## Future Scholars Shine: AEERD MSc and PhD Students Present Research Proposals at a departmental Seminar Series Day

## Date: 19 June

## Location: Agricultural Annexe Building Seminar Room

The Department of Agricultural Economics Extension and Rural Development recently hosted a highly successful Seminar Series Day, showcasing the academic promise and research innovation of its postgraduate community. This annual event is a culmination of the Research Methodology course that is brings together MSc and PhD students, faculty members, and invited guests for a day of dynamic research proposal presentations and constructive academic engagement.

This year's seminar series, held on 19 June 2025 provided a platform for Master's and Doctoral students to present their research proposals as part of their academic milestones. The day featured a wide range of topics (Figure 1) addressing contemporary challenges in agricultural economics, extension and rural development reflecting the diversity and relevance of student research and reflecting the intellectual diversity and real-world relevance of the department's academic programmes. The day formed a critical part of the postgraduate academic journey, offering students the opportunity to articulate and defend their research ideas, engage with constructive feedback, and build confidence in their scholarly voice. The atmosphere was marked by intellectual curiosity, supportive dialogue, and a shared commitment to advancing knowledge

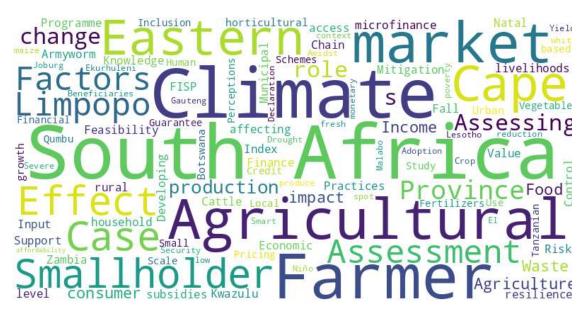


Figure 1 Summary of student topics presented

The day concluded with an informal reflection session where students and academic staff shared their experiences of the proposal development process and the value of receiving live feedback in a collegial setting.

Dr. Colleta Gandidzanwa, the seminar coordinator, remarked, "It was truly inspiring to see the level of thought and preparation our students put into their proposals. The seminar day not only validates their academic progress but also builds confidence and sharpens their research focus of our students."



As one MSc students Ayanda Ndlovu put it, "Presenting today was nerve wrecking and intimidating but it was reassuring in that the event was a space for learning. It helped me see my research through different lenses. The questions I received challenged me to think more critically and clarified some key points."

Guillame Oberholster said "I found the presentations very well organised with the flow within and between presentations and discussions happening smoothly. It was very informative and engaging. I appreciated the range of feedback we received from many different experts in the department. The feedback and questions were constructive. I feel that it was a good learning experience to enhance my own work, even from the questions and comments other students received."

Saraphina Hambokoma reflects "I really enjoyed the opportunity to learn about the research projects of my fellow students. It provided me with a clearer picture of how my own work aligns with the broader academic community and even inspired some ideas for potential future collaborations. Overall, this experience reminded me that research is a journey; it's not a solo mission! Engaging with others is essential for nurturing our ideas and transforming them from good to great. It's perfectly acceptable not to have all the answers; what truly matters is our willingness to embrace growth and learning."

This successful seminar day is a testament to the department's commitment to nurturing future researchers and creating a vibrant academic community. It also reinforces the role of peer learning and mentorship in the postgraduate journey.

We extend our congratulations to all the presenting students and express our gratitude to the supervisors, panelists, administrative staff and attendees who made the day a resounding success.

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