



CHARLES
TELFAIR
INSTITUTE

CHRONICLES



LEARNING AND TEACHING



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EDITORIAL

We have devoted the whole issue of this newsletter to the principles of teaching and learning, and how they can be implemented effectively. The world over, a diverse cohort of educators and academics are striving to make a greater impact on the lives of all students by applying student-centered, active learning pedagogic principles. Here at CTI, under the dynamic academic leadership of Odylle Charoux, we have adopted these principles with enthusiasm and diligence and have gone as far as appointing a new Office of Learning and Teaching, headed by Dr Shafiq Gopee.

In this same issue we cover the recent launch of our English Language Centre, a much-needed venture judging by the inherent difficulties our Mauritian and foreign students experience when having to communicate in English as their second language.

Finally, our Corporate Training arm is going places. As the following pages indicate, this year alone we have had not fewer than six Management Development Programmes courses running at CTI involving a total of 154 corporate trainees.

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Evolution of Learning and Teaching

Learning and Teaching (L&T) is at the core of what we do at CTI. During the last few years, we have witnessed an evolution, if not a revolution, in L&T practices. In an age dominated by fast-changing technologies and an ever-lasting debate on the uncertainties and excitement that the future beholds, more than ever, as teachers and learners, we have to ask ourselves the fundamental and perennial question of where L&T is heading.



“I still remember clearly how in my school, I was sitting amongst well-ordered rows of chairs and tables, facing in a strict military fashion the blackboard greyed by an overuse of limestone chalk”, recalls Dr Karlo Jouan, today Head of Faculty. “The teacher, an imposing figure in his early thirties, would be standing in front of the classroom dispensing knowledge only he possessed. And God helped us all if we dared question or cast doubt his knowledge.”

Fast forward. Today’s classroom, at CTI and elsewhere, has undergone a complete transformation. Gone are the blackboards and the ubiquitous chalk box. Instead, state-of-the-art projectors and huddle boards compete for space as desks and chairs are arranged in islands of collaborative spaces. Gone is the military, fearful, omnipresent and omniscient sage-on-stage guru, the good old teacher of yesterday – find instead a facilitator, one who engages his or her students in authentic and deep learning.

■ The Impact of Technology on Education

This (r)evolution did not happen overnight. It has been very much driven by the needs to provide an education that is aligned to the demands of an ever-changing industry and society at large; demands that are also very much a result of the pervasiveness of technology in all the spheres of our life.

The advent of the all-mighty Internet has opened the doors to an unprecedented amount of information and knowledge, one which is freely available. Google and YouTube, for example, have become one-stop shops for understanding and solving potentially any problem one may encounter - from how to change a light bulb to more complex issues relating to the understanding of the origins of the earth or the maintenance of good health. Users can, within clicks, access information which only a few years ago, was the privilege of the rich and the few.

■ Overhaul of L&T practices

This advent of information technology has had a profound impact on L&T practices. Universities and training institutions have had to revamp and overhaul their courses approaches. Technologies like Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are becoming increasingly popular platforms for international institutions to share freely their course contents with students and the public at large.

In terms of student engagement, notions like *blended learning* (incorporating some online content or exercise within the course) and *flipped classroom* (requiring students to do some pre-learning before attending classes) have now become essential elements in L&T practices.

Technology is also allowing us to do things that were once the privy of science-fiction. For example, all industries have an immersive collaborative experience with professors and students from around the globe as if they were present within the same room - distributed learning, as the article on the next page attests.

■ The Future

The future of any educational institution is directly linked to quality and innovation. Much of the quality is in turn determined by the institution’s ability to prepare graduates to possess skills to evolve in this changing world.

To the question: Will we still need teachers and trainers in the future? Dr. Shafiq Gopee, Head of Learning and Teaching at CTI, replies: “Yes, most definitely. Despite the hype around technology and artificial intelligence taking over, much of the future of teaching and learning remains unpredictable. All we can guarantee is that the role of the teacher or trainer will shift more towards enabling authentic learning than delivery of contents - and this will require a complete paradigm shift in the way we approach L&T. We will see the emergence of new pedagogical approaches that are strongly embedded in technology and networking.”

