



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

Institutional Advancement

This Week @FORT HARE

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In conversation with Prof Andries Bezuidenhout

Professor Andries Bezuidenhout, is an industrial sociologist, an accomplished researcher, and a Development Studies professor in the Faculty of Management & Commerce at the University Fort Hare. In addition to a successful academic career, Prof Bezuidenhout is endowed with many other talents. He is a published author, poet, rock music artist and a newspaper columnist.

He holds a PhD from the University of the Witwatersrand where he worked as a Senior Researcher and Acting Director of the Society, Work and Development Institute. He has also worked at the University of Pretoria and the then Rand Afrikaans University (now the University of Johannesburg).

AWARD WINNING WORKS:

- Prof Bezuidenhout has produced several ground-breaking studies on the impact of global production systems on local economies, workers, and communities. His most recent publication is a volume titled: *Labour Beyond Cosatu: Mapping the Rupture in South Africa's Labour Landscape* (Wits University Press, 2017, co-edited with Malehoko Tshoaedi).
- In 2009, one of his books (co-authored with Edward Webster and Rob Lambert), titled: *Grounding Globalization: Labour in the Age of Insecurity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), won the Distinguished Scholarly Book Prize, awarded by the American Sociological Association's Labour and Labour Movements section.
- He has published two poetry books: *Retoer* (Protea, 2008) and *Veelvuldige gebruike vir huishoudelike toestelle* (2014, Protea).
- He has also penned a collection of newspaper columns titled: *Toeris in Hillbrow* (Human & Rousseau, 2010).
- As an Artist, Prof Bezuidenhout has released five CDs, two solo and three with his now disbanded rock band - the Brixton Moord & Roof Orkes.

During a radio interview in 2017, Prof Bezuidenhout referred to himself as a 'Jack of all trades and a master of none'. In our books he has mastered a lot and that is the reason why *ThisWeek@FortHare* requested an opportunity to probe beneath the surface.



// Prof Andries Bezuidenhout

Who is Prof Bezuidenhout?

I joined the University of Fort Hare in 2018 to teach development studies at the Alice Campus. I also live in Alice and don't regret having moved from the city in order to live in a more rural context.

Previously I worked at Gauteng-based universities such as the University of the Witwatersrand, University of Pretoria and what was then the Rand Afrikaans University (now known as the University of Johannesburg).

I like Alice's sense of history. Many of the institutions and their buildings here are much older than anything you will find in Gauteng. These include Lovedale College, Healdtown a bit further afield, Victoria Hospital and the University of Fort Hare campus itself.

Alice is such a beautiful place to live and work in.

Family Roots

My father's side of the family originally came from here. My grandparents were from King William's Town and my grandmother was an English teacher at the technical school in Adelaide. So in a way I returned to where my own family's roots had been. Then there's the privilege of being able to work in a place that has been associated with so many iconic figures. These include AC Jordan and Phyllis Ntantala, also Chris Hani and Robert Sobukwe from different liberation movement traditions and much earlier, the whole Jabavu dynasty.

Please share some information about your research interests, including past and current projects:

FINDING INNOVATIVE WAYS TO RESPOND TO UNEMPLOYMENT CHALLENGES

I have worked as a full-time researcher for most of my life, so I don't think I should take up space with listing all of them. Let me rather focus on the broader questions that frame my research.

- I trained as an industrial sociologist, but my interests are in the intersecting space between development studies, geography and labour studies.
- I am interested in issues such as the impact of global production systems on local economies, workers and communities.
- One of my interests is to understand how mining towns and mining communities in particular, deal with social change and the decline of the industry. In a way, mining communities are microcosms of the country as a whole - a country that has seen some improvements, but that has also experienced a range of social shocks - including the rise in unemployment.

If the labour market is changing at such a rapid pace - and here I'm referring to a large proportion of workers who are no longer permanently employed, the massive increase in youth unemployment, the rise of new jobs in what is now called the 'gig economy' - how do we respond to this as a society?

What do we do if having a job is now the exception to the rule and the majority of young people are dependent on welfare, money from family members, or hustling?

All these changes have longer term consequences for the stability of our society and also for the future of democracy. We have to find innovative ways of responding to this. I would say a preoccupation with finding solutions to these challenges would be a way to frame my research interests.

What do you think are your most significant research accomplishments?

