The Evolution of the Student Success Reflection (SSR) Module at the University of Pretoria

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- **Objective of Study**
- Assess the effectiveness of a mandatory Student Success Reflection (SSR) Module on at-risk students
- Academic Success Coaches typically encourage voluntary participation in academic interventions
- Academic exclusion risk: Failing to pass 70% of course credits
- Address negative perceptions of intervention programs which are often seen as overly demanding
- Enhance student engagement and success through structured academic support

MODULE OVERVIEW

- Content includes time management, study techniques, test-taking skills, mental well-being, and resilience.

- Format: User-friendly online module with concise instructional videos and practical exercises developed by academic advisors.

Investigating Exclusion Factors Among EBIT Students

- **Total Registered**: 1,514 first-year students within the Engineering, Built Environment, and IT (EBIT) department

- **Demographic**: This cohort provides a diverse cross-section of the student population, essential for understanding varied academic challenges.

- **Instrument**: Online Questionnaire

- **Target Group**: First-year EBIT students at the University of Pretoria

- **Primary Objective**: To delve into the underlying reasons for academic exclusion among first-year students, defined as failing to pass 70% of their course credits

- **Broader Goal**: Refine and enhance the Student Success Reflection (SSR) Module by pinpointing the most critical issues leading to student exclusion

Theme 1: Mastering Time Management in Higher Education

- **Organisational Skills for Advanced Time Management**

- Crucial for adapting to the autonomous university environment

- Student Feedback: Many students struggle with creating effective study schedules and prioritising tasks

- **Self-regulation Skills for Advanced Time Management**

- Challenges: Procrastination and inadequate self-regulation hamper academic responsibilities

- Impact: Directly affects students' ability to meet deadlines and maintain academic performance

Theme 2: Unpreparedness for University Workload Adjustments

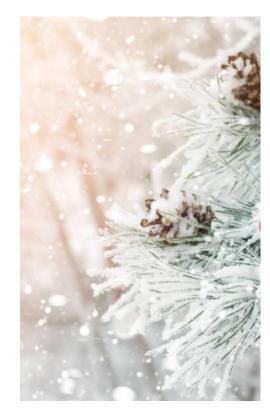- **Essential Academic and Social Skills for University Adjustment**

- Difficulties in adjusting academically and socially to university life

- Students express being overwhelmed by the pace and rigor of university standards

- **Discipline and Self-Regulation Needed for University Adjustment**

- Strong discipline and self-regulation are essential for balancing academic and social demands

- Student Experiences: Reports of struggling to balance study time with social activities, leading to academic stress
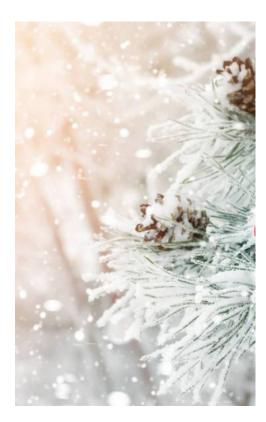
Theme 3: Escalating Mental Health Challenges Among University Students

- **Interplay between Academic Performance and Mental Health**

- Connection: Stress, anxiety, and depression directly impede academic success

- Student Concerns: Many students report that mental health struggles exacerbate the difficulty in handling academic pressures
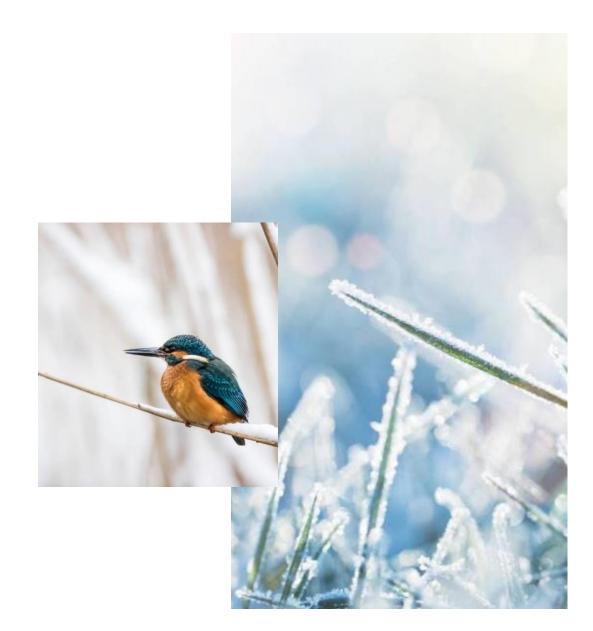
SSR MODULE FOCUS IN 2024

