



Afropolitanism at UCT



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
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Deputy Vice-Chancellor
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Africa's call to UCT



Welcome to Africa: International students participate in an African drumming session at UCT.

By Professor Thandabantu Nhlapo, Deputy Vice-Chancellor

The relationship between South African universities and sister institutions across Africa has been topical for much of the past decade. At the University of Cape Town the matter has recently been thrown into sharp relief by the debates surrounding the Centre for African Studies and the proposal to form a new school that would provide a different platform for the study of Africa. A question that has been asked often is whether these debates have implications for, or may be able to draw from, UCT's declared goal to position itself as an Afropolitan university.

The Afropolitan vision is simple enough to describe: it is UCT's aspiration to embrace more meaningfully and more visibly our African identity and to play a significant continental role as one of Africa's leading institutions. We believe that we are well-prepared for such a role.

Our annual intake of international students is tilted heavily in favour of African students. In 2010, out of a total of 4 671 international students enrolled, 2 894 (62%) came from 35 African countries, with the majority

of these (2 096) from the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Over the years our scholarly engagements on the continent have been many and varied, including several hundred research collaborations that range from informal research partnerships to structured relationships within which joint work is formalised.

Many of these relationships are located in high-profile UCT flagship units and institutes, while others represent work that is quietly going on at departmental or individual level. This includes joint research and publications, external examinerships, student exchanges and capacity-building programmes in curriculum design.

A significant aspect of this involvement is direct capacity building for the region and for the continent, generally through the large numbers of SADC students who come through UCT (at the same fees as South Africans, in terms of the SADC Protocol), and through dedicated staff development programmes such as the University Science, Humanities, Law and Engineering Partnerships in Africa, better known as USHEPiA (see article on page 12).

The Afropolitan ideal aims to

recognise this work, to support it and to give it more prominence, with the ultimate aim of consolidating UCT's place as an intellectual meeting point between South Africa, the rest of Africa, and the world.

But since this strategic goal was approved by Council in 2009, it has become increasingly clear that its implementation and its implications for UCT will be multi-layered and complex.

Viewed in this way, then, Afropolitanism at UCT stands on several pillars:

1. In the first place, the notion builds on the past efforts and successes that have led to the enviable reputation that UCT currently enjoys, and promotes the university as an exciting place to live and work. It celebrates work that is already taking place and helps us focus further on finding scholarly incentives for UCT academics to engage in research that looks to our continent, as well as to the global south, Europe or the US, in advancing their work. In other words, such work at UCT is not new, and this should be acknowledged.

This kind of Afropolitanism connotes a future-oriented approach to understanding Africa. It is based on

the conviction that Africa is an important and distinctive area of study, as heterogeneous as any other region in the world, and is extensively connected to the rest of the world.

This means that studying Africa can contribute profoundly and distinctively to understanding global issues and challenges, while at the same time facilitating powerful interventions on the continent itself.

a) Being an Afropolitan university in this way will mean specialising in studies on Africa, so that we are the place people come to study Africa – albeit not to the exclusion of other sites or kinds of research. As an Afropolitan university, UCT would become the centre for the study of issues of particular salience to the continent or where the continent offers special opportunities.

b) But apart from studies of particular local, regional and continental relevance, UCT – because of its academic quality – has another competitive edge. We are located on African soil, and we can bring a particular perspective and insight to our work on global issues that do not necessarily have an African focus.

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Giving substance to the Afropolitan vision

After just a few faculty visits, Professor Thandabantu Nhlapo is convinced that there is no shortage of ideas among academics for strengthening implementation of the vision, and that many of these steps have already been taken. Initiatives include:

- developing meaningful partnerships with universities across the continent, with joint degree programmes, co-supervision of higher degree research, and exchange of academics;
- tapping into the growing demand from international students, especially postgraduates, for special study modules and full degrees, and also offering UCT's students exposure to other universities on the continent;
- attracting international faculty from Africa and beyond, through permanent posts and visiting for sabbaticals and short-term stays;
- attracting postdoctoral students from Africa and further afield;
- developing course offerings in languages spoken on the continent;
- funding research that brings a contemporary African focus to international comparative studies;
- creating exchange-based opportunities for UCT students to visit and/or study in other African countries, and designing credit systems that recognise such study;
- creating ICT-based global classrooms for postgraduate seminars, incorporating several partner African institutions.