A COMMUNITY OF CRITICAL SCHOLARS AND ACTIVISTS INTERESTED IN THE LINK BETWEEN THE ECONOMY, SOCIETY and DEVELOPMENT

In the area I work in, it is really difficult to become a specialist in one area, like many of our colleagues located in the global North. As a community of South African social scientists we are small, compared to say the US, China, India, or Europe. I am not sure we always appreciate the significance of this context. We reward specialisation, but can we afford specialisation in such a small community of scholars with so many issues to be researched?

So, to get back to the question, I consider my most significant accomplishment the fact that I am part of a community of critical scholars and activists who are interested in the link between the economy, society and development.

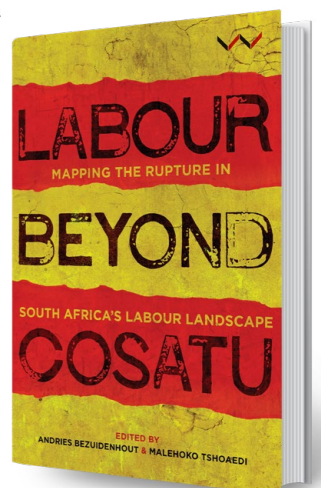
WORKING WITH A DYNAMIC AND DIVERSE GROUP OF ESTABLISHED AND UPCOMING SCHOLARS

My most recent book is a volume I co-edited with Malehoko Tshoaedi titled: *Labour beyond COSATU: Mapping the Rupture in South Africa's Labour Landscape*.

In this book we attempt to understand the implications of the split in the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) for democracy and society, looking at it from a range of different angles.

Malehoko and I edited the volume, but the contributors are all part of a dynamic and diverse group of established and upcoming scholars. I feel at home in this community and I am proud to be part of it.

I also contributed to the education of some of the younger black scholars who are part of this community. If as a community we succeed in breaking the racial division of labour in knowledge production, then we will have achieved a really important goal. This does not happen spontaneously, because there are entrenched ways of thinking and behaving that have to be challenged.



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How do you ensure your research is well communicated, digested and acted on?

ARTICLES AND BOOKS

Our first responsibility is to publish well researched and well considered articles and books. I think we have devalued books, because people tend to chase subsidies for journal articles. Books take a longer time to write, but they provide you with the scope for comprehensive and rigorous analysis.

Books are about slow science and contemplation. Also, books end up in book shops and you get the opportunity to speak to a broader public of informed readers. Many of the unions and union federations sent representatives when we launched our *Labour beyond COSATU* book. COSATU was really upset about the title, but once they understood our argument they were less antagonistic. We tried to be even-handed in our treatment of the different labour groupings. But they came to the book launch because as a scholarly community we have a longstanding relationship with them and there is a level of mutual respect.

COMMISSIONED WORK

Taking on commissioned work for clients is another way. I have done work for trade unions, companies, government departments and international development organisations. Many of these projects also culminated in academic articles and books, so I don't personally see a tension between applied and pure research. Funded projects provide you with very real problems people want solutions for, a budget, access to research sites, and opportunities for training a next generation of scholars in the field.

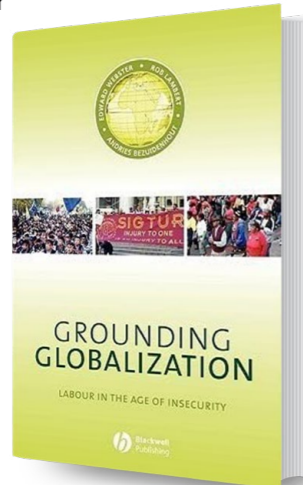
MEDIA

Then as academics we have a responsibility to write more popular pieces and to comment in the media, but I've also learnt to not comment when I have not done research on a certain topic. Years ago I made a complete fool of myself on national radio when I commented on a set of public sector wage negotiations and did not have the inside story. I will never make that mistake again. Some journalists look for quotes that will support what they want to write about and some of our colleagues are so willing to comment on everything and anything, just for the sake of building a public profile. We always run the risk of being over-exposed and losing our credibility as experts. It is a fine balance between maintaining your integrity as independent scholar and having a public voice.

What has been the greatest impact of your work?

Grounding Globalization: Labour in the Age of Insecurity:

The most ambitious research project I was part of culminated in a book with the title *Grounding Globalization: Labour in the Age of Insecurity* (I wrote this with Edward Webster and the now late Rob Lambert, published in 2008). Despite its shortcomings, I am still very proud of this book. We were interested in how workers in factories responded to the insecurity caused by threats from companies to move production to other countries where wages were lower and unions less militant.



