

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

NEWS LETTER

Executive Summary

The Department of Public Management and Governance, within the Faculty of Management and Public Administration Sciences, continues to pursue excellence in teaching, learning, research, community engagement, and academic development. During this term, the Department achieved several significant milestones that reflect its commitment to fostering academic success and institutional growth.

This Newsletter highlights the noteworthy accomplishments of both staff and students, showcasing their dedication, innovation, and hard work. These achievements are guided by the Departmental Operational Plan for 2026, which serves as a strategic framework for attaining the Department's goals and advancing its mission.

The successful implementation of the objectives outlined in the Operational Plan remains central to the Department's progress and success. Through collaborative efforts, effective leadership, and a shared commitment to excellence, the Department has continued to strengthen its academic profile and contribute meaningfully to the University's strategic priorities.

It is with great pride that the Department celebrates these accomplishments and recognises the contributions of its staff, students, and stakeholders. These achievements not only reflect past successes but also provide a strong foundation for continued growth and excellence.



Teaching the Public Beyond the Lecture Hall

Academics in the Department of Public Management and Governance continue to extend their teaching mission beyond the confines of the classroom by engaging the wider public through various media platforms. On 13 April 2026, Dr Zolani Tafeni contributed an opinion piece to the Daily Dispatch newspaper titled “SA’s leadership crisis deepens as citizens lose faith in the state.”

Opinion

Monday April 13, 2026 **DailyDispatch**

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Today's Quote

"I have found people on both sides of the aisle, white and black, that'll give you the shirt off their back. And I've also found people that won't give you a piece of bread if you're starving to death."

— Al Green, US singer-songwriter and pastor

Zolani Tafeni Column

SA's leadership crisis deepens as citizens lose faith in state

In SA, we are facing significant challenges due to a clear lack of leadership in government. This absence of effective leadership is evident across many sectors and in all three spheres of government, resulting in a lack of direction and accountability. Political leaders are hesitant to address pressing issues such as corruption, inadequate service delivery and rising unemployment and crime statistics, which have led to disappointment among SA citizens. The internal dynamics of political parties, especially the ANC, are characterised by factional battles. This division leads to destruction and places personal and party interests above those of the public. Also, there is an evident lack of coherence in policy implementation and leadership that struggles to unite for a common goal that will take this country forward. This lack of leadership has further demonstrated during a peaceful protest on March 30, in KwaGalethu City. The march later turned violent, highlighting the disconnect between leaders and the communities they serve. I wonder where the political leadership and government officials are when it comes to having meaningful engagement with civil society groups. It is crucial to address the growing tensions between foreign nationals and South Africans before it is too late. As the saying goes, an untold revolution is dangerous. The country's leadership of late makes its presence felt only when there is a crisis, rather than proactively resolving the issues at hand. This leadership deficit poses a challenge to our country's sovereignty and democratic consolidation. Currently, our border forces are not fully armed, and the Border Management Agency is facing difficulties in effectively managing illegal border crossings into SA. There is no accountability to SA citizens, we are not safe as a country. Lack of leadership also accounts the chaos in our local government. Over the years in our municipalities, we have witnessed an increasing number of service delivery protests, many of which have turned violent. One must wonder why, in our democratic society, we are facing such protests. It is evident that there is a deficit of leadership in local government. This is the sphere of government where our citizens should receive high quality services, but unfortunately that is not the case. Citizens are experiencing inadequate services due to a lack of infrastructure maintenance and development. This situation has reached a critical point where essential services such as water supply, waste management, and road maintenance are increasingly unreliable. Municipalities, which are supposed to be the frontline of service delivery, often struggle to manage existing infrastructure effectively, leading to deteriorating conditions that directly impact the quality of life for residents. It is within this context that municipalities such as Nelson Mandela Bay sometimes go for three weeks without electricity. In some areas such as Mquma local municipality, Makana local municipality and King Sabata Dalindyebo municipality, residents can go for days without access to clean water. That does not only affect their daily lives but also poses serious health risks. Similarly, the state of municipal roads in many municipalities is dire, with potholes and impaired routes becoming commonplace. This not only makes transportation difficult but also endangers lives, increases vehicle maintenance costs, and impedes local businesses trying to operate effectively. We often only see our political leaders on the eve of elections, when they come to our doors to campaign for votes. However, their responsibility should extend beyond that. They need to be actively engaging with citizens in their term offices, listening to our experiences and concerns about the services we receive. It's crucial to ensure that leaders are held accountable for delivering on their promises to us. But since many of them never visit even their constituency office, they remain oblivious to community challenges. To address the leadership deficit in SA, a multifaceted approach is essential, focusing on reforms in political parties and government structures. Promoting transparency is vital. This can be achieved through robust systems for public scrutiny of government activities. Open data initiatives, accessible online platforms, and regular public reporting on spending and project outcomes can help build trust and ensure accountability. Improving educational qualifications for leaders is essential. There is a possibility for the country to be rescued from its current dire situation. But for this to happen, one of two things should happen. Firstly, the current crop of political leadership should change its modus operandi and be capacitated. Secondly, future leaders should be elected based on merit, not their political affiliation, buying of positions, or intimidation. Unless these measures are taken, SA will remain in perpetual suffering while the country has more resources. Dr Zolani Tafeni, Lecturer, Department of Public Management and Governance, Walter Sisulu