At CTI, we are committed to embrace this change.

Distributed Learning – A first in Mauritius

Think about it: the university of the future will no longer be confined to what happens to you within the physical boundaries of the campus but to your entire student experience. This could mean not only you attending traditional lectures, but indulging into a complex web of on-campus experiences, connecting to virtual environments from a variety of locations such as your home or a local cafe, or participating in professional practice kilometres from the physical campus. This exciting new development, known euphemistically as 'Distributed Learning' promises to change forever the way we teach and learn on this island.

Origins

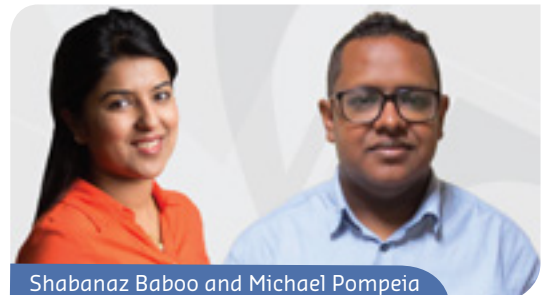
"It was inevitable," explains Dr Shafiq Gopee, Head of CTI's Office of Learning and Teaching. "The world over, we are witnessing a disintegration of the distinction between face-to-face learning and teaching and distance education. There is increased recognition that learning doesn't just happen in the classroom but at work, home, and within the community. The principles of 'lifelong learning,' 'flexible,' 'open,' 'distance' and 'off-campus' learning are at long last being embraced by our society and to assist us in the process, the almighty modern technology."

In line with world-wide trends, we launched, this semester, our latest state-of-the art Distributed Learning Space - a first in Mauritius. Powered by a series of the latest generation of Cisco Telepresence kit, this learning space provides an unprecedented and captivating collaboration between CTI and the Curtin campus in Australia, Singapore, Malaysia and Dubai. "A lot of thinking has gone into the design of this learning space," comments Shafiq. "It's been a really good example of a strong partnership with Curtin AC technicians and the local Cisco suppliers."

Jeremy Charoux, Executive Director of CTI, confirms: "This unique learning space is once again proof of CTI's commitment to innovation. It provides Mauritian students with a unique global learning experience. We are now one step closer to offering to our students on the Telfair campus, the same experience as students at the Bentley (Perth) campus."

Unique Teaching Experience

Shabanaz Baboo and Michael Pompeia, two Marketing lecturers using the Distributed Learning space for their units, report: "It's been a truly incredible teaching experience. It's amazing to see group of learners, 6000 kilometres apart, collaborating, questioning and learning from each other as if in the same classroom. It has definitely brought a global touch to our teaching."



Shabanaz Baboo and Michael Pompeia

Unique Learning Experience

What about the students? The main protagonists - our students found the experience to be most exciting and enriching.

Our Retail Marketing unit, for example, demands that our students work in groups of four with two students from CTI and two students from Bentley.

Bakurally Abdel Kaazim, third-year B Com Management and Marketing student, says: "We've worked with international students during our studies here in Mauritius but the Distributed Learning mode has provided us with a unique and rich experience of collaborating with peers that we have never, and most probably, will never meet. This creates a different set of challenging dynamics and raises peer-learning to new heights."

Adrienne Barbe, third-year BCom Management and Marketing student, concurs in a similar vein: "The immersive experience is really thrilling and makes you feel that the lecturer in Bentley is actually here in class - the experience is just out of this world!"



Michael Pompeia, CTI lecturer interacting live with Curtin counterparts

WIL Programmes

Industry wants and needs work-ready graduates. The education system is thus expected to push Teaching and Learning beyond traditional boundaries and incorporate vital soft skills such as effective communication, teamwork, and resilience, in order to make our graduates employable.

With this in mind, some two years ago, CTI embraced Work Integrated learning (WIL) as a prime Teaching and Learning philosophy to deliver real-life learning experiences.