As part of the research for the book I had to do field work and conduct interviews with workers in factories in South Africa, South Korea and Australia – an enriching experience. We found that in some cases workers attempted to make contact with comrades in other parts of the world in order to jointly campaign against attempts to play workers off against each other. If companies can globalize, workers can too.

But, we also found worrying signs of working class nationalism, where workers had become xenophobic and had started to blame foreign workers and migrants for their very real feelings of insecurity. The publication of the book coincided with the economic crisis of 2008 and caused quite a stir in that context. It won an award from the American Sociological Association and was the subject of two special editions of journals. Because the issue of working class nationalism has become such an issue (with the election of Donald Trump, as well as Brexit), the book continues to attract international attention.

Writing the book was hard work, but proverbially speaking – we were also in the right place at the right time.

What advice would you give to Young Researchers out there?

Do not suffer alone. Become part of an intellectual community. If you are stuck with your paper, ask a likeminded colleague to write with you. When I was a young scholar I really struggled to write and publish. A more experienced scholar offered to write with me, also because we shared a number of research interests.

Paradoxically, in writing with him I was able to develop my own voice. That is how I got into the game. I was part of a community of committed and generous people. Granted, some scholars flourish when they work on their own, but my preference is to work with others. It is less lonely and helps me to avoid procrastinating and stick to deadlines.

CONGRATULATIONS PROF WISEMAN NKUHLU!!!

THE NKUHLU DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING

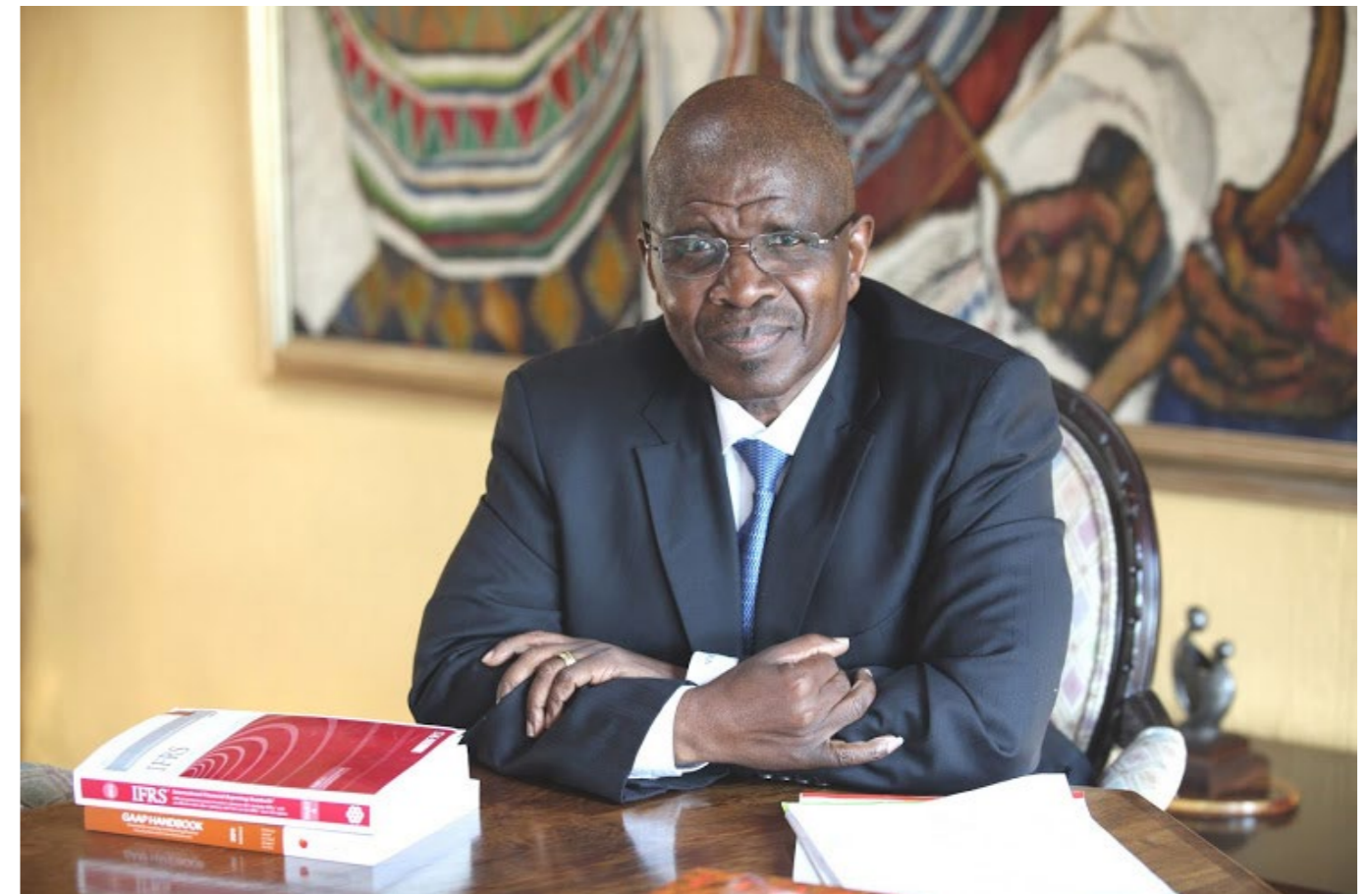
proudly congratulates one of its esteemed alumni,

