

Technology and educational innovation: A case study of the  
virtual campus of the University of Pretoria

**A thesis by**

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigates the creation and evolution of the virtual campus of the University of Pretoria as a case of educational innovation. The theoretical fields of *learning, instructional design, knowledge creation, knowledge management, organisational learning, change management, technology innovation* and *customer relationship management* are drawn upon to contribute to inquiry into educational innovation. These theories were selected because the case consists of *process, product* and *service* innovation components that require an interdisciplinary perspective to achieve a holistic analysis. *Process innovation* explores new processes that have been embedded in the institution to support the virtual campus. *Product innovation* explores web-supported courses and *service innovation* explores new web-based services that have been created. The theoretical framework contains important strategies that go beyond the field of technology innovation. Following an extensive literature survey, the researcher sketches the higher education landscape – focusing predominantly on virtual education. This serves the purpose of contextualising the case within a broader setting of higher education and the impact of technology on various aspects of higher education. Theoretical constructs are applied to *process, product* and *service* innovation components of the virtual campus to explore how they manifested in the case. Qualitative and quantitative research methods are used to investigate *process, product* and *service* innovation components of the case. The research contributes to knowledge about educational innovation by means of a case study of the virtual campus. In addition, the findings of the practice of the case contribute to various theories and can be used to improve upon current practice.

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