It is necessary, says Nhlapo, to weave these activities and intentions into a coherent Afropolitan tapestry, underpinned by a flexible policy framework and a strong and accessible database of UCT partnerships and other involvements across the continent.

Synergies between Afropolitanism and UCT's strategic themes

As recently announced by vice-chancellor Dr Max Price, Professor Thandabantu Nhlapo will assume responsibility for internationalisation, thus reuniting this objective with Afropolitanism, which is a strategic aspect of the broader initiative. In this article Nhlapo looks at the synergy between these two strategic areas, as well as the links between Afropolitanism and the areas of transformation, research, teaching and learning, and social responsiveness.

Afropolitanism and its link with internationalisation

From the outset it is clear that the Afropolitan vision is a significant component of the internationalisation endeavour at UCT. Both visions share the same interest in transformation through their potential for creating the diversity that is needed to change the institutional climate at UCT and for addressing issues of redress through increasing opportunities for the mobility of South African students. There is even some evidence that Semester Study Abroad students (mostly from the developed North) have assisted in keeping a number of academic programmes at UCT viable that might have been discontinued due to poor student numbers. Significantly, these are courses that have the potential to strengthen UCT's Afropolitan reputation as an African and Africa-facing institution.

There are thus at least three levels at which the Afropolitan vision and the international vision intersect. First, to the extent that

they both seek to insert UCT into networks outside South Africa's borders, they have the same 'customer' base. Second, internally they seek to achieve the same ends: demographic transformation, diversity, curriculum development and an improved institutional climate.

At a third level, Afropolitanism and internationalisation are shown to have an active, complementary relationship that goes beyond mere overlap. This is where, in fulfilling its own mandate, internationalisation also promotes the ends of Afropolitanism in these ways:

- By forging strategic alliances and partnerships, both in Africa and globally, the internationalisation project raises UCT's profile and connectedness. These are essential prerequisites for a future role as a hub of international and African scholarship.
- Where these alliances are in the global South, they consolidate UCT's position in the club of nations facing similar challenges, such as India, Brazil, China and Mexico, and a host of countries on the African continent.
- In line with emerging global trends in donor funding, UCT's positioning as a portal between the global North and the global South will attract funding for research, student and staff exchanges, and regional and continental capacity-building initiatives. It is a position in which UCT can

be the pivot in beneficial multi-cornered partnerships involving North-South-South permutations.

- Internationalisation-at-home also articulates well with the Afropolitan mandate in its ability to foster diversity in the student body and to influence curriculum change towards topics of special relevance to Africa.
- Exposing UCT students and staff to African contacts and contexts through exchanges and joint postgraduate supervision supports the Afropolitan mandate centrally. There is already evidence in models such as USHEPiA that such contacts are invaluable in changing perceptions of the continent.

Afropolitanism and its link with transformation

The Afropolitan vision has a clear link with transformation, not only in its shared interest in enhancing diversity and improving the institutional climate, but in the transformative value of the vision itself. Done correctly, the Afropolitan thrust will alter mindsets around perceptions of Africa among UCT staff and students, with positive effects on a range of other activities: curriculum development, research collaborations, staff and student recruitment.

Afropolitanism and its link with research

Afropolitanism directs the research ener-

gies of UCT academics at staff and graduate level. Many of the networks into which UCT will insert itself will be based on research collaborations of different kinds, whether they are in the developed North, Africa itself, or the global South generally. What will give these partnerships a common energy and a shared interest is the idea of UCT as a vibrant centre of knowledge-production on African issues, with African and global partners, to the highest international standards.