PROFESSOR WISEMAN NKUHLU

for being included in the list of

THE 100 MOST REPUTABLE AFRICANS

RELEASED BY REPUTATION POLL INTERNATIONAL, A GLOBAL PUBLIC RELATIONS CONSULTANCY FIRM



// Prof Wiseman Nkuhlu (Pic: BusinessLive)

Prof Nkuhlu graduated from UFH in 1970 with a BCom degree, and in 1976 became South Africa's first black Chartered Accountant.

OUR ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT IS PROUD TO CARRY HIS NAME!

MEET THE UFH GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE TASK TEAM



// Dr Ellen Chenesai Rungani



// Dr Marianna Oelofsen



// Dr Arthur van Coller



// Dr Paul Tladi



// Mr Livingstone Malinge Gqeba



// Ms Ntibi Maepa



// Ms Yonwaba Mbadu



// Ms Yolokazi Mfuto



// Mr Onke Giwu

One of the directives of the UFH Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Policy is the establishment of a GBV Task Team and the university has complied in that regard.

The task team is responsible for the following:

- Establishing the GBV Unit as well as developing a selection process for the appointment of the GBV Reporting Officer.
- Identifying and harmonising related UFH policies.
- Developing and delivering GBV-related educational training and sensitivity building programmes or campaigns until the policy is fully implemented.

In the absence of the GBV Unit - currently in the process of being established, the team plays an oversight role in ensuring that GBV and Sexual harassment cases at institutional level are handled with urgency. It also facilitates the provision of counselling to the victims and ensures that all perpetrators are accountable for their action(s).

TASK TEAM MEMBERS:

1. Dr Ellen Chenesai Rungani

Senior Lecturer and HoD: Business Management Department

Dr Rungani is the Chairperson of the team. Her main role is to be the convener of policy implementation and to oversee the team's mandate in realising the establishment of the GBV unit. She is tasked with initiating the selection and appointment process of the Reporting Officer. Supported by the members, she ensures that The Management Executive Committee (MEC) receives accurate, timely and clear GBV-related policy implementation information.

2. Dr Marianna Oelofsen

Senior Lecturer and HoD: Philosophy Department
Chairperson: *Stand as One against GBV*

Relentless in the fight for a GBV-free campus, Dr Oelofsen is among a group of students and staff who in 2017, formed *Stand as One against GBV*. This is an anti-GBV forum that advocates for sound GBV policies at the University of Fort Hare.

As the Chairperson for Stand as One, her contribution to the team includes agitating for fast implementation of the GBV Unit. She has brought current cases under the attention of the team to ensure they are dealt with in a fair and just manner, while the unit is still being set up.

Dr Oelofsen believes the university community should work actively towards creating a secure, caring and nurturing environment which fosters the development of a deep sense of self respect, as well as respect for all.

3. Dr Arthur van Coller

Associate Professor: Nelson R Mandela School of Law

Dr van Coller is a Human Rights and International Law Lecturer. He is an admitted Attorney and has acted as a Magistrate in the past. He also lectures for the International Council of the Red Cross. His main research focus is on International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights.

4. Dr Paul Tladi

Human Resources Director

Dr Tladi is an accomplished senior executive with domestic and international experience. He has substantial experience

She hopes and aspires for an urgent facilitation of a safe campus environment that provides equal social, political and economic rights for women and men.

as an executive and non-executive director. He is an expert in building high performance teams and cultures, talent management, building human resources and business functional capability, employee value proposition, service delivery, transformation, change - and employee relations management.

