

South African National Resource Centre for the First-Year Experience

Vision Statement

The South African National Resource Centre for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition (SANRC) will serve as the trusted expert; a nationally recognised leader; and initiator and repository for scholarship, policy, and best practice for all postsecondary student transitions.

Mission Statement

The South African National Resource Centre for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition, in conjunction with the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition (in South Carolina, USA), serves education professionals by supporting and advancing efforts to improve student learning and transitions into and through higher education (and at a later stage in further education and training).

We will achieve this mission by providing opportunities for the exchange of practical and scholarly information as well as the discussion of trends and issues in our field through the convening of conferences, workshops, and online learning opportunities; and publishing a range of research- and practice-based resources in a variety of formats, including a peer-reviewed online journal.

Core Commitments

Student Transitions: Students in postsecondary education are faced with various important transitions. For student learning and development to happen in an optimal way, these transitions have to be negotiated successfully. We strive to set a standard of excellence for supporting student transitions and facilitating educational success for a diversity of South African and international students in the 21st century.

Connection between Research and Practice: We believe that good practice in higher education must rely upon a foundation of high-quality research. Conversely, good research draws from and informs practices in our field. As such, the work of the SANRC advances and supports both scholarly practice and applied research.

Inclusion: We strive to create a supportive and professional environment where a diversity of viewpoints are recognised and considered in the ongoing dialogue on student transitions. One of the greatest strengths of the first-year experience and students in transition movement is its ability to cut across traditional boundaries in higher education and involve professionals from multiple sectors of education, institutional roles, and disciplinary perspectives as well as from a variety of personal backgrounds, institutional environments, and educational experiences.

Collaboration: Partnership and collaboration draw from the interdisciplinary nature of higher education, communicate an ongoing commitment to inclusion, and, ultimately, enhance the success of our efforts to support student transitions. The SANRC was founded as an affiliate of the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition, continues to operate in partnership with the National Resource Center, and aims to continue to work with like-minded national organisations. Collaboration between South African universities and various sectors of the education field will also be pursued.

Lifelong Learning: We believe that all educators continue to be lifelong learners. We support a climate of intellectual curiosity and provide the tools and media to pursue professional development and an ongoing process of inquiry, exploration, and discovery.

National and continental focus: The SANRC is committed to serve South African higher education and to provide materials, support and professional development opportunities appropriate to our national and continental context. This also includes a focus on developing the national and continental first-year experience and student transition movement and to developing nationally and continentally relevant and appropriate South African and African resources.

Core Functions

Conferences and Continuing Education: The Centre hosts professional development and continuing education events each year to regional, national, and international audiences to highlight the latest research findings, share assessment strategies, and address current trends and issues affecting university students' transition, learning, and success.

Publications: The SANRC publishes research-based literature on scholarly practice relevant to the national and regional context such as books, monographs, guides and other resources for those interested in postsecondary transitions. The early focus of the Centre will be to support the dissemination of research on the first-year experience and students in transitions through the collection and publication of existing knowledge. Future developments include plans to launch and publish an online peer-reviewed journal, create resources that highlight research and practice in the field in a variety of print and electronic formats.

Research: The SANRC serves as a national initiator of scholarship on postsecondary transitions; maintains an original research agenda and develops and strengthens collaboration with scholars throughout the world.

Online Resources: The Centre maintains several online channels for resource sharing and communication, including a dynamic website with resources on a range of topics, and several social media outlets.