Afropolitanism and its link with teaching and learning

Research with an Afropolitan slant should lead to an Africa-rich curriculum across the board. We are exploring the viability of other Afropolitan initiatives such as courses in the major African and Africa-relevant European and Asian languages. As the implementation of the vision unfolds, the impact of Afropolitanism will be felt in the classroom in other ways, such as the high visibility in the lecture room of African visiting scholars, postdoctoral researchers and eminent Africanists from all over the world.

Afropolitanism and its link with social responsiveness

The link between Afropolitanism and social responsiveness is obvious. Charity begins at home. Whenever our social response to the lives of members of our immediate communities is effective and relevant, it will be discharging the Afropolitan mandate.

• Continued from page 1

This value is already being recognised, as is shown by the growing numbers of high-quality partnerships with leading institutions worldwide who seek us out precisely for this reason. Afropolitanism thus embraces not only what we do, but also who we are.

2. Linked to this, but quite distinctive as an aspect of this vision, is the need to increase the flow of African academics (as well as those from further afield) to UCT, while striving at the same time to create opportunities for our own academics to travel to the rest of the continent on scholarly business. We need students and staff to be exposed to the very best in the world by having eminent scholars visiting UCT to teach, write, conduct research or participate in public debates while making it possible for our staff and students to experience the vibrancy of the continent at first hand.

However, a distinction needs to be drawn between ordinary postgraduate and postdoctoral traffic, on the one hand, and other forms of strategic traffic, on the other. While the former contribute significantly to the Afropolitan profile of UCT, they reside firmly in the academic sphere of the faculties which will determine appropriate recruitment and enrolment strategies. Mobility of a more strategic kind will need to be investigated, and some creative ways will have to be found to resource it. As recent outward academic delegations (and others planned in the near future) have shown, this is one way of linking Afropolitanism more directly to UCT's intellectual project. The appointment by faculties of deputy deans responsible solely for internationalisation is another healthy sign.

3. The third pillar of the Afropolitan vision is also linked to the first one in that in acknowledging existing work, Afropolitanism seeks to promote and support this work through various kinds of resourcing. It is as important to support UCT academics to improve, deepen, expand or sharpen their continental projects and collaborations, as it is to expand the circle of engagements. There is no doubt that many of these existing collaborations are real jewels in the Afropolitan crown and deserve support, as do those colleagues and departments wishing to seek out new partnerships. It is worth noting that in the first round of awards (2009-2010) from the VC's Strategic Fund, 19 awards (about 50%) went to projects linked to this goal.

4. The concluding of institutional MoUs with African universities represents another thrust in the Afropolitan approach. For this to happen in a structured way, we need a policy framework that helps to clarify the rationale behind our choices, highlighting the options and assessing their merits on the basis of research and other intellectual considerations, as well as taking geopolitical, economic and other factors into account.

5. The Afropolitan vision must also recognise that there are many good reasons for firm partnerships with institutions situated within South Africa. In this respect we are in advanced discussions with several South African universities and with the Department of Higher Education and Training to promote effective collaboration internally.

As we reflect on Africa Day across the university I am confident that we will deepen our understanding of the total Afropolitan idea and its implications for UCT.

Every aspect of UCT's academic and operational life is touched by Afropolitanism. PASS departments have raised questions as to what Afropolitanism means for them.

The Human Resources Department will have it on their radar screen when they plan recruitment, appointment and remuneration policies; Student Affairs will have it in mind when they ponder their student housing and health offerings; ICTS will do the same in considering their delivery capacity, as will Properties and Services in thinking about physical plant, including short- and long-term housing. So will the Finance Department, over a range of money and sustainability matters. The Institutional Planning department, the admissions and recruitment people, the Postgraduate Funding Office and the UCT Libraries will reflect on the possibilities opened up by this approach, and of course IAPO will be central to the implementation. The Development and Alumni Department will have an interest in identifying funding opportunities for the project.

Many of these reflections will inevitably come back to the issue of resources.