He also endears resourcing and building high performance individuals. Dr Tladi has dealt extensively with unions and has achieved success in improving management-union relationships and employee conduct.

5. Mr Livingstone Malinge Gqeba

Dean of Students

Mr Gqeba has been working in Higher Education for 23 years. He has held different positions within the university sector and has served in management positions within Student Affairs portfolios for the past 16 years. The University of Fort Hare is the third university where Mr Malinge has served at the helm of Student Affairs Division. He also practises as a workshop facilitator with specialisation in strategic planning, change management, diversity management, team effectiveness and conflict management. He is also a published author.

6. Ms Ntibi Maepa

Deputy Registrar: Governance and Legal Services

Ms Maepa is an accomplished Legal practitioner with demonstrated expertise in a range of areas including risk management, legal compliance, governance, negotiating and drafting complex agreements, dispute resolution, litigation management, legal research, policy and rule formulation among others. Before joining the University of Fort Hare, Ms Maepa was a Legal Advisor at the University of Witwatersrand - a position she held since 2009. Previously she was Chamber Coordinator for Trade and Industry and

Operations Manager at Nedlac. Before that she was an Advocacy Officer at the South African Centre for Non-Profit Law. She also served as the National Organiser for the Development Resource Centre where she set up the South African National NGO Coalition (SANGOCO). Ms Maepa has a BA Law degree from the University of Swaziland as well as LLB and LLM degrees from the University of Witwatersrand.

7. Ms Yonwaba Mbadu

Final year: Bachelor of Social Sciences

Ms Mbadu occupies the Student Gender Advocacy position on the task team. She deals directly with students and escalates GBV cases to the task team's attention.

Her hopes and aspirations are for the team to successfully work together with staff and students to create a GBV-free institution that prides itself in protecting and serving students.

8. Ms Yolokazi Mfuto

MA Candidate: Political Science and International Relations

Ms Mfuto is a student activist who advocates against GBV. She is the co-founder of *Stand as One against GBV*. She hopes that one day GBV will be a thing of the past, where women will no longer be scared for their lives, for the rape culture to be abolished and patriarchy replaced by humanity.

9. Mr Onke Giwu

ISRC: Legal and Constitutional Officer

Mr Giwu firmly believes that all perpetrators of GBV should be dealt with decisively. He lives for day when the GBV policy is taken seriously in a sustainable fashion.

UFH ROUNDS OFF WOMEN'S MONTH WITH FIRST-EVER GBV VIRTUAL LECTURE



// Ms Aphwe Ntlemeza



// Ms Nwabisa Dlova



// Mr Madoda Ludidi

On the last day of Women's Month (31 August), the University of Fort Hare hosted its first-ever Anti-Gender-Based Violence (GBV) lecture.

The Vice-Chancellor, Prof Sakhela Buhlungu said the lecture was a discussion whose time has arrived.

Themed - *Unpacking the UFH GBV Policy and the Way Forward* - the virtual event was hosted via Microsoft Teams.

The lecture comes almost a year after the university officially approved and adopted its first-ever Sexual Harassment and GBV policy on 13 September 2019.

<https://www.ufh.ac.za/sites/default/files/UFHHarassment-SexualHarassment-GBVPolicy.pdf>

The master of ceremonies was **Ms Yolokazi Mfuto**, a UFH Political Science International Relations MA candidate and GBV activist.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Three alumni and GBV activists who, during their time at UFH, advocated for a GBV-free campus, delivered keynote addresses:

- **Ms Aphwe Ntlemeza:** a Black Feminist, Sociology Researcher, Writer and Freelancer. She holds a MA Degree from UFH.
- **Ms Nwabisa Dlova:** a Social Worker and Social Justice Activist. She is an intersectional feminist and educator who works for Masimanyane Women's Rights International Organisation.
- **Mr Madoda Ludidi:** a UFH History and Philosophy graduate with an interest in ethics, political economy, African history and societal theory. He is also the Chairperson of Stand as One, an anti-GBV forum that advocates for sound GBV policies at the university.

PANEL MEMBERS:

- **Dr Ellen Rungani:** UFH GBV Task Team Chairperson,
- **Mr Onke Giwu:** SRC Gender and Transformation Officer
- **Ms Yonwaba Mbade:** UFH GBV Task Team Student Gender Advocacy

OTHER SPEAKERS

The lecture was officially opened by **Dr Marianna Oelofsen** who serves on the GBV Task Team and is a leading voice and a champion of gender-based violence issues at UFH.