Mr. Amrit Gayan

The CTI WIL Committee was launched in 2016. The project coordinator, Sarita Ramanan, explains: "Within the curriculum, we have guest lectures from industry experts and industry visits to help our students better understand the requirements of their fields and provide an opportunity for them to network with their future colleagues." She adds: "We've also ensured that assessments and classwork adopt an authentic slant through real-life case studies and industry projects. For example, for their final-year project, Information Technology students develop information systems for actual industry clients. Students are thus able to apply the IT and project management skills taught and learnt in class to meet the requirements of an authentic client. They also learn to work effectively in a team to meet set deadlines, communicate with a real client, and adapt to changing requirements."

Mr. Amrit Gayan, Head of Strategic Innovation at SBM, oversaw CTI students at work and commented: "The Work Integrated Learning program run by CTI has been mutually beneficial. On the one hand, SBM has been able to assess the good level of the students' capabilities and self-motivation through project milestones set jointly. And on the other, CTI students have been able to understand the challenges in the industry and have had to adapt to tight deadlines and deliverables while ensuring quality."

Direct interaction

CTI provides its students with numerous other opportunities to interact with industry beyond the set-up of the traditional internship, and outside of its curriculum. The Maurilait Industry project is one such example where twelve CTI students from across faculties worked on improving and sharpening the company's image and digital strategy. One of the project deliverables was a student-led video for the "I love my age" campaign which targeted consumers of Maurilait's dairy products across different age groups.

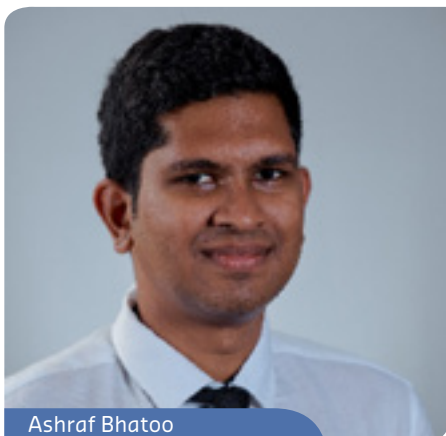
From concept to footage capture and editing, the development of this professional video allowed the participants to sharpen their screen production skills while honing their soft skills in a real-work environment for improved career-readiness. To quote Christian Maudave, Human Resources Manager at Maurilait: "What was really impressive is the extent to which CTI students were resourceful. Some of the projects were not easy and many obstacles were encountered but their resilience and commitment to the projects was admirable."



Maurilait Industry Project

Direct Participation

Extra-curricular WIL at CTI also includes active student participation in industry events and competitions. For two consecutive years now, CTI Accounting and Finance students have taken part in the CFA Research Challenge, an international financial analysis competition. CTI students won the local round in 2016 and represented Mauritius at the international competition in Chicago. Through this experience, participants were able to get a rich insight into the real world of a financial analyst.



Ashraf Bhatoo

Ashraf Bhatoo, one of the CTI students who participated, described his experience as follows: "The most interesting aspect about the CFA Research Challenge competition was the real-world application of concepts which we had learnt in class. This WIL project has enabled us to interact with both industry experts and members of the CFA Society to go beyond typical textbook problems and get a taste of what a financial analyst's job really entails."

Thanks to strong WIL leadership and institution-wide buy-in and commitment, WIL at CTI is now an integral part of the Institute's Teaching and Learning DNA. In 2016 alone, more than 500 student Work Integrated Learning experiences were recorded. This number is expected to increase in 2017, as CTI continues to actively collaborate with industry to increase and enhance its WIL experiences. This could explain why in 2016, 84% of CTI graduates were reported to secure employment within six months of their graduation!

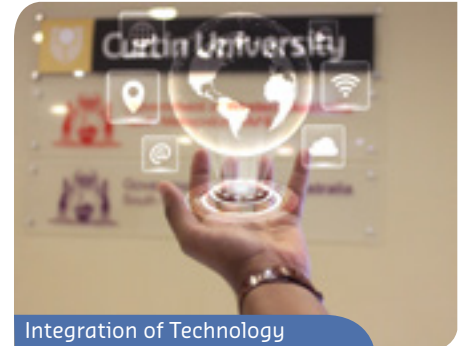
Modern Classroom and Best Practices

Do you want your students motivated and engaged? Do you want to make learning relevant, authentic, and valuable in their lives? Then shift from a teacher-centered learning mode to a student-centered one. If you succeed, both your students' attitudes towards learning and their academic performance would have improved. So says research.