As a final word, it should be acknowledged that, in the greater scheme of things, we cannot do this alone. It is crucial to engage the Department of Higher Education and Training, the Department of Science and Technology, the Department of Home Affairs, and regional and continental bodies such as the Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA) and the Association of African Universities (AAU), who themselves are now quite alive to the need for universities to use continental partnerships as a real driver for the development, not only of the higher education sector but of African populations as a whole. 🍀



Prof Thandabantu Nhlapo, deputy vice-chancellor. "Many South African universities are seeking, quite understandably, to define a continental role for themselves. My task is to persuade us at UCT to be comfortable with our chosen approach."

Tough questions raised for African studies



Many voices: Panellists included (from left back) Prof Adebayo Olukoshi (UN African Institute for Economic Development and Planning) Assoc Prof Leonhard Praeg (Department of Political and International Studies, Rhodes University), and Prof Lungisile Ntsebeza (Department of Sociology, UCT). (Front) Assoc Prof Pearl Sithole (Department of Community Development and Social Work, UKZN), Prof Thandabantu Nhlapo, DVC, UCT, and Assoc Prof Harry Garuba (Centre for African Studies, UCT).

What is an African university? This is not a simple geographic question, as a panel discussion, hosted in celebration of Africa Day by acting vice-chancellor, Professor Thandabantu Nhlapo, demonstrated on 25 May.

The topic, *The Study of Africa in the Postcolonial African University*, was scrutinised, meta-analysed and even criticised by the five speakers in their presentations.

First to take the podium was **Professor Lungisile Ntsebeza** of UCT's Department of Sociology, who examined the issues and recent discussions surrounding the planned restructuring of the Centre for African Studies (CAS).

"Given the history of CAS, and the vice-chancellor's commitment to Afropolitanism, the possibility of closing the centre would seem to be a contradiction," said Ntsebeza.

Although a task team, led by Ntsebeza, proposed the opening of the New School of Critical Enquiry in Africa, Ntsebeza is wary.

"The current discussions on African studies at UCT are not addressing the issue," said Ntsebeza. "They are about setting up the school, but have not confronted the tough issue of what the intellectual business of the school may be, and how the school will address the issue of African studies."

Ntsebeza called for open discussions about the history of CAS and, in particular, the selection process for the late Archie Mafeje, who, after UCT retracted an offer of appointment in 1968, citing government pressure, applied for a post at UCT in 1993 but wasn't even interviewed.

Professor Adebayo Olukoshi, of the UN African Institute for Eco-

nomics Development and Planning said that soon after independence, the mission, vision and identity of postcolonial African universities was a crucial debate.

But Olukoshi feels that the question whether Africa should aim for universities that are either global centres of learning, or locally embedded institutions, was a false debate.

"The question assumes a tension between a locally embedded university and aspirations for international status," noted Olukoshi. "But if we look at the history of the idea of the university, we find that almost invariably those universities described as the epitome of internationalism are also among the most locally embedded."

Olukoshi argued that no university striving for internationalism can afford to ignore its immediate environment. "It is in its own environment that it begins to define its mission, its identity and its relevance."

Associate Professor Harry Garuba, head of UCT's CAS, divided the development of African studies into three overlapping phases. These are the 'area studies' phase, which was when Africa was studied from a distance by researchers on the outside, looking in at the continent. This was followed by decolonisation and its aftermath, during which there was a structural struggle in the humanities, as scholars found themselves unable to move away seamlessly from inherited structures.

Garuba's third phase is the present: globalisation. This is marked by internationalisation, and the impact of new technology on education.

"With globalisation, universities

are no longer perceived as a public good, but more as an economic product." It's a situation Garuba describes as 'knowledge capitalism' – "which is as dangerous" as any other kind.

Garuba is wary of market-driven models of education, and corporations determining the financing of education. Big business, he feels, is more interested in "PowerPoint

"With globalisation, universities are no longer perceived as a public good, but more as an economic product."

knowledge" than in-depth research – which can result in African studies being further marginalised.

