

## Prof Sarah Gravett

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Prof Sarah Gravett is a Professor of Education and Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Johannesburg (UJ). She holds a PhD in Education from the Rand Afrikaans University (now part of the University of Johannesburg). She was a high school teacher for eleven years, during which time she received several awards for teaching excellence. Her other awards include: The South African Association for Research and Development in Higher Education Teaching Fellowship and the medal of honour from the Education Association of South Africa honouring her for outstanding service to Education in South Africa. From 1993, she worked at the Bureau for University Education as a researcher before joining the Faculty of Education at the former Rand Afrikaans University (RAU). Prof Gravett served as Chair of the Department of Educational Sciences from 2002 to 2004 and as Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Education from April 2004 until her appointment as Dean at the beginning of 2007.

Prof Gravett's initial postdoctoral research included transformative learning, dialogic teaching and the design of learning environments in higher and adult education. In recent years, her research focus has shifted to teacher education. Prof Gravett is the author and co-author of numerous books and articles on teaching and learning, teacher education and related themes and has supervised numerous postgraduate students to completion. In 2009-2011 she led a research project on "Learning to become a teacher: Novice teachers entering the teaching profession", commissioned by the Gauteng Department of Education. She also led a research project that led to the establishment of teaching schools in South Africa. Research emanating from this initiative includes innovative work in developing a teacher education model, incorporating a "teaching school". The research was commissioned by the South African Department of Higher Education and Training (with a European Union Grant) – the work is still ongoing. Some of the "teaching school" work has also been supported through grants from USAID and the Elma Foundation. The "Knowledge for Action" website emanated from this support: <https://knowledgeforaction.co.za/>

Her involvement in establishing a school at UJ's Soweto campus is the most gratifying achievement of her academic career. This school was established to serve the education needs of young children in close proximity to the UJ Soweto campus. It also serves as a learning site and an education laboratory for teacher education. Currently, she leads two projects. The first, on

mentor teachers who oversee student teachers' practicum in schools. The initial work resulted in an open source course, with collaborators from the University of Helsinki: [www.uj.ac.za/faculties/facultyofeducation/mentoring-school-teachers](http://www.uj.ac.za/faculties/facultyofeducation/mentoring-school-teachers). The second, is a pilot project on the 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching and learning in schools, the implications for teacher education and the development of African Languages in and for teacher education. In 2018, she secured a grant from the South African Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) to establish a Centre for African Languages Teaching at the UJ Soweto Campus.

Apart from her role as dean and UJ academic, Prof Gravett was also involved in developing the "Strategic Framework for Teacher Education and Development" – a framework that steers teacher education and development in the country (2011-2025). She chaired the Education Deans' Forum in South Africa for several years. In 2012, she led a major project in Siyabuswa, a rural area in the Mpumalanga Province, commissioned by the Department of Higher Education and Training to establish a new foundation phase (elementary school) teacher education programme. The programme was taken over by the University of Mpumalanga and she continued to oversee work related to the development of Siswati and isiNdebele (South African languages) as languages of teaching and learning in the foundation phase until July 2018. In 2013-2017, she chaired the Education Sector Committee of the South African National Commission for UNESCO (SANATCOM). In this role she provided leadership to enable the committee to carry out its advisory, facilitative, liaison and coordination role between UNESCO, the South African Government and Civil Society.