Dr Paul Tladi, HR Director gave a summary of what the policy prescribes in terms of the rights and responsibilities for staff.

He also described the policy as: "a ground-breaking policy for the emancipation of GBV victims within the institution." According to him, the policy seeks to address issues that were left unattended in the past and have left bleeding scars on affected victims.

Mr Malinge Gqeba, the Dean of Students, spoke about the rights and responsibilities of UFH students in terms of the policy.

The keynote speakers delved deep into the theme of the day as they scrutinized and unpacked the policy. While each speaker shared their own perspective, there was one dominating factor. The policy is good to have, however, much more needs to be done for it to be implemented effectively.

Following the key address, a question and answer session ensued. Facilitated by **Mr Njongwezintle "Njongo" Baliso**, a postgraduate Business Management student, the session created a robust atmosphere where participants posed challenging questions to the speakers and the panel members.

Prof Sakhela Buhlungu applauded the speakers and organisers of the event. "We need to have more of these discussions. The session was very productive and useful."

The VC's closing remarks ended with the following statement: "There is NO excuse for GBV and there is NO excuse for perpetrators"

by Aretha Linden

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH A RECORDING OF THE VIRTUAL LECTURE](#)

More Students, More PPEs!



// Ms Khanyisile Jumba

As the number of students on campus increases with the staggered return of the second cohort, the university has also increased measures to curb the spread of Covid-19 by installing over a thousand automatic hand sanitiser dispensers.

On 26 August the Minister Blade Nzimande announced that under Level 2, the second cohort of students (33%) would be allowed to return to campus. On the very same day, the university's Property and Services department began rolling out the process of installing automatic sanitiser dispensers.

Ms Khanyisile Jumba, Property and Services Interim Contracts Manager, said the installation process started at in Alice, followed by East London and will move to the Bisho campus later this week.

The dispensers are mounted on walls at every entrance inside all university buildings, including lecture halls and residences. They are also mounted on every office floor and common spaces.

"We have also ordered screens that will be installed in the laboratories and the Music Department to ensure adherence to social distancing," said Jumba.

by Aretha Linden



// Installation of Automatic Hand Sanitisers

STUDENT LAPTOP AND MODEM DISTRIBUTION FAST TRACKED

“The distribution process is moving fast. Having these devices means the migration to online learning - which is a very difficult task - will become much easier”



On Monday morning (7 September), scores of students who form part of the first cohort that returned to campus when the country moved to Level 3, lined-up to receive their long-awaited laptops and modems.

The distribution took place at East London and Alice campuses simultaneously. The process is managed by DHL courier services and facilitated by members of the Student Representative Council (SRC), Institutional Advancement department (IA) and UFH Information and Communication Technology services (ICT).

The on-campus delivery process is aimed at fast tracking distribution of the much needed devices, after delays experienced at the Port of Durban due to Covid-19 related staff shortages. Other available options for students include home deliveries and self-collections from DHL central collections points.

Chief Information Officer, Dr Chris Johl, said the decision to deliver to the first cohort on campus was agreed upon during a meeting between the SRC, IA and ICT.

“The SRC undertook to validate the students who were on campus and supplied the list to ICT to ensure those students who form part of the first cohort have their laptops delivered on campus.”

Dr Johl further stated that arrangements would be made to distribute to the second cohort of students, once their presence on campus is validated by the SRC. This is expected to happen over the next three weeks until 25 September.

IA staff and SRC members were on site to ensure Covid-19 safety measures were in place and to attend to queries. Stringent precautionary measures included queueing in marked areas to ensure social distancing, hand sanitising before and after collection, as well as conducting online screenings.

Speaking to *ThisWeek@FortHare*, East London SRC officer, Mr Sandiso Mbulawa said they were happy with the process so far. “The distribution process is moving fast. Having these devices means the migration to online learning - which is a very difficult task - will become much easier,” he said.

Ms Sinonelelwe Mkatshwa, a final-year Bachelor of Commerce student was among the students waiting in anticipation to receive their laptop and modem.