The change of mentality expected here is significant. The educator has at his disposal three best practices.

Greater Integration of Technology

The future classroom will make increasing use of digital media for individual or group interaction. CTI tutors are constantly asking themselves three basic questions: Will technology help to achieve set outcomes? How can we best use technology in a given the context? How does the teacher's role change when incorporating technology in teaching practices?



Integration of Technology

Collaborative Learning



Curtin and CTI on-line Interaction

Traditionally, teaching has been to low level collaboration during which, typically, a particular staff member would teach while another observes him or her. Alternatively, a staff member would teach while another would assist by moving from one group to another.

Nowadays, we now have two or more teachers working with groups of students and sharing the planning, organization, delivery and assessment of instruction. As Dr Jouan, Head of Faculty, points out: "There is no division of authority and both tutors are free to throw in information, answer questions and provide feedback to students. The more diversified the exposure for students, the richer is the learning environment and the more meaningful learning will be."

In addition, with the development of technology, we now have students and teachers from different locations (Perth and Mauritius) interacting through streaming video conferencing in weekly workshops.

Reflection

At the start of year 2017, one of CTI's key objectives was to engage in reflective practice, and to share these reflections.

Loga Balla-Soupramanien, Lecturer, who has been involved with reflective practice in 2017, shares her thoughts with us: "I believe reflection has now reached a higher level because, in the past, only a few individuals occasionally did some reflection and these were merely basic mental exercise carried out in a disorganized manner. Reflection at CTI is now purposeful; it is much more structured with feedback from peers as well as from students. It links the theory with practice and the sharing of these reflections represents an internal benchmarking that contributes significantly towards professional development for tutors and enhanced learning for students."

Asked about what makes a good reflective practitioner, Loga replies: "One has to be convinced about the need to contribute to the learning and growth of our students. One needs to be honest and humble to be able to accept criticism and be prepared to accept change."



Peer reflection practice

How to Become Better at Research

Prof Alan Nankervis: “There is a growing need for new graduates to develop higher order research and inquiry skills to live up to the new standards of tertiary education and to match the needs set by employers.”



In September, the Charles Telfair Institute invited Prof Alan Nankervis, Professor of Human Resource Management at Curtin University, to share his experience and expertise in the process of developing the research capabilities of CTI staff. Prof Nankervis had a threefold agenda: (1) conduct a boot camp focused on writing for publications (2) follow up on current research taking place at CTI and (3) providing directions for future research projects.

Writing Boot Camp

The writing boot camp was run over two days. Its main objective was to provide an opportunity for the participants to enhance their writing skills by actually getting involved in the writing process, under the guidance of facilitators.

Prior to the workshop, the participants had set their own writing objectives. These ranged from drafting PhD proposals, to editing and refining journal articles for submission. Vimla Ramdoo, one of the participants said, “This two-day writing boot camp was amazing and very fruitful. I have greatly appreciated the fact that it provided me with an opportunity to switch off from my daily activities and focus only on research and writing.” Commenting on the boot camp, Professor Nankervis explained why it was such a great way to encourage research output, and he expressed much satisfaction at the level of the participants.

Research Projects

Prof Nankervis spent one day meeting for those currently conducting their own research projects.

One such project was the state of Graduate Work Readiness (GWR) in Mauritius. Its leader, Sarita Ramanan explained to *Chronicles* that its findings will be published as a book chapter in collaboration with other academics from the Asia Pacific region. Dr Ramanan further shared: “Prof Nankervis was instrumental in the smooth running of the GWR research at CTI. His expert advice, from the initiation of the project to its write-up, has been invaluable to those involved.”

Future Collaboration

During the time he spent at CTI, Prof Nankervis also held meetings to discuss future collaborative projects between CTI academic staff and other academics from Australia and the region. Gounshali Vaghjee, one of the participants, commented: “Such collaborative projects are excellent in developing our research skills. They provide us with precious opportunities to work with overseas academics on the same project and this fact alone can only be beneficial in our research journey.”