https://clickup.up.ac.za/ultra/courses/_175364_1/outline

- **For Time Management**: Develop workshops and tools specifically designed to enhance organisational and self-regulation skills
- **For Workload Adjustment**: Implement programs that ease the transition to university life, focusing on both academic skills and social integration
- **For Mental Health**: Increase support services, provide more accessible mental health resources, and integrate mental well-being education into the curriculum
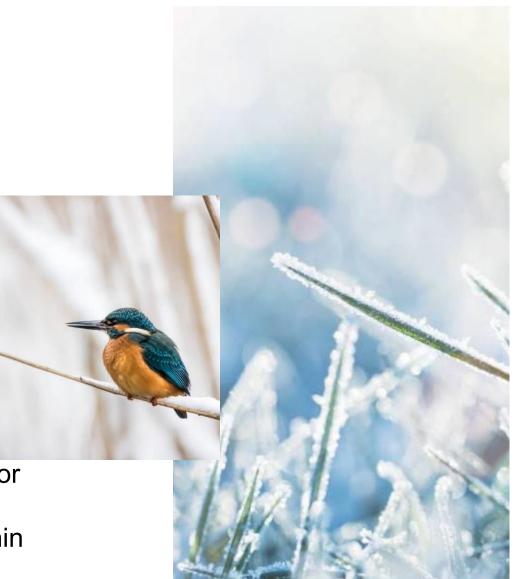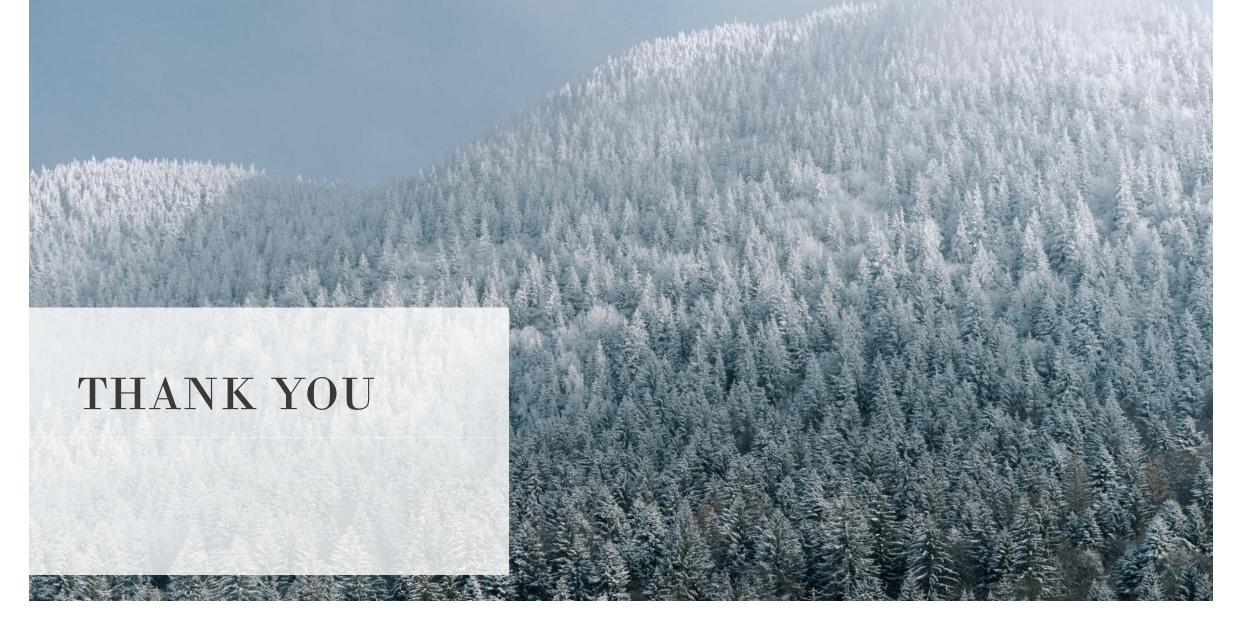
SUMMARY

- **Target Audience**: At-risk students in the Engineering, Built Environment, and IT departments

- **Key Features**: Mandatory participation to ensure consistent engagement – reaching students who may not have made use of support services

- **2024 Enhancements**: Based on student feedback, the curriculum includes improved time management strategies and mental well-being support.

Refining Academic Support

- **Time Management Workshops**:
- Focus on practical organisational and self-regulation strategies
- Use cognitive and behavioral techniques to enhance effectiveness
- **Mental Health Support**:
- Expand and diversify services to increase accessibility and reduce stigma
- Collaborate with the counseling unit to create targeted workshops and support groups
- **Structured Learning Communities**:
- Develop programs to foster social integration, especially for off-campus students
- Address social isolation and enhance community feel within the university

THANK YOU