



Communication and Marketing Department
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Guest lecture at UCT by former Eskom executive

The University of Cape Town (UCT) confirms that the individual in question was invited to address a class of final-year students on Friday, 1 March 2024.

He was invited by a lecturer in the Department of Civil Engineering, in line with the usual practice of inviting individuals who are industry practitioners. The lecture forms part of a case study engaging with issues of ethics and professionalism.

The invitation is also in accordance with the right to academic freedom at an institution that by its very nature is a space for contestation of various and sometimes varying ideas. An important part of educating professional engineers in particular – and university students in general – is the ability to reason critically, to act ethically, and to judge professionally.

A university is an environment in which students grapple with complex problems, and which promotes debate and engagement. It should not be an environment where they only listen to carefully crafted and selective versions of the world.

UCT acknowledges the valuable work of the Zondo Commission. However, the university also notes that the individual has not been convicted of any criminal act by any court of law. UCT further states that the invitation to the individual, in the context of academic freedom, should not be seen as any form of endorsement.

As part of the specific course, the lecturer invites about five or six guests each year, often captains of industry and leaders from an array of fields, including political leaders. Students are highly appreciative of the opportunities this brings to the class, which all falls well within what the course seeks to achieve.

The department does not vet guest lecturers. The lecturer however did discuss the invitation with a few colleagues beforehand.

The university further states that this was not an institutional lecture or event, which would have had the involvement of and/or a discussion by the university executive, but was a

departmental one. As such, lecturers have a level of autonomy in conducting their academic work.

ENDS

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