When asked about his overall impression of his visit, Prof Nankervis mentioned: “From an outsider’s point of view, what struck me the most about CTI is its atmosphere. It’s a fact that CTI has a strong family culture, one which, in my experience, is unusual in universities. This supportive culture, which you can actually feel as soon as you walk in, is definitely a more productive way to achieving results in all areas – including research.”



HIGHLIGHTS OF 2017

Orientation Weeks

Over 860 students enrolled at CTI in 2017.

Semester 1



Semester 2



Graduation Ceremony

503 New graduates in 2017. The Vice Chancellor of Curtin University & Ms Melanie Sorensen from South Metropolitan TAFE were both present at the graduation events.



Curtin & Tafe



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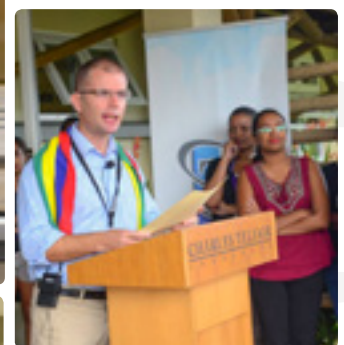
Curtin University: 50 Years of Innovation

At CTI, we also celebrated the Curtin 50 years of Innovation with the Vice Chancellor of Curtin University and CTI Alumni.



On - Campus Events

Several activities were organised during 2017 for our students: Play Station Tournament, Football Tournament, Independence Day, Outdoor Cinema, Queen's Baton Relay and International Student Outing.



Welcome to the English Language Centre!

It is a fact: English is a language that spans the globe and connects people from different backgrounds. The English language has about 350 million native speakers, but is spoken as a second or third language by as many as two billion speakers across the world. According to SIL International, more than one billion people on this earth are currently learning English. In a world increasingly globalized and competitive, English proficiency provides the path to academic excellence, employability, and personal development.

It is within this context that the CTI English Language Centre (ELC) was recently launched. Its aim is to provide English Language programmes which will help students achieve the most from their CTI experience, and beyond.

■ A Day on Campus

Recently, *Chronicles* spent a day on the campus to learn more about this initiative. Our first stop was Odylle Charoux, Director of Innovation and Change Management, and the originator of the concept: “The ELC embodies the CTI mission since its inception,” she mentioned, “which is to use a student-centred approach to facilitate academic and professional success.”

■ ELC Programs and Tools

In order to do so, various programs and tools are offered. First, English Success Study Units are embedded in the curriculum to develop English proficiency, professional communication, and academic skills progressively.

Second, during English Language Workshops, students can further their mastery of English grammar and vocabulary as well as academic writing and oral presentation. These workshops are “activity-based, highly interactive, and fun. We even bring chocolates for our students!” Mylene Biquette, Dr Vedita Cowaloosur, Luvinska Golam Oogarah, Talita James and Greta Curpen are the ELC specialists.

Third, online self-study resources are made available to all students via the library and in digital format. Students are one click away from online courses delivered by Australia and can access English Skills newsletters from Curtin University.

Finally, English Language Development plans and peer support are available to students for free. Students are paired with a peer to receive personalized and structured coaching to further their English proficiency. They receive optimal support from ELC specialists who structure the sessions and monitor learning outcomes.

Odylle shares with us a touching success story: “I remember meeting one student from China, who came all the way to study with us. At first, we could only smile and use sign language to communicate as he could only speak Mandarin. With continuous effort, peer and lecturer support, and an encouraging team, he started to progress and learn English. At the end of his stay at CTI, he rushed in my office with a big smile and perfect English speaking skills. I never knew he could be so talkative!” This is just one example, but there are many more success stories.

■ Career-ready, Happy Graduates

As we are heading to our next meeting, we do a quick detour via the CTI Auditorium. It is buzzing with activity as students are gathered around tables working on assignments, team presentations, and writing assessments. We can overhear one student encouraging her friends: “We are ready to present our final project and we’ll do a great job! I just know we are ready.”

