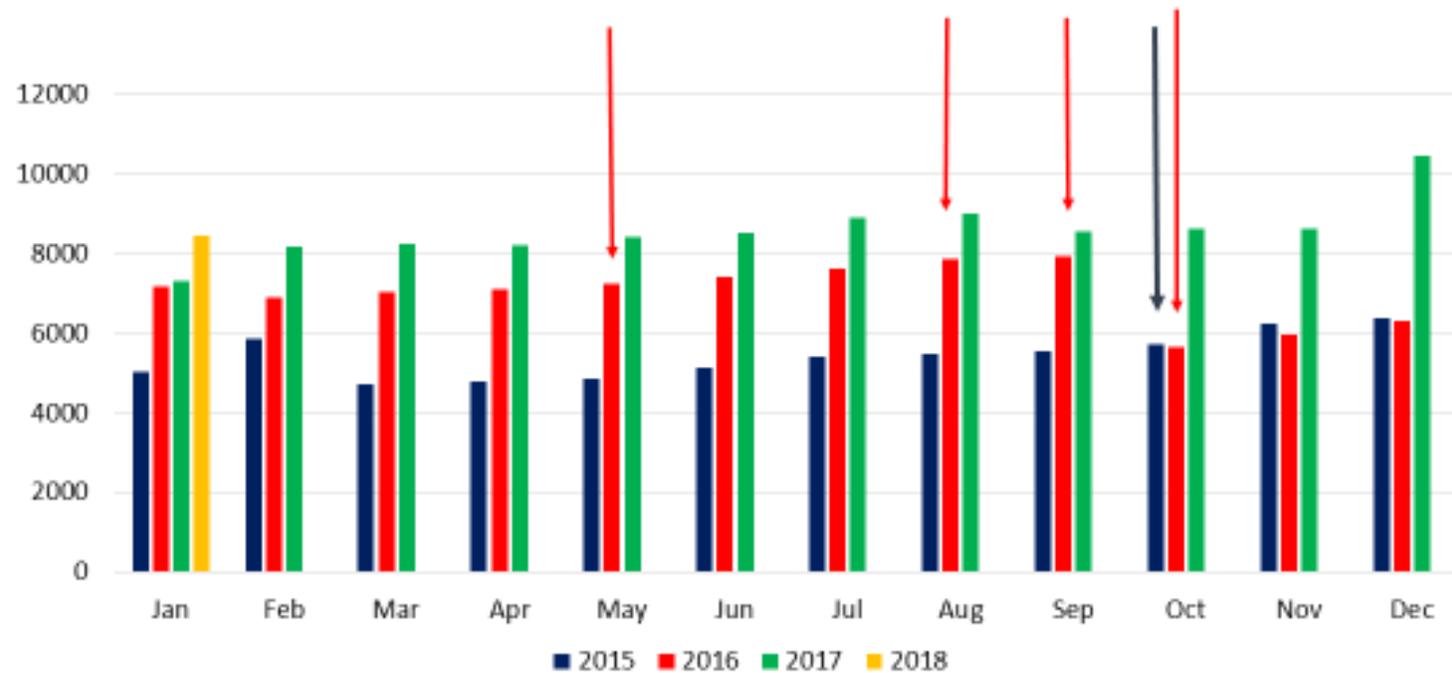


*no data for Jan & Feb 2015



