# Respondent 9 Interview Summary

## Question 1 (1, 4, 5, 7,

* Yes, but it is a general problem everywhere
* Natural phenomenon of humans
* Plants tend to be the background of what they’re interested in
* Intrinsic behaviour to our behaviour and value system at the moment
* Plants are not ass significant or important as pets or animals

## Question 2 (1, 5, 9

* In the field of medicinal plants, no, students like the idea of working on plants that have value to humans and that tends to attract students
* In general, numbers are much lower than zoology or biotech modules
* Definitely a problem, plants are very important in our day to day lives
* Would be good to see more students doing more classical botanical subjects but it is a bit harder to find jobs in these areas which could be one of the contributing factors

## Question 3 (2, 7,11, 13,

* Narrow approach
* Not something I am familiar with but something I want to try implement in his own teaching
* Teaching them a few core concepts gives them a strong backbone/foundation that they can build off of later on
* Narrow focus might teach them to gather knowledge very quickly, moving into a future where we can google just about anything
* Having a broad knowledge is not as useful as it once was
* Core concepts are more important
* In terms of a marketing tool, it might not be the best approach
* Building a nice long solid story through the programme instead of covering as much of the discipline as possible might be appealing to some students

## Question 4

* Evolution and structure and function, they go very nicely together and can be core concepts that cross between many different disciplines
* Many different concepts can be explained through evolution, it’s easy to bring in because it’s happening
* Structure and function is a good foundation for this because evolution describes the kind of relationships and the existence of things in the living world
* Although pathways and information are essential, they can be learned at a later stage
* Top two: evolution and structure and function

## Question 5

* The process of science is great because it’s a great vehicle for teaching, showing them how we know what we know.
* Interdisciplinary nature isn’t essential but it’s easy to add
* Integration of science is a good one to catch students because it makes it relevant for them and it’s easy to bring in and not teach as a separate component
* Communication and collaboration can be brought in with the teaching style and doesn’t need to have that much emphasis put on it.
* Process of science, understanding and interpreting data and qualitative competencies are good because they are also generally lacking in school education and they link together nicely
* The others can be woven in

## Question 6

* Concepts: no, other than the fact we are looking for a narrow approach in the module and we need to reduce the content a bit. Nothing should not be taught; you just need to focus on a few.
* Competencies: none of them are unnecessary, can bring little bits in of all of them.
* The others can be woven in around the important one.

## Question 7

* Yes, it’s the model we are using for the first-year botany curriculum
* A good way to provide a nice framework
* Allows you to teach the competencies and the content at the same time, helps building interesting lesson plans

## Question 8 (4, 11, 9,12

* Time, energy and enthusiasm
* Teaching is not prioritized at the university; staff is measured using research component so few academic staff are prepared to contribute a large portion of their time to the education component
* Need support from higher up the ladder
* Need to consider that this module feeds into other modules, certain content needs to be maintained, this is tricky especially in a big institution
* We have large classes and poor botany schooling

## Question 9 (9, 4,

* Try make it a discipline driven initiative and get publicity to get some traction, this would get more people taking about it and working on it.
* We should try making it a more locally relevant system, talking about things that are issues here in SA
* Having a national initiative that is potentially funded would be great, to help combat the schooling issue.
* Buying people time to work on these things is necessary, and then being able to provide support
* Making a national database for collaboration such us designing a textbook that could be shared along with other support material for staff as well as having standardised practicals where the materials are provided by government/donors.

## Question 10 (4, 3,

* Lecturers don’t have a lot of time as it is, adding anything that takes away from their research time or adds more to the to do pile will be resisted against.
* Some lecturers may feel their particular speciality isn’t being addressed strongly enough or well enough.

## Question 11

* Get industry involved in some way, this will not only get lecturers excited because of possible funding but it will also help students see that there are jobs at the end of a plant science degree which again will potentially increase enrolment.
* Need to break the stigma of garden boy syndrome in SA, show students that it is a sophisticated, cutting edge, technology driven, vital industry.
* The students don’t like the current way of teaching plant sciences and its affecting class numbers. This affects the quality of the students coming into research
* Long term it will be beneficial to have a stronger PS education system because it will attract more students, create better students which will create better research and ultimately a stronger field.

## Question 12

* Not entirely essential but it does add big value if done properly
* Knowing what we know now, we didn’t value face to face time as much as we should have
* Became show and tell, an extension of lecture time and not really working on the competencies, practicing experiments and getting them to ask questions and engage with the material in front of them
* Recipe style pracs need to change, we need to get them practicing competencies and doing the scientific method
* We need them working and interpreting data and designing experiments
* Good lab practice is also good and a marketable skill
* We need to stop telling them what to do and start getting them understanding why they are doing what they are doing