It helps us reflect that perhaps the ELC also prepares career-ready graduates. With their improved standards, graduates are more confident to enter the job market and make a significant contribution to the community. This is echoed by Jeremy Charoux, our Executive Director: “Our vision is to become the region’s leading centre of academic excellence, and we believe that English proficiency is central to this goal. In addition, the ELC prepares students to communicate effectively and make an impactful contribution once they enter the job market. We wish for all of our students to have academic, professional, and personal success. It is the reason why we offer English Language Development Programs as an added value. It is free of charge, but students are expected to be pro-active and take ownership of their learning.”



Career-ready, Happy Graduates

Isabelle Domijan: “The decision to commit to training is not one that our clients take lightly.”

During the past twelve months, CTI has welcomed a record six large organisations seeking corporate training services. They are Winners, Rogers, Birger., RT Knits, SWAN, Eclasia, ABC and Phoenix Bev. Altogether they represent 154 trainees. Chronicles met with Isabelle Domijan-Bowler, Leadership Centre Manager, to find out more.



Isabelle Domijan - Bowler,
Leadership Centre Manager

Q: Six clients, 154 trainees all in just one year. How do you explain this popularity?

Most of the organisations who chose to train their employees at CTI this year are returning customers. This means that they've had a very positive experience on previous occasions and wished to extend these benefits to their colleagues.

Q: What are you saying?

That the endorsement by some of the key players of the Mauritian economy can be explained by what their employees feel about the course. For example Dan Moothien (Operations Supervisor at Phoenix Beverages LCP 2016/2017) is on record for saying, and I quote, “For me the course opened many paths professionally and personally. I shared much of what I learnt with my colleagues and family members and I believe that many were inspired to follow my example.”

Q: Some say managers attend training because they are told to do so by their bosses. It's part of their routine.

No, not true. I can assure you that the decision to commit to training is not one that our clients take lightly. Client expectations are forever increasing and one prerequisite that keeps coming back in our discussions with senior management is always the perennial ‘Return on Investment’. Our clients want to see these returns – they almost demand the certainty that training will have a significant and positive impact on all their organisational stakeholders

Q: Which is of course a very difficult guarantee to give.

Absolutely. There are so many factors involved here that no one in his or her right mind would even think of giving it.

Q: The adage is well-known: unless we innovate training dies - like so many other things in life. What are you doing in this area?

CTI has a rich history in training adults but this doesn't mean that there is no need to innovate and find new ways to encourage our trainees to learn and transfer knowledge. We do so by focusing on experiential learning and encouraging lots of sharing. Our trainers are experts at using a variety of techniques such as self-observation, reflection, team activities, paired work learning, role plays and solving practical challenges all based on real business scenarios.

Q: Any new programmes?

Yes. We've recently introduced new modules such as Stress Management, Sales Strategy, Managing in the Digital World, Innovation and Strategy, Strategic Selling, Time and Focus Management, amongst others.

Q: Another perennial issue is always transfer of training. How do you ensure that whatever is learnt in the training room doesn't just die in the classroom?

We use a variety of techniques. Two of them are worth mentioning: Guest speakers and Action Learning.

Guest speakers have always featured in our training programmes. Justifiably so, as they bring with them experience from the real world. Some of the guest speakers we were lucky to welcome this year included Patrice Sheik Bajeet (Phoenix Bev), Oscar Olsen (Flying Dodo), Eddy Jolicoeur (MCB), Rolph Schmid (Indigo Hotels), Julien Guillot-Sestier (Circus), and Marina Ythier (Maluti Communications).

Regarding Action Learning, this year we introduced a different way of assessing our training efforts. Instead of relying on the traditional course reaction questionnaires, we asked participants to prepare and submit a final summative report designed to solve one of their real work-based problems. In doing so, they had to use all what they had learnt throughout the year. Needless to say, our participants' own bosses have welcomed with open arms this innovation.

2017 Academic Events

During 2017, a series of Work Integrated Learning events were held at the CTI with the collaboration of Industry Partners.

