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## EFFORTS MADE TO BOOST PERFORMANCE OF BLACK BCOM HONOURS ACCOUNTING STUDENTS



**Accounting Winter School participants.**

The School of Accounting, Economics and Finance (SAEF), in partnership with the Advancement of Black Accountants of Southern Africa (ABASA), and the SA Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA), recently hosted a winter school aimed at boosting the performance of BCom Honours Accounting students.

The programme from June 23 to 30 involved 71 students from disadvantaged communities who benefitted from extra tuition in advanced accounting, advanced auditing, managerial accounting and financial management (MAF) and advanced taxation to ensure they are adequately prepared for the SAICA ITC examination as the first step towards becoming a CA.

'The ABASA/SAICA/UKZN Winter School initiative has come at a crucial time for students and the country at large. The initiative comes at the time when the country is driving the transformation agenda; and the need to upskill the youth with critical skills in fields such as Accountancy. The realization and acknowledgement of diversity among students by the ABASA and SAICA especially on the previously disadvantaged student cohort must be applauded and used as a linchpin for future initiatives. Such timely interventions will surely yield positive results,' said the School's Acting Dean, Dr Mabutho Sibanda.

ABASA Representative, Mr Mbusiswa Ngcobo said: 'ABASA's main objective, together with the assistance of various stakeholders including SAICA, hopes that through this program, improvements of the pass rates of African and Coloured CTA students at UKZN will go a long way in benefitting the accounting profession in our region to become representative of the society it exists within.'

SAEF academic and Thuthuka project coordinator, Dr Msizi Mkhize added that the initiative also aims to enhance the students' comprehension skills.

'Facilitators focused on examination techniques and study skills. Students were coached on time management and maximising marks with facilitators emphasising that students must read questions prior reading supporting material. This technique guaranteed students' focus on right answers', Honours student, Ms Thembeke Bobo, said she learned a lot from the programme.

'What I really appreciated about the winter school was that we also get to write tests to assess if we are understanding what we have been learning,' said Bobo. 'This gives us an opportunity to gauge how much we have taken in and where we need to improve because as much as we can sit and listen to a lecturer explain concepts it does not mean that we understand everything. The knowledge I have gained at the school has made me confident I will pass this course,' she said.

Thandiwe Jumo