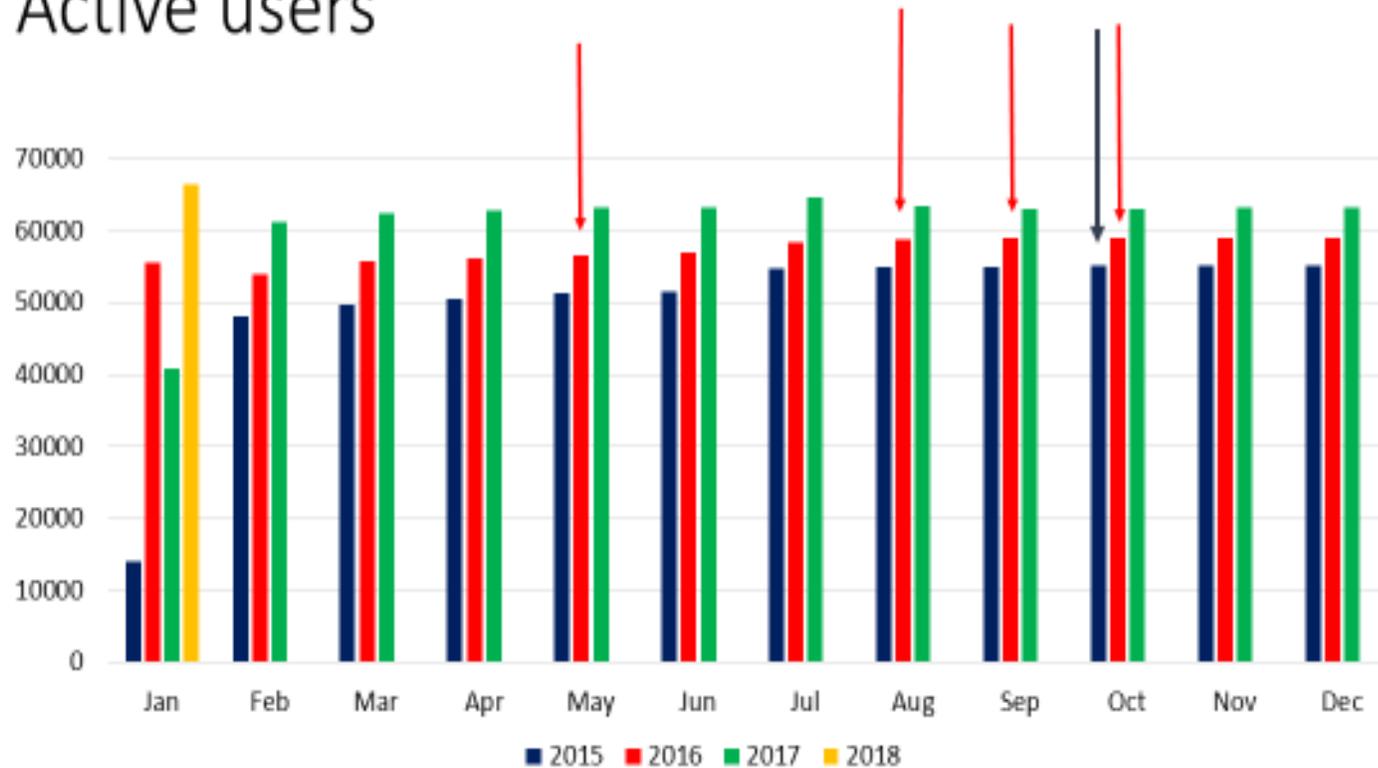
Active courses compared to eventful months over time

