

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

DEPARTMENT OF ACADEMIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS

FIRST SEMESTER RESIT/ SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION, JULY, 2018

**TITLE OF PAPER: ACADEMIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS
ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES (EAP)**

COURSE CODE: ACS 111 / 102

TIME ALLOWED: 2 (TWO) HOURS

- INSTRUCTIONS:**
- 1. Write the name of your Faculty and Programme on the cover of your answer booklet.**
 - 2. Answer ALL questions.**

TOTAL MARKS: 100

This examination paper contains 7 pages including the cover sheet.

DO NOT OPEN UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED BY THE INVIGILATOR

SECTION A: Reading Comprehension**50 marks****Answer ALL questions**

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow.

PHAT... OR JUST FAT

In African society, the fuller figure has always been celebrated. But just how healthy are our ideas about a voluptuous figure? Could our quest to retain our African attributes be the death of us? Alarming statistics reveal that more black South African women are succumbing to weight-related diseases than any other race. Thando Pato investigates.

1. Big, black and beautiful are the words that *Lerato, uses to describe her figure. "I'm a typical African woman, big hips and thighs, an African trademark bum and a small waist and upper body. It's the way I was born and I'm happy with it," she exclaims.
2. By **conventional standards**, Lerato is not fat. At least that's what she thought, until she was recently diagnosed with high blood pressure and told by her doctor that she's overweight and needs to shed some kilos in order to alleviate the symptoms and lower her risk of developing other conditions related to being overweight (which include type II diabetes, high cholesterol, heart disease, gout, kidney disorders, infertility, certain types of cancers and the risk of suffering a stroke).
3. Lerato's problem is not **unique**. Thousands of black women across the country are finding themselves in similar circumstances. A recent study by the Medical Research Council (MRC) reported that South Africa could soon take over the title of the world's fattest nation from the United States. According to the report, 45 percent of South Africans are overweight and the obesity rate amongst black women is higher than other local ethnic groups. This has seen a sharp increase in type II diabetes, strokes, heart attacks and high cholesterol levels. Currently it's estimated that in the black community there is a 12 to 16 percent prevalence of type II diabetes, which is a direct result of being overweight or obese.
4. Associate Professor Thandi Puoane, from the School of Public Health at the University of the Western Cape, says part of the problem stems from the traditional African perceptions we have about being fat. In African culture a full, **voluptuous figure** is seen as a positive thing and is associated with good health, fertility and prosperity. Traditionally married women who are curvy are seen to be happy in their marriages, while a skinny frame is seen as a signal of ill health or unhappiness in the union. "These perceptions still exist, especially amongst the older generation. Some people think that it's poor or uneducated people who believe in this but, I encounter a lot of well-educated people who are also believers," says Puoane.
5. Puoane says that in her line of work she frequently comes across women who are aware that they're overweight and at risk of life threatening diseases but are reluctant to lose weight because of the stigma they might face, which include being thought of as poor or suffering

from HIV/AIDS. "Some women I've spoken to tell me that they purposefully eat fatty foods in order to stay fat," she adds. Is being thin such a bad thing? According to Mantombi Makhubele, 29, it is. "I'm too skinny and too tall. I need to gain at least five kilograms. I've got no curves and an English [white] bum. The only men who pay me compliments or even look at me are white guys because I'm basically built like a white woman," she says.

6. For some women, Mantombi's **enviable** size-32 figure would be a dream come true, but she considers it a curse. Brought up in a household and community where a full-figured woman was **revered**, she's never quite fitted in. "Ever since I was a child people commented on how thin I was. My mother was so worried about me that she took me to see doctors and specialists who recommended that I take extra vitamins to gain weight, but none of it has ever worked."
7. So what is her dream figure? "To have some hips, a rounder bum and generally just to be a bit plumper," she explains. Even after having two children, Mantombi still hasn't managed to pack on any extra kilograms – so she's resorted to eating as many vetkoeks as she can for breakfast and large meals at lunch and supper.
8. Registered dietician, Tabitha Hume, says women need to stop looking at weight from an **aesthetic point of view** and concentrate more on a holistic picture that involves long-term health benefits. "In the scientific realm of weight issues, it is a fact that being overweight increases your chances of getting sick, of having long-term and **debilitating** lifestyle diseases and ultimately, an early death. So although an overweight woman may feel fit and OK and even look super, the chance of her developing a lifestyle disease like hypertension or diabetes is still higher than a woman who has a lower body fat percentage," she says.
9. Hume says that a healthy body size is one that falls in the Body Mass Index (BMI) of 20 to 25. Anything over 25 is classified as overweight, while BMIs of 30 and above fall into the category of obese. So how do you work out your BMI? Take your height in metres, square it and then divide your weight by that number. At the moment the BMI system is marketed as the most effective method of calculating whether people are at a healthy weight or not. But there are continuing debates surrounding its appropriateness for African people.
10. Hume says although there is no real research or evidence comparing the BMI and risk ratio amongst particular ethnic groups, lifestyle diseases still present themselves across the races at the particular weight indexes calculated by the BMI. "Black people are just as likely as white people to develop disease if they have a BMI over 30," she explains. The one time she says that the BMI system may be inaccurate is when it's used to measure extremely muscular people, like competitive weight trainers and advanced athletes. This is because their muscle mass percentage is so high that its weight incorrectly increases the BMI.
11. The truth of the matter, says Puoane, is that is neither healthy to be too fat nor too thin. "There is middle ground but you have to be ready to change your perceptions and your lifestyle," she says.
12. A sentiment echoed by Hume, who says, "Getting one's body into a slim but curvy shape should be aspired to, with exercise, eating healthily and maintaining a good body fat

percentage. The bootylicious figure is in, the overweight figure is dangerous." What is important to note, say experts, is that the body needs to have a certain amount of fat to function – however, too much of it is dangerous.