Cultivating Tomorrow's Leaders

- Organizational Development & Leadership Association (ODLA) and CTI organized a debate between GenX/Baby Boomer leaders and Millennials on Friday 22 September. The theme of the debate was "Understanding the Generation Gap in the Mauritian Context".
- The Panel Members consisted of Vidia Mooneegan, Managing Director at Ceridian Mauritius, Louis Rivalland, CEO Swan Group, Nadine Filipe, Executive Creative Director, Mc Cann Group Mauritius and Partner at Redhouse Advertising, Andre Viljoen, CEO Fiji Airways, Varsha Naran, Founder of Lumiere Consulting, Pauline Seeyave CFO New Mauritius Hotels. All of them shared their thoughts about the generation gap and also gave some useful advice on how to become a good leader.
- CTI Millennials on the other hand focused on their passion, their uniqueness, their ability to dream and be creative, but at the same time the necessity to respect their mentors.



ODLA

CTI Career Day

- CTI hosted its biggest ever career day on 30 August. The event saw over forty of the island's leading companies participate and students were provided with the opportunities to ask questions and even submit job applications if interested.
- Mrs. Kanya Santokhee (Head of Marketing) said, "CTI has been establishing links with Mauritian industry leaders for over 17 years. These close links are very important as it allows our students to secure internships and later on jobs with the best companies on the island."
- Executive Director, Mr. Jeremy Charoux, kicked off the event by welcoming the companies present. He reaffirmed that CTI sees itself playing a vital role not only in delivering curricula but ensuring all its graduates are work-ready.



Career Day Festival



Global MBA trip

- The much anticipated Curtin MBA (Global) is well on its way with the first batch of students already on its second trimester of the programme.
- Programme manager Mrs Christel Ramloll said, "Our students are very excited at the prospect of travelling to Perth on the 28 October as part of the international study tour unit. They will be joining fellow MBA students from Singapore and Australia. The primary objective is to examine the similarities and differences between Australia, Singapore and Mauritius with respect to the institutional environments, business practices and protocols, and the ability to identify the opportunities and challenges of conducting successful business through immersion."



MBA (Global) trip



ACA Design Festival

ACA Design Festival

- The ACA Design Festival was an excellent opportunity for the CTI team of design lecturers to network with local industry players as well as internationally renowned experts in the field.
- Head of Design, Dr Sarita Hardin-Ramanan, said “Our lecturers came back from the design festival highly inspired and, more than ever, determined to align CTI design raining with international benchmarks. They even invited two of the international jury members to CTI to share their experience with our students. An excellent opportunity to stimulate creative juices!”



Festival Ile courts

Festival Ile courts

- In line with the International Ile Courts Film Festival, three groups of CTI Mass Communication students specialising in Corporate Screen Production, collaborated with three representatives of Media Trust (one per group) to participate in the “Cinema en Dix Plans”, five-day workshop.
- Under the supervision of international directors, the students had to shoot, edit and produce a short documentary. It was screened and reviewed at CTI on the fifth day.



PwC on campus

PwC Next Generation Factor Competition

- PwC organized the second edition of the NextGenFactor competition and their team was at CTI on 13 September to ‘fish’ for candidates.
- Successful candidates will be working in teams and will have to review a real-world business scenario, focussed on strategic issues facing companies all over the world including financials, tax, risk, governance, technology, amongst others.
- The winning team will bag a cash price of Rs 200,000 and the chance to land an internship with PwC.

Dr Vedita Cowaloosur: “I am dedicated, in my work as well as in my personal life, to endorsing the values of inclusion and social justice.”

Chronicles continues with its presentation of our PhD staff members. In this issue, Vedita Cowaloosur recalls her research at the University of Warwick.



Dr Vedita Cowaloosur

Q: What was the topic chosen for your PhD?

Home and the World: Representations of English and Bhashas in Contemporary Indian Culture. It focused on contemporary and near-contemporary literature and film, exploring a broad range of canonical and non-canonical works from South Asia—including literary and popular art forms in English, as well as in indigenous South Asian languages such as Hindi, Bengali and Urdu.