As a scholar of Public Administration and Management, Dr Tafeni's article underscores the critical role academics play in shaping public discourse. His contribution demonstrates that teaching is not limited to lecture halls; it also involves raising awareness of pressing societal challenges and fostering informed debate among citizens. This commitment to public engagement highlights the department's dedication to advancing knowledge and addressing issues that directly impact governance and the broader community.

Health and Wellness Days

The Department of Public Management and Governance successfully hosted Health and Wellness Days on 24 April 2026 at the Komani Campus and 30 April 2026 at the Butterworth Campus. These events were well attended, with both lecturers and students demonstrating enthusiastic participation in a range of wellness activities, particularly the aerobics sessions.

The initiative highlighted the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and reinforced the message that a healthy mind and a healthy body thrive together. Participants actively engaged in physical exercise, which not only improved fitness but also effectively relieved stress and enhanced overall well-being. The positive response from both staff and students underscored the Department's commitment to fostering a culture of health, wellness, and holistic development within the university community.

The success of these events reflects the growing awareness of the vital role that physical activity plays in supporting mental health, improving productivity, and contributing to a balanced and fulfilling academic and professional life.



Second Webinar

The Department of Public Management and Governance successfully hosted its second webinar of the 2026 academic year on 29 April 2026 under the theme:

The Consequences of Non-Action: Erosion of Public Trust, Normalisation of Interference, and a Culture of Impunity in Policing Structures in South Africa - Lessons from the Madlanga Commission.

The webinar provided a timely and thought-provoking platform for critical reflection on governance, accountability, and ethical leadership in policing and broader public-sector institutions. The discussions explored the implications of failing to address systemic challenges, particularly the impact on public confidence, institutional integrity, and the rule of law.

The event attracted a diverse audience, including academics, students, public servants, and professionals from provincial and national departments involved in criminal justice and related governance matters. The high level of engagement and robust discussions demonstrated the relevance of the topic and the importance of sustained dialogue on issues affecting public administration and justice in South Africa.

Through initiatives such as this webinar, the Department of Public Management and Governance continues to strengthen its role as a platform for scholarly engagement, knowledge sharing, and evidence-based debate on contemporary public sector challenges. The successful hosting of the webinar reaffirmed the Department's commitment to promoting informed discourse and contributing to the development of ethical, accountable, and responsive governance.