13. Typically, an African woman's body shape falls into two categories: the pear, or apple, shape. Pear-shaped women have small torsos and fuller hips and bottoms, and this is most likely where they'll gain extra weight. Her apple-shaped counterpart tends to carry any extra weight around her stomach and breasts. While all experts agree that carrying extra weight is not healthy, an overweight apple-shaped woman is at higher risk of developing heart disease and other complications. "Extra weight puts a strain on the heart and if you're carrying most of your weight on your torso it's even more dangerous because all that weight presses against your lungs and causes you to be short of breath," Puoane explains.
14. Both experts agree that a healthy, balanced diet and exercise play a huge role in reaching and maintaining a good body fat percentage. "Your diet should be low in fat, high in healthy carbohydrates, fresh fruit and vegetables," says Puoane. For exercise she recommends walking at least 30 minutes three times a week.

**not her real name*

True Love, 11 December 2006

QUESTIONS

1. In your own words, explain the meaning of 'In African society, the fuller figure has always been celebrated' (Introductory paragraph). [4]
2. What is the writer telling us about "an African trademark bum?" [4]
3. The word "enviable" (Par. 6) tells us that
 - a) Mantombi's figure was disliked by most women.
 - b) Mantombi had a figure that was a curse.
 - c) Most women admired Mantombi's figure.
 - d) Mantombi's figure was a dream come true. [4]
4. Identify three (3) diseases associated with being overweight. [3]

5. What are the misconceptions associated with a woman's body in
- a) the African context? [4]
 - b) Western representation? [4]
6. Explain the meaning of the following words/phrase as used in the text:
- a) **conventional standards** (Par. 2) 3 Marks each
 - b) **unique** (Par.3)
 - c) **revered** (Par.6)
 - d) **aesthetic point of view**(Par. 8)
 - e) **debilitating** (Par. 8)
- [15]
7. In two (2) sentences explain the message of the passage. [8]
8. Suggest an alternative title for this passage. Justify your choice. [4]

TOTAL = 50

SECTION B – Summary**50 marks**

Read the passage below and in about **200 words**, summarise the things that a jobless graduate ought to do (or should have done) in order to improve the chances of getting a job.

Dear Jobless Graduate

Jun 21, 2012 by Jonathan Jansen

Jobless Graduate writes to me often, posing a question filled with emotion and frustration. "I have a degree, but I cannot find a job. How do you explain that, professor?"

There is a veiled accusation in the question, something like "you are always telling people to study and get an education; well, my parents sacrificed much to send me to university and now, look, I cannot even find a simple job with this qualification."

JG is male and female, in the early to mid-20s, mostly black, from a poor family, and from all nine provinces. JG has applied for every job available, starting with one that fits the degree that she studied for and then, later, going for any job that could earn her some money.

JG feels frustrated because he is invited to interviews but the companies never call back. He feels he is there simply to make up the numbers; at his lowest points, he believes they need black faces on parade without feeling the need to hire one. After all, they can claim they made the effort.

So JG, here is my message to you. The reason you fail to get a job has little to do with your degree. It has everything to do with the other things employers look for in a candidate. To begin with, take a close look at your curriculum vitae. You will notice spelling errors and large gaps between words. You will see that your paragraphs are not always aligned, and that your references at the end are missing information.

Your sloppy CV is one reason that employers decide, there and then, that you would probably make a careless worker. You will also see that your CV is quite thin. From this important document it is clear that you did nothing else with your life while you were a student. You did not belong to youth associations, and I do not mean the destructive political ones that go around insulting people and disrupting classes. You were not part of progressive social, cultural and political organisations that sought to make a difference in the lives of poor people.

Your CV makes no reference to voluntary work or holiday occupations. That part-time job at the Spur might have brought in much-needed cash, but volunteering at an Aids hospice or

starting up your own youth literacy project or reading club in the township would have shortlisted you for the job.

Then take a look at the marks you took from your transcripts and pasted onto your CV. Your marks reveal that you concentrated on passing, and so your 40% in mathematical literacy at school, and your 52% in sociology at university, send all the wrong signals, and here I am not even talking about your meaningless 90% in life orientation.

While you were concentrating on passing, other students were focused on excelling; there is a big difference. I also noticed from your transcript that you repeated anthropology and political science three times each; fat chance of an interview, to be honest.

Now I want you to reflect on your last interview. The way you walked into the interview room suggested a serious energy deficit. There was no smile, and you looked depressed, with your drooping shoulders. And for heaven's sake, dress properly. The way you used language was not upbeat, and you made several grammatical errors that the panel members noticed.

You were not prepared, and this showed when one of the panellists asked you what you had found out about their organisation from Google. Your answer was not cool: "I have not yet met Mr Google." I am glad you did not respond when one of the interviewers, out of frustration, mumbled, "Bring me Jack Daniels."

And so you see, JG, it is not about showing up with a degree that matters. It is the other stuff they are looking for, the value added to the degree. You see, unlike with political appointments, they are looking for competence, composure and confidence, and evidence of a life well lived. They want proof of an energetic self-starter who filled her leisure time with service to others.

They want an articulate and accomplished employee who can be trusted to represent the organisation well to the outside world. They regard an investment in a professional CV writer as demonstrating care and concern for the small things that matter. And by the way, that line on the CV that says "Criminal Record - None." Please remove that useless information just in case they do a background check.

<https://www.ufs.ac.za/docs/default-source/all-documents/times-live---the-big-read-dear-jobless-graduate-979-eng.pdf?sfvrsn=0>