The Department of Anaesthesiology and Critical Care at Stellenbosch University lost a valued colleague and dear friend when Dr Pieter le Roux passed away on Wednesday, 27 March 2013.

Pieter was born in Cape Town on 10 March 1967. He matriculated from Hoërskool President with an A aggregate (fourth on the national merit list), and commenced his studies at Stellenbosch University in 1984. After completing his MBChB in 1990, Pieter became a registrar in the Department of Anaesthesiology and Critical Care. He was awarded the MMed (Anaesthesiology) and became a Fellow of the College of Anaesthetists (FCA) in 1997.

Pieter was appointed as a junior consultant in 1998 and a senior consultant in 2001. In 2007, he became the Head of the Clinical Unit in Anaesthesiology and Critical Care.

During his career, Pieter worked at a number of institutions, including St Lucy’s Hospital, Transkei; Glenfield Hospital, Leicester, England; Nottingham City Hospital, England; James Paget Hospital, Great Yarmouth, England; Russells Hall Hospital, Dudley, England; the Netcare mobile ophthalmic theatre, Merseyside, England; en Moosejaw, Saskatchewan, Canada.

Pieter had a great interest in the instruction of both pre- and postgraduate students. It was a great honour for him to be the recipient of the Rector’s Award for excellence in teaching in 2009. He was also nominated by his students in 2007 and 2008. This singular achievement was a confirmation of his exceptional ability to present difficult topics in an interesting and understandable manner.

Pieter was also responsible for the tuition in physics of the registrars in the department, and managed the important pharmacy portfolio on behalf of the department.

He was an examiner for the MBChB final exams and also served as an external examiner for the MMed exams at the University of the Free State, University of Pretoria and University of the Witwatersrand, as well as his alma mater, of course.

Pieter also participated in a number of research projects, the results of many of which were published in both local and international journals. He supervised the research of 15 master’s degree students, published 10 papers in academic journals, and presented at 50 congresses and academic meetings.

In addition to his academic involvement and clinical leadership, Pieter was particularly active in professional anaesthesiology organisations. As a student, he was awarded honorary colours for leadership and service delivery, and he served on the National Council of the College of Anaesthetists from 2005 until the present time. He was also active within the South African Society of Anaesthesiologists from 2009, assuming the role of national vice president from April 2012. He was the deputy editor of the SAJAA, and was an occasional member of the National Council of the Medical Association of South Africa.

The department, faculty and Tygerberg Hospital have lost a loyal and valuable colleague and friend who had an incisive intellect and unique sense of humour. We will miss Pieter, but we are grateful for the privilege to have known him. Every member of the department has been touched by him, and we are all better people for having known him.

Prof André Coetzee