Active courses & organisations

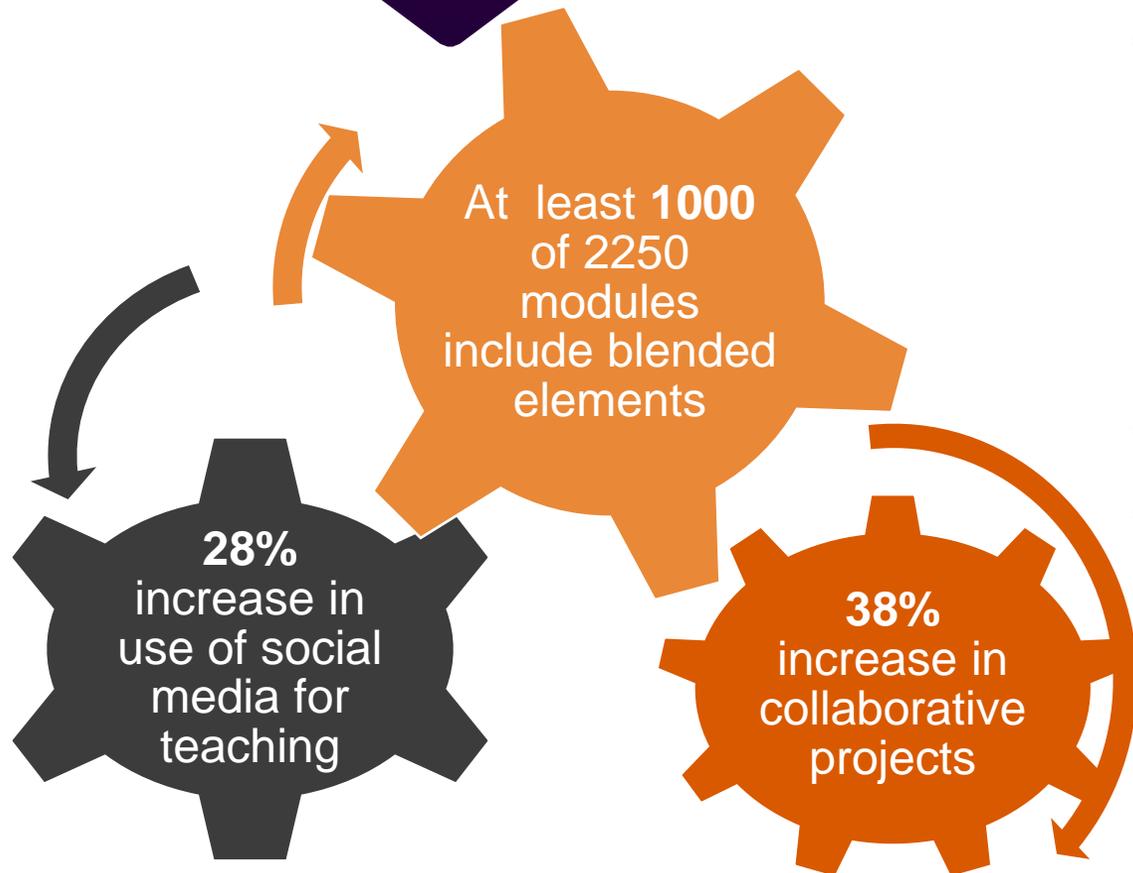


Active users compared to eventful months over time

Active users



Changes in blended learning? Comparing survey results 2014 to 2017



- In truly blended learning modules, **some form of independent online learning activity by a student should take place** – not just loading assignments or extracting passive learning material placed online by a lecturer.
- Positive **shift** in the use of technology for T&L.
- Many categories of use increased by ten percent or more compared to 2014/15
- Including electronic assessments (quizzes and rubrics) and **collaboration** (team teaching and group work).



Increase in student use of technology for learning 2017 student survey (12,500 completed survey – 9900 undergraduates)

90% UJ first-year students use a variety of devices (laptops, tablets and smartphones) in and out of lectures for learning

64% undergraduates used WiFi during lectures to do activities

38% increase in online assessments

82% UJ modules are currently registered on Blackboard

Undergraduate attitudes towards new technology used for academic purposes very positive: **91%** enthusiastic or welcoming



2018 student survey results

- **Typical blended learning activities** (e.g. collaboration, flexibility in the timing and place where T & L activities take place) **have increased**.
 - For example, **about 50% students** reported that they have used at least one of the **discussion tools** in Bb to interact or work with fellow students in the past semester.
 - **Two-thirds of students** reported that they were able to complete **an assessment in their own time and space** (not in a lecture venue or computer lab).
 - Over **70%** reported that they were given a **real-world problem** to solve in an assessment or assignment and **25% could watch a video/listen** to an audio lecture in their own time.
 - An important note is that the majority of students prefer access to audio/video recordings of their lectures and **over 75% indicated that they would still attend lectures**.



“...just little things that I tweak...”



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Not in big shifts, but in small tweaks...

- Overall then, from lecturers' stories – and likely different from other universities whom experienced massive disruptions to classes – **#feesmustfall did not lead to massive changes in blended learning at UJ.**
- What we saw were **tweaks**, and a continuation of the **slow move towards blended learning** that already started happening before #feesmustfall, and were seemingly influenced by other factors.