“Now I will be able to join online classes without any network connectivity interruptions,” said an excited Mkatshwa.

by Aretha Linden



PROF MNWANA FACILITATES WEB SEMINAR ON *RETHINKING CORRUPTION*

“When we conceptualized this idea last year, things were not as bad as they are now. There were still residual elements, arguably of a ‘new dawn’. People still thought that corruption in SA’s political, social and economic landscape could be dealt with decisively, by change of leadership”

On 21 August, the University of Fort Hare’s Department of Sociology and Anthropology, in partnership with Friederich-Ebert-Sifting South Africa, hosted a web seminar under the theme: *Rethinking Corruption*.

The session was facilitated by Professor Sonwabile Mnwana, an Associate Professor at the Sociology and Anthropology Department at the University of Fort Hare and Research Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities at the University of Edinburgh, UK.

The objective of the seminar was to challenge prevailing views on corruption in South Africa’s democratic era. The seminar came at a time when the country is overwhelmed with media reports on allegations of corruption in the tendering process for personal protective equipment to combat the spread of Covid-19.

In his opening remarks Prof Mnwana said the time has come to ‘Rethink Corruption’.

“When we conceptualized this idea last year, things were not as bad as they are now. There were still residual elements, arguably of a ‘new dawn’. People still thought that corruption in SA’s political, social and economic landscape could be dealt with decisively, by change of leadership”, he lamented.

The panel comprised two prominent speakers:

- 1. Professor Mcebisi Ndletyana:** A well-known political analyst and an Associate Professor of Politics at the University of Johannesburg. He is also a writer and his latest book is titled *Anatomy of the ANC in power: insights from Port Elizabeth, 1990-2019*.
- 2. Professor Karl Von Holdt:** A Senior Researcher and Professor at the Society Work and Political Institute at Wits University.

Excerpts from Speakers’ Notes:

PROF VON HOLDT

He focussed his arguments on four points:

1. The mechanism for elite formulation rather than a moral or criminal issue
2. The manifestation of a pervasive informal political economic system in South Africa
3. Violence
4. President Ramaphosa’s trajectory and the shape of corruption in SA will be determined by the character and stability of the coalition he can forge within the ANC

He argued that apartheid was a formation of the oppression of the black middle class, with jobs reserved for white people.

“On the other hand, democracy provided an opportunity for people to advance, and in many ways, to move to middle class, get qualifications that are required to improve lives, enter into business and become rich”, he said.

According to him, there were two legally established mechanisms - Black Economic Empowerment and Land Redistribution, but both only achieved little. This led to an informal political economic system. This, he argued, preceded the Zuma-Gupta political project that syphoned money from the state-owned companies and extended way beyond.

“The power of former President Jacob Zuma at national level was sustained by provincial groupings and cities, an enriched network to fund the ruling party, side-lining of technocrats and cadre deployment and a plethora of consultation firms from abroad,” argued Prof Von Holdt.



// Prof Mcebisi Ndletyana



// Prof Karl Von Holdt



// Prof Sonwabile Mnwana

He argued that violence is an integral part of the corrupt system, sighting a number of death threats in local municipalities.

He further stated that elite formations through wealth accumulation are intrinsic to the work of the political economic formation which consists of friends and business associates. He however warned people not to think that everybody involved is corrupt.

“There are genuine businesses and there is blurring of lines between politics and business across the board. President Ramaphosa promised to clean up but the task to do so is not clear. So it is no surprise that it is continuing during his presidency,” he said.

PROF NDLETYANA

Professor Ndletyana’s talk was inspired by his latest book. His focus was on corruption being a systemic issue rather than an opportunistic activity.

“It does not come when opportunities present themselves. It is inherited from the apartheid system and continued up to 1995”.

According to Prof Ndletyana, the old system allowed councillors to do business with municipalities and it expected mayors to be rich.

“It became normal and acceptable in the new system for councillors to fight over who becomes the city manager. The city manager’s opposition to looting was threatened with violence”, said Prof Ndletyana.

“When you realise you need competent people, the embeddedness within the system resists whatever improvements you want to do. The system is reconfigured to perpetuate corruption”, he argued.

He further pointed out that when there is an allegation, councillors vote and initiate the investigation themselves, but when they are involved, such never happens.

“Reports should be brought to the council in order to bring in the influence of society. Participation by members in the audience during the question, commentary and answer session produce more fireworks”, argued Ndletyana.

Prof Ndletyana indicated that he was glad about the awareness that it is not just some institutions, but that all sectors are engulfed by corruption.

“For politicians not to behave in the way they do, there has to be intolerance and consequences. That part of our fight is that institutions should be a lot more accountable and transparent so that we are able to get a lot more of what is happening within such institutions”, he said.