"CAS is trying to address all these issues," said Garuba. "We prioritise Africa and seek solutions by creating a space where we can develop our own methodologies."

The difficulty in addressing the topic was a concern for **Associate Professor Leonhard Praeg**, a philosopher in the Department of Political and International Studies at Rhodes University.

"We have to work within a discourse which itself works against the very discourse within which we work," said Praeg. "This is a profound paradox, a tortuous contradic-

tion – which creates a lot of tension."

Arguing that the division between "pre-" and "post-colonial" Africa was a temporal one when what was really needed was an *epistemic* classification, Praeg suggested that the topic's essential questions are firstly: what is the objective of producing knowledge on and from Africa today, and secondly, what institutional arrangement best reflects that objective?

"These questions compel us to reflect on our responsibility to our students and our disciplines, and on what being and thinking 'African' means," said Praeg.

Praeg also noted that the "sense of belonging" in Africa is being increasingly challenged by new communication technologies.

"We no longer see the nation state as our primary community," he said. "The nation state is being superseded by Facebook, Twitter and other forms of global interconnectivity, with which we are building new super-national communities."

But what is African scholarship, really? This question, for **Associate Professor Pearl Sithole** of the Department of Community Development and Social Work at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, was the proverbial elephant in the room.

Sithole strongly believes in the existence, and uniqueness, of African scholarship, valuable in substance and application and not simply in existential or instrumental terms. She concedes that there is a lot of work that could mimic being African scholarship merely by virtue of it being done on the African continent and not because it has any unique epistemological contribution.

"What is distinct about African

scholarship," asked Sithole, "and can it be self-sustainable while at the mercy of systems that are defining excellence, but don't understand what African scholarship is?"

Sithole proposed that the expropriation of science by Western education, as if science itself is Western, is a fundamental mistake that leads to African knowledge being perceived as something other than science. She points out that subjugation to Western rating systems with their inherent bias makes such work all the more invisible as it is difficult to seek to be validated by the very hegemonies that one is critiquing.

"I suggest that the idea of indigenous African knowledge is not a manifestation of failure of objectivity. It is related to the stuff that we as scientists do not want to admit we don't understand, such as the existence of God."

Sithole argued that the "dry objectivism" of Western science and capitalist interest in pragmatic, profit-making learning have not only had a negative impact on African studies, but on the whole field of humanities.

The discussion went "smashingly", said Nhlapo after the event.

"I got the sense from the audience that they were reflecting deeply on what was being said.

"Every South African university wants to show a visible link with the African continent, and I think we should be happy with our own showing in this regard. If I have a task at all, it is to use events like Africa Day to demonstrate that we are already heavily embedded in the African situation, producing African knowledge, and celebrating it."

(For a podcast of the event, go to <http://www.uct.ac.za/news/multimedia/sound/2011/>).

Afropolitan research forges intellectual routes in Africa

UCT has a wide research engagement with Africa. This includes active research relationships with colleagues on the continent as well as routes of enquiry that relate directly to Africa and its peoples

Professor Robert Morrell

UCT is one of South Africa's leading research institutions. Its production of research on and about South Africa, and the continent more broadly, can be assessed by its published record. In 2010 UCT produced 1 788 subsidy-earning journal articles. Of these 426 (23%) contained 'Africa' in the title and 310 were published in journals dealing explicitly with African issues. The Faculty of Health Sciences contributed 171 articles to this total while the Faculty of Science contributed 122 with the Faculty of Humanities producing 54 articles.

Environmental issues, from the health of grasslands and fish stocks to urban housing, were reflected in 47 contributions. The bulk of these, 37, were produced by the science faculty. Published research reflected both on the continental landmass and its oceanic perimeter, examining fish, birds, animals and plants and their interaction with humans. Themes that ran through many articles were biodiversity, degradation and the sustainability of current practices and policies.

