

UNIZULU to host African Studies Global Virtual Forum

GCINA NHLEKO

THE University of Zululand (UNIZULU) will, on July 27, host a hybrid webinar championed by the office of the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Xoliswa Mtose, and titled: "The African Studies Global Virtual Forum, an experiment in form and substance".

The African Studies Virtual Forum 2021 to 22, which is led by Prof Sinfree Makoni, seeks to decentre hegemonic epistemologies and decolonise the Western canon to facilitate other ways/waves of knowing. Through a series of online conversations, participants in the forum will challenge the notion of the "universal truth" and discuss how the only truth that is universal is the truth of complexity. To decolonise knowledge, epistemic perspectives need

to be pluralistic in ontologies, cosmologies and insights – and the emergence of Epistemologies of the South is one such response to the decolonialisation turn. Joining from around the world, speakers will discuss the multiple approaches taken in humanities and social science scholarship to decolonise knowledge by paying attention to complexities, heterogeneities and multiple ontologies.

The lecture will be presented by Prof Makoni, a Professor of Applied Linguistics and African Studies at Pennsylvania State University (PSU). He is originally from Zimbabwe. He did his undergraduate work in Ghana and received his PhD in Applied Linguistics from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland in 1989. Prior to working at PSU, he held academic posi-

tions in South Africa, including Chair of Linguistics at the University of Western Cape and Associate Professor of Language and Literature at the University of Cape Town. He is also a former president of the Southern African Applied Linguistics Association.

Prof Makoni's research spans a number of areas, including the socio-historical construction of colonial linguistics and postcolonial urban languages; anthropological approaches to health and aging in multilingual communities; police communication, discourses of militarisation and terrorism; and the sociolinguistics of Arabic. His many books include the co-edited collections *Black Scholars on Black Languages: Problems and Possibilities* (Routledge, 2002) and *Disinventing*

and *Reconstituting Languages* (Multilingual Matters, 2007).

His work has appeared in a wide variety of journals such as *Current Issues in Language Planning*, *Language Policy*, *Language in Society*, *Journal of Politeness Research*, *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *Language and Communication*, *Applied Linguistics Review*, *Journal of Language, Identity and Education*, and *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology*. His work also covers a diversity of geographies such as Angola, Zimbabwe, Sudan, South Africa, Ghana, Kenya and Brazil. His latest book is a monograph titled *Innovations and Challenges in Applied Linguistics from the Global South*, co-authored with Alastair Pennycook.



Professor Sinfree Makoni

Excitement builds for highly anticipated 2022 MBALI Conference



Professor Lorraine Greyling, Dean of the Faculty of Commerce, Administration and Law pictured during the 2021 MBALI Conference.

NALEDI HLEFANE

THE beginning of August will see scholars in various disciplines convening for the 2022 International Management, Business, Administration and Legal Initiatives (MBALI) Conference.

The biennial conference is the brainchild of the Faculty of Commerce, Administration and Law (FCAL) within the University of Zululand (UNIZULU). At the heart of the initiative is providing novice researchers and postgraduate students with an opportunity to develop and sharpen their skills by interacting with experienced researchers.

The MBALI brand has blossomed in a manner that even the organising committee had not anticipated, and is currently

in a stage "where insights are interrogated and new ideas take their first breath", the conference website states.

The event will be held at the BON Hotel Waterfront in Richards Bay – commencing on Tuesday, August 2 and concluding on Thursday, August 4. It will also include a virtual component to accommodate scholars who are not able to physically attend the conference. The proceedings will take place under the theme, "Beyond the pandemic: Rejuvenation, Regeneration and Recovery through innovation". Conference papers were accepted in an array of sub-themes, namely: finance and accounting; business and 4IR; marketing and supply chain management; public management; law; human resources; econom-

ics; management information systems; operations management; ethics in the business and legal space; and entrepreneurship.

Plenary sessions are set to be enthralling, with addresses by His Excellency Zainab Arif Mantaha, a Singaporean ambassador who will speak on "Singapore's meteoric rise to a world class economy"; and by Dr Melanie van Rooy, head of marketing at Clicks, whose presentation is titled "Winning in retail marketing: Big data and personalisation".

Also among the speakers is Erich Schlenker from Appalachian State University-Walker Business College (Transportation Insight Centre for Entrepreneurship), who will unpack the topic of "Digital entrepreneurship, the new disrupter".

Prof Ntshangase granted Honorary Visiting Professor status by York University

NALEDI HLEFANE

PROFESSOR Sifiso Ntshangase, a full professor in the Department of Physics at the University of Zululand (UNIZULU), has been accorded the status of Honorary Visiting Professor in the Department of Physics at the University of York in the United Kingdom.

This status is valid for a period of five years and will grant the physicist access to facilities with high-tech equipment that will catapult his current research exploits. This is a high honour for the professor as, according to him, institutions must first recognise a researcher's contribution to a particular field prior to bestowing them with the status of being an affiliate. "They then invite you to apply for the professorship and the application goes through various structures of the university for approval," he added.

Professor Ntshangase has conducted extensive research in nuclear structure, nuclear reaction, and environmental radioactivity. He is also a published scholar with work in publications such as *Nature*, a top international science journal. He is currently the only UNIZULU academic to publish in this prestigious title.

An excited Prof Ntshangase expressed that he will be visiting the institution once or twice annually, as he intends to acquire as much knowledge as possible on nuclear detector development, nuclear physics and environmental nuclear physics. These are areas in which UNIZULU, York University and the University of Western Cape are currently conducting collaborative work, through the Modern African Nuclear Detector Laboratories (MANDELA) project.



Professor Sifiso Ntshangase has been granted Honorary Visiting Professor status by the University of York. He intends to fully utilise this opportunity by gaining new knowledge, conducting research and creating study opportunities for some of his postgraduate students.

Owing to the existing relationship with the institution, Prof Ntshangase added that he would travel with some of the postgraduate students involved in the MANDELA project in order to expose them to the advanced facilities and level of research conducted at York University. "I firmly believe in capacitating students so that the number of researchers in the field can increase. I don't want any of my projects to be one-man shows; the work must be able to continue even when I am no longer

around," the professor pointed out. His primary objective is to establish an exchange programme that will produce at least one PhD graduate by the end of his visiting professorship.

Prof Ntshangase mentioned that apart from benefitting him professionally and providing incentives, this international opportunity will also have a positive spin-off for the institution in terms of its ranking. By being affiliated to a top-ranking international institution, UNIZULU's profile will also be raised.

A NODE FOR AFRICAN THOUGHT



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