SAAPAM Eastern Cape Chapter Leadership Roles



As part of the Department's contribution to scholarly and professional engagement, two lecturers, Dr Kauleza and Dr Tafeni, serve in leadership positions within the South African Association of Public Administration and Management (SAAPAM) Eastern Cape Chapter, as Treasurer and Deputy Chairperson, respectively. In these capacities, they play a significant role in advancing the discipline of Public Administration and Management and fostering academic collaboration across the province. Their leadership was particularly evident in their instrumental contribution to the successful launch of the Nelson Mandela University SAAPAM Student Chapter on 8 May 2026.

Public Management and Governance Article Writing Retreat



From the 5th to the 7th of May 2026, the Department hosted its first Article Writing Retreat for the 2026 academic year at the Phyllis Ntantala Collaborative Library in KuGompo City. The retreat provided a dedicated platform for academic staff to advance their research and scholarly writing, resulting in the development of eight scholarly papers.

Several participants successfully completed and submitted their manuscripts to accredited journals for publication. These included articles by Dr Kauleza, Mr Sentiwe, and Ms Ncamani; Dr Masha and Ms Gqweta; Dr Masha and Mr Mutize; and Dr Lukman and Dr Masha. In addition, Prof Mofolo finalised a book chapter, which was ready for submission on 15 June 2026.

Researchers whose work is not specifically mentioned above were expected to finalise and submit their manuscripts by October 2026. Overall, the retreat was highly successful, demonstrating the Department's commitment to strengthening research productivity, fostering scholarly collaboration, and enhancing academic publication output.

Distinguished Guest Lecture At Nelson Mandela University

On 08 May 2026, Dr Zolani Tafeni, a lecturer in the Department of Public Management and Governance, was invited to serve as a Guest Lecturer at Nelson Mandela University, where he was hosted by the Department of Public Management and Leadership. His presentation, titled “Public Sector Accountability: Ensuring Governance Spending Drives Inclusive Development,” addressed the critical role of accountability, transparency, and responsible public expenditure in promoting sustainable and inclusive socio-economic development.

The lecture provided valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities of public sector governance, highlighting the importance of ensuring that public resources are managed effectively and directed toward improving citizens’ quality of life. The engagement offered students and academics an opportunity to reflect on contemporary public administration issues and explore strategies for strengthening accountability mechanisms within government institutions.

Dr Tafeni’s invitation to share his expertise at a fellow institution is a testament to the growing recognition of the Department of Public Management and Governance’s scholarly contributions. It also reflects the Department’s ongoing commitment to knowledge sharing, academic collaboration, and meaningful engagement with higher education institutions across the country.

Through such initiatives, the Department continues to contribute to national conversations on public administration and governance while actively participating in efforts to address the complex management and service-delivery challenges facing South African society. This engagement further strengthens the Department’s reputation as a centre of excellence dedicated to advancing good governance, ethical leadership, and evidence-based public sector practices.



DISTINGUISHED GUEST LECTURE

TOPIC: “PUBLIC SECTOR ACCOUNTABILITY: ENSURING GOVERNMENT SPENDING DRIVES INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT”.

DR Z TAFENI
iYunivesithi Walter Sisulu

Date:
08 May 2026

Time:
13H00 - 14H00

**Building 35 Room 40
South Campus NMU**

Hosted by the Department of Public Management and Leadership

May 2026 Graduations

Butterworth Campus		
	Qualifications	Number of students
1	Master of Public Administration	18
2	Bachelor of Administration – Honours	85
3	Bachelor of Administration	61
4	Advanced Diploma in Public Management	86
5	Diploma in Public Management	76
6	Diploma in Policing	21
7	Diploma in Local Government Finance	16

Komani Campus		
	Qualifications	Number of students
1	Advanced Diploma in Public Management	78
2	Diploma in Public Management	55
3	Diploma in Local Government Finance	33

The Department of Public Management and Governance, under the Faculty of Management and Public Administration Sciences, proudly celebrates the success of its students who graduated during the May 2026 graduation ceremonies. This achievement reflects the dedication, perseverance, and hard work demonstrated by the graduates throughout their academic journey.