My research was interdisciplinary in nature and largely informed and inspired by the desire to bridge the perceived gap between academia and civic capacity for global, cultural, social and environmental awareness. In my thesis, I actively engaged with new forms of literary thinking and criticism, whereby the texts and genres that I researched—including migrant narratives, trans-oceanic literatures, literatures from diasporas, as well as literature in translation—furthered the debates about the nature, relevance, and cultural implications of the literary and critical theories of the discipline to society at large.

Q: Why have you chosen this topic?

I am dedicated, in my work as well as in my personal life, to endorsing the values of inclusion and social justice. My work reflects my commitment to foreground the rich diversity of an increasingly mobile and globalized world, in which people move across spaces and communities in search of work, safety, and a better quality of life. For my PhD, I was keen to focus on the ways in which people who move are assimilated, accepted and integrated in their new communities, and analyze the sensitivity of these new communities that are formed, through the prism of language.

While I work on texts and films, my interest is specifically with those forms of literatures and criticisms that engage with the diversity of the present day world. Through the study of these texts, I seek to transmit the sense of a multi-faceted and diverse world to my readers, in the hope that the understanding of this difference would engender tolerance and respect for that difference among them.

Q: How relevant to Mauritius was your research?

Very. The interdisciplinarity and contemporaneity of this project sits well with the ethos and make up of our country - especially the ongoing concern to promote multicultural education with an aim to open students at all levels up to non-discrimination and equity through the creation of culturally responsive pedagogy and commitment to socially just practices.

Q: What have you learnt as a result?

While the PhD findings have been published in various academic journals, for me the PhD experience provided the most significant learnings. Not only did I attend various conferences and had the opportunity to collaborate with academics across the globe, but the research led me to a Postdoctoral Fellowship at the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa. In the process, this variety of workspaces has exposed me to different cultural and socio-economic environments and greatly expanded my professional and socialization networks. My lived experiences, international exposure, adaptation to different cultural and linguistic environments, and experience with students and colleagues from varied social class, gender, sexual orientation, age, religious background, national and ethnic origins and language abilities have all been the greatest learnings of my PhD.

Q: What would you advise any future PhD candidates?

Research does not happen in isolation—join the academic community and make sure to take part in ongoing conversations around your topic and across disciplines. At a more basic level, your relationship with your supervisor will be E-L-E-M-E-N-T-A-L. Make sure that you pick a supervisor you look forward to conversing with.

New Faces and Baby at CTI

New Faces



Vedita Cowaloosur
Lecturer



Shane Jadoo
Lecturer



Luvinska Golam Oogarah
Lecturer



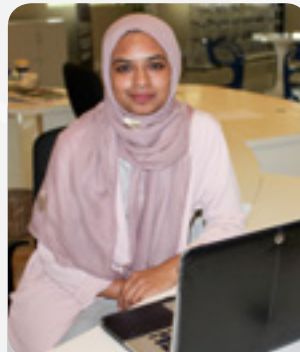
Selvin Thanacoody
Lecturer



Alisha Hingun
Lecturer



Viraj Dawarka
Lecturer



Samirah Jugoo
Lecturer



Hemant Huzooree
Lecturer



Sanjna Ramdenee
Lecturer



Sailesh Ramsaha
Accounts Officer



Ketsia Narsoo
Cashier



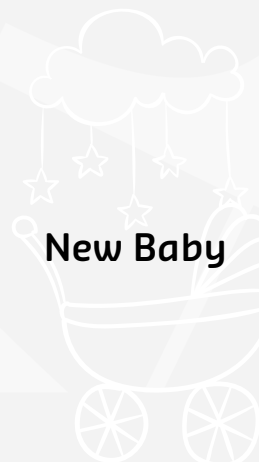
Vekand Appanah-Lingiah
(Ritesh) *IT Assistant*



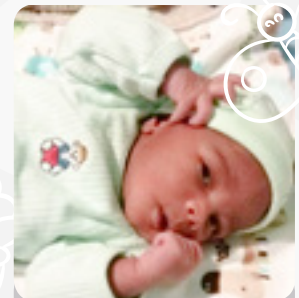
Valerie Aspasia
Educator



Sanish Moher
*Digital Marketing
& Events Coordinator*



New Baby





Louis Mathieu
Jonathan Sansfaçon
28 of August 2017



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