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Physics III Laboratory Module at the University of the Witwatersrand

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Abstract content
 (Max 300 words)

One of the problems facing experimental physicists at the University of the Witwatersrand is the small number of home-grown graduate students opting for experimental physics projects when deciding to pursue higher degrees in the School of Physics. It has been suggested that the reason for this may possibly lie in the structure and curriculum of the undergraduate laboratory courses. The curriculum for the Physics III Laboratory module at the University of the Witwatersrand is well-established, and has followed a particular format for approximately a decade. A new module co-ordinator was appointed at the beginning of 2011, and it was decided to review the curriculum, and actively make changes if this was required. Accordingly, a comprehensive student survey was presented to the student cohort towards the end of 2011. The results of the survey highlighted several issues which have the potential to make experimental physics unattractive. During 2012 several changes were made to the course in response to the survey, and their efficacy is at present being monitored carefully. Results of the survey and details of the measures taken to address some of the student concerns will be presented.

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