The Department is immensely proud of their accomplishment and commends them for reaching this important milestone. Their success serves as an inspiration to current and prospective students, encouraging them to remain committed to their studies and strive for academic excellence.

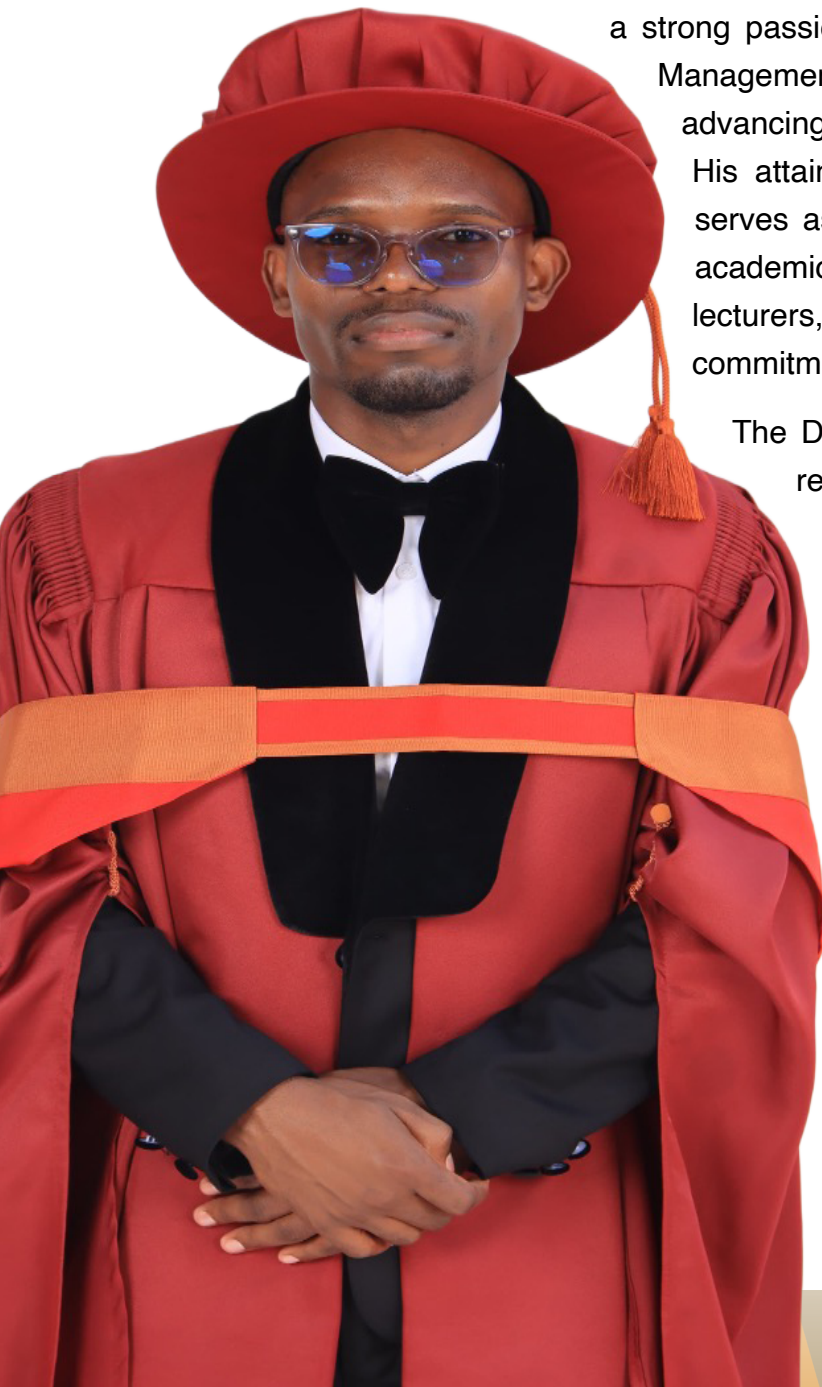
These graduates have demonstrated that determination, discipline, and consistent effort lead to success. Indeed, hard work always pays off, and the Department wishes all graduates continued success in their future careers and endeavours.

