



Communication and Marketing Department
Isebe loThungelwano neNtengiso
Kommunikasie en Bemakingsdepartement

Private Bag X3, Rondebosch 7701, South Africa
Welgelegen House, Chapel Road Extension, Rosebank, Cape Town
Tel: +27 (0) 21 650 5427/5428/5674 Fax: +27 (0) 21 650 5628

www.uct.ac.za

28 July 2025

UCT lecture to offer practical insights into having difficult conversations

6 August 2025 | 18:00 SAST | Format: Online | Live Screening: New Lecture Theatre, Upper Campus



A/Professor Lorreta J Ross

Photo: Supplied

Associate Professor Loretta J Ross, a leading voice in human rights and social justice, will deliver the 59th TB Davie Memorial Lecture at the University of Cape Town (UCT) on Wednesday, 6 August 2025. This year's lecture will be delivered online, with in-person screening in the New Lecture Theatre.

The lecture will offer practical insights into how to have difficult conversations while remaining grounded in the shared values of ubuntu and academic freedom, said Vice-Chancellor Professor Mosa Moshabela.

Titled "Calling In: Navigating Challenging Conversations and Cultivating Compassionate Connections", the lecture will reflect on how we engage with each other in the face of disagreement, particularly in a time often marked by division, "cancel culture", and public shaming.

Professor Moshabela said: "At a time where the notion of having difficult conversations is in itself becoming increasingly difficult, we are honoured to host Associate Professor Ross, who will deliver the 59th TB Davie Memorial Lecture at UCT."

Organised by the Academic Freedom Committee (AFC), chaired by Professor Rudzani Muloiwa, the lecture provides a platform for distinguished speakers to engage with themes relating to academic and human freedom.

Ross will introduce the practice of "calling in", an approach that encourages dialogue, empathy and mutual accountability. She will share how compassionate communication can build stronger, more inclusive communities, particularly in academic spaces that value rigorous debate and freedom of thought.

The TB Davie Memorial Lecture was established by UCT students to honour Thomas Benjamin Davie, who served as vice-chancellor at UCT from 1948 to 1955. He was a committed defender of academic freedom.

Ross is a highly respected public intellectual and activist. She was the 2022 recipient of the MacArthur Foundation "Genius" award and is an associate professor at Smith College. With more than five decades of experience in advocacy and education, her work has influenced key movements, including the early anti-violence movement and today's ongoing fight for reproductive justice.

- Members of the media wishing to attend the lecture online are requested to [RSVP](#) by Monday, 4 August 2025.

Ends

Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department

Thami Nkwanyane

Media Liaison and Monitoring Officer
Communication and Marketing Department
University of Cape Town
Rondebosch
Tel: (021) 650 5672
Cell: (072) 563 9500
Email: thami.nkwanyane@uct.ac.za
Website: www.uct.ac.za