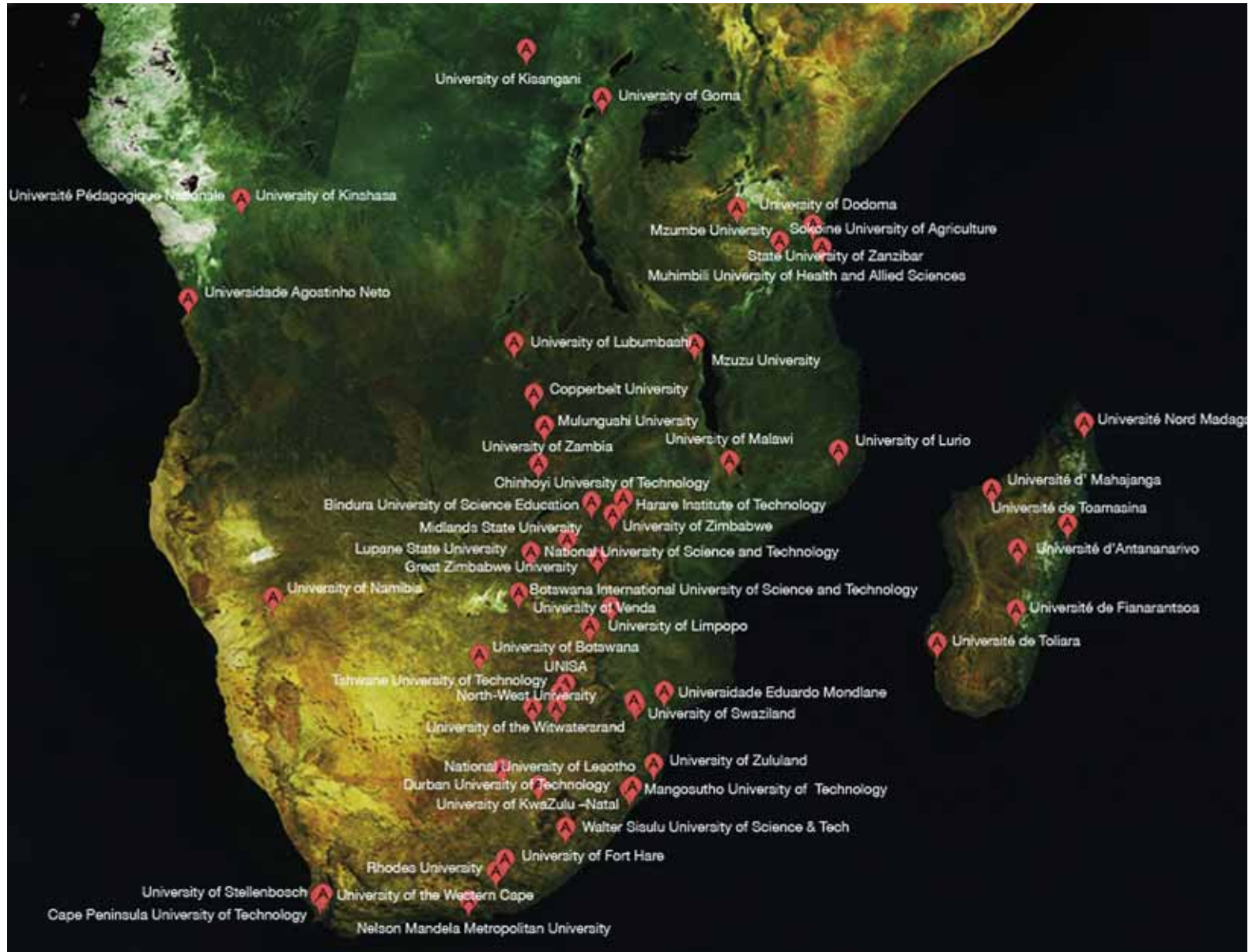
Thirty articles dealt with issues of poverty, inequality and employment. Many articles engaged with policies and programmes, including the Millennium Development Goals, designed to