Academic Achievement

The Department proudly celebrates the academic achievement of one of its part-time lecturers at the Mthatha Campus, Dr Ndamse, who was awarded a doctoral degree (NQF Level 10) on 20 May 2026. This significant accomplishment reflects his dedication to academic excellence, scholarly inquiry, and lifelong learning.

As a young and emerging scholar, Dr Ndamse has demonstrated a strong passion for the field of Public Administration and Management and has consistently shown enthusiasm for advancing discourse and research within the discipline. His attainment of the highest academic qualification serves as an inspiration to both current and aspiring academics, particularly the Department's younger lecturers, by exemplifying the value of perseverance, commitment, and professional development.

The Department congratulates Dr Ndamse on this remarkable milestone and recognises his achievement as a positive contribution to strengthening the Department's academic profile, research culture, and capacity for knowledge production. His success underscores the Department's commitment to nurturing and supporting the professional growth of its academic staff.



Community Engagement Through Radio



The Department continues to make a meaningful contribution to community engagement by disseminating expert knowledge and providing public education. Mr Nxafani, Programme Coordinator and Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) Coordinator for the Policing Programme, remains a sought-after commentator on policing and criminal justice matters, regularly sharing his expertise through various media platforms.

On 31 May 2026, Mr Nxafani was invited as a guest on the current affairs programme of Umhlobo Wenene FM, where he provided expert analysis on the state of correctional centres in South Africa.

During the discussion, he unpacked several challenges facing the Department of Correctional Services, including the inability to trace thousands of absconded parolees, the implications of this challenge for public safety, and the role of correctional services within the broader context of the country's persistent high crime rates. His insightful commentary helped inform public understanding of complex criminal justice issues and stimulated constructive dialogue on possible solutions.

The Department highly values and applauds his efforts in ensuring that scholarly and professional knowledge extends beyond the classroom to benefit society at large.

Benchmarking with Industry: City of Cape Town

The Diploma in Public Management recently underwent a comprehensive programme review to enhance its relevance, responsiveness, and alignment with contemporary public sector needs. In preparing for the Programme Improvement Plan, the Department initiated a benchmarking exercise to identify areas for strengthening and ensure the curriculum remains aligned with emerging trends and industry expectations.

On 19 June 2026, the Department undertook a benchmarking visit to the City of Cape Town Metropolitan Municipality, one of South Africa's leading local government institutions known for its commitment to innovation and service excellence. The visit provided an invaluable opportunity for academic staff to engage directly with senior municipal officials and departmental directors, who shared insights into the municipality's strategic use of technology, digital transformation, data-driven decision-making, and innovative service delivery practices.

Through a series of presentations and discussions, the delegation gained a deeper understanding of how technological advancements are being leveraged to improve efficiency, effectiveness, accountability, and citizen-centred service delivery within the Metropolitan Municipality. The engagement highlighted the increasing importance of digital competencies, smart governance, e-government systems, and innovation management in addressing complex governance and service delivery challenges.

The benchmarking visit reinforced the Department's commitment to producing graduates who are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and competencies required in a rapidly evolving public sector environment. It underscored the need to strengthen the integration of technology, digitalisation, and innovation-related content within the programme curriculum to better prepare students for the demands of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and modern public administration. Overall, the visit yielded valuable insights that will inform the Programme Improvement Plan and contribute to the continuous enhancement of the Diploma in Public Management.