“I think there is a reaction by politicians in terms of electoral response to corruption. Part of the reason the ANC has been performing badly is because people are not voting for it. While some decided not to show up in the polls, some decided to change and vote for other parties. On legislation, the call that people should be voting directly for their leaders, and the constitutional court ruling that individuals should be allowed to stand for election, is part of the reaction.”

He further alluded that the anger over the past few years is caused by political parties being protective of corrupt politicians. “You cannot expect leaders to exact punishment on their wayward leaders. So, the parties are themselves implicated.”

“State institutions outside the judiciary were knee capped intentionally not to fight corruption. But we have been seeing lots of changes now with new appointments. From the sides of the courts there has been some interesting development. If one insists on a frivolous case and loses that case, the individual is forced to pay out of pocket.”

The seminar concluded with a Questions, Answers and Comments session.

by Mawande Mrashula

[PLEASE CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO THE RECORDING](#)

DR BITSO SPEAKS AT UJ's SCHOOL LIBRARIES ONLINE SEMINAR:

The Changing Role of Teacher Librarians and Digital Literacy amidst Covid-19

The advent of the Covid-19 pandemic has presented immense opportunities, but there is no doubt it has also presented daunting challenges as we navigate ourselves through the digital dispensation.

This is according to Dr Connie Bitso, Director of Libraries who spoke during an online seminar hosted by the University of Johannesburg on 7 and 8 September.

Dr Bitso was among seven speakers, including Professor Jonathan Jansen - a distinguished Professor of Education at the University of Stellenbosch who also delivered the keynote address.

Dr Bitso's presentation was titled: *Digital Literacy amidst Covid-19 and the changing role of Teacher Librarians: opportunities and challenges*. She gave an overview on the aspects that enhance and impede digital literacy.

In the library context, being digitally literate has presented more opportunities and opened several channels in regards to discovering and engaging information during this period.

"Libraries have been offering virtual learning environments and electronic information. However, amidst Covid-19, we had to swiftly move to 100% of what we offered," she said.

Speaking about the impact of Covid-19 in the education sector, Dr Bitso said the pandemic has no doubt magnified and exacerbated the inequalities that exist in our education system.

"There has always been education inequalities which translate into digital exclusion and ultimately digital illiteracy. We know our government is committed to free universal education, primarily in the basic education

sector. But now we are left wondering whether during Covid-19, when confronted with glaring disparities and inequalities, the commitment and the move towards a just society is feasible or not", said Dr Bitso.

She cited the following as **Opportunities**

- Open science, open sources, open data and open scholarship.
- Self-paced interactive learning.
- Social networks and collaborations.
- Variety of teaching methods and materials.
- Wealth of resources and tools for information creation, consumption and presentation.
- Exposure to visuals, diagrams, charts, tables and maps.
- Advanced software engineering with API (application programming interface) and search algorithms.
- Covid-19 compelling working remotely and encouraging online engagements.

Challenges

- Disconnection, exclusion and marginalisation in the digital revolution and its potential dividends.
- Cyber security
- Dwindling budgets
- Covid-19 (While it presented enormous opportunities it also presented challenges)



// Dr Connie Bitso

- Managing the overload and noise from pop-ups, adverts etc.
- Identifying yourself, others and pertinent resources.
- Keeping up and remaining relevant.

In wrapping-up her presentation she urged participants to think of how school libraries or multimedia centres will thrive within the current basic education funding landscape and the potential impacting conditions.

"Over and above, technology, imperative literacies and the future of libraries depends on the ubiquity of personal skills, agility, problem solving attitudes and creativity," she concluded.

by Aretha Linden

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH A RECORDING OF THE SEMINAR](#)

Dr Connie Bitso is the Director of University of Fort Hare (UFH) Libraries. Prior to this position, she was a senior lecturer at the University of Cape Town (UCT). She taught Information Architecture and Metadata; Knowledge Organisation & Management; Resource Description & Communication; and Teaching & Learning for LIS Professionals. She leverages on her knowledge of these subjects matter to lead UFH Libraries' strategy in digitisation, digital scholarship, research data management and semantic web.

She graduated with a PhD in Information Science from the University of Pretoria and has a Master's degree in Library and Information Science from UCT. Having started her career as a high school teacher, she appreciates schooling systems and understands the critical role of school libraries as well as the importance of inculcating information literacy and cognate literacies at basic education. She has grassroots experience of university-school partnerships, which is evident in her publications and community engagements.



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