Second term Publications

BOOK CHAPTERS

1.	Mbebe, E. & Roboji, Z. 2026. Entrepreneurship and Innovation in BRICS Economies: A Holistic Perspective in Emerging Markets. Emerald Publishing Limited.		
2.	Mbebe, E. & Roboji, Z. 2026. Breaking Barriers: Emerging BRICS Women Entrepreneurs through Social Media Innovation. Emerald Publishing Limited.		

ARTICLES

1.	Ntando, Y. 2026. M-Governance as a Tool to Promote Transparency in a Selected Local Municipality in the Eastern Cape. International Journal of Public Administration in the Digital Age, 13(1): 1-22.		
2.	Masha, A.K. & Damo, S., 2026. Determinants of Quantitative Research Methods Usage in Public Administration Research: The Case of a Selected University in a Rural Setting. Journal of Educational and Social Research. 16(4), pp. 457 to 474.		
3.	Masha, A.K. and Komisane, S., 2026. Female youth entrepreneurs at the King Sabata Dalindyebo local municipality: A portrait of progress in the context of their contributions to the economy and job creation. International Journal of Business Ecosystem & Strategy, 8(3), pp.55-68.		
4.	Masha, A.K. et al. 2026. Public bodies' support for the sustainability of small and medium-sized tourism enterprises in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. Insights into Regional Development, 8(2), pp.178-190.		
5.	Lukman, Y., & Mofolo, M. (2026). From Scaffolding to Autonomy: A Theoretical Analysis of Postgraduate Supervision through Self-Determination and Zone of Proximal Development Theories. Journal of Ethics in Higher Education, (8.2), 261–288. https://doi.org/10.26034/fr.jehe.2026.11480		

Second term Publications

ARTICLES

6.	Lukman, Y., Ndamase, M. 2026. Public participation deficits and governance challenges in local government. <i>Insights into Regional Development</i> , 8(1), 120-138. http://doi.org/10.70132/j5778559766		
7.	Masondo, N., Lukman, Y. 2026. Advancing local economic development through agricultural support initiatives. <i>Insights into Regional Development</i> , 8(1), 105-119. http://doi.org/10.70132/p5696977889		
8.	Lukman, Y. et al. 2026. "Digital vs. Face-to-Face learning in Accounting education: Analyzing student preferences and academic outcomes in an Eastern Cape University." <i>Journal of Education and Learning Technology</i> 7, no.3 (2026): 223 - 234. https://doi.org/10.38159/jelt.2026732		
9.	Lukman, Y. et al. 2026. Enhancing student learning in accounting: bridging online and classroom education in a selected higher education institution in South Africa. <i>Insights into Regional Development</i> , 8(1), 174-188. http://doi.org/10.70132/y2349675773		
10.	Lukman, Y. et al. 2026. Mentoring and Improving the State Capacity in South Africa: Implications for Governance, Public Policy, and Ethics, 185.		
11.	Zindi, B. & Mofolo, M. 2026. Empowering Local Communities: Exploring the Impact of Decentralisation on Service Delivery and Citizen Participation in South African Municipalities. <i>African Journal of Sociology, Psychology and Rural Studies (AJOSPRS)</i> , 6(1): 151-177. DOI: https://doi.org/10.31920/2752-6585/2026/v6n1a8		
12.	Nkonki, N. et al. 2026. The house that Zondo built: State Capture Commission implications for local economic development in South Africa's construction sector. <i>Journal of Local Government Research and Innovation</i> , (7) a317 DOI: https://doi.org/10.4102/jolgri.v7i0.317		

13	Gqweta, Z. et al. 2026. Fostering Sustainability through Innovative Pedagogies: Faculty Community Engagement at one University in the Eastern Cape. Vol. 2 (2026): Innovative Journal of African Education, 2(1): 1-19.	
14	Mathumbu, S. and Tafeni, Z., 2026. The role of local government in improving public service delivery in rural areas: A case of King Sabata Dalindyebo Local Municipality. International Journal of Business Ecosystem & Strategy (2687-2293), 8(3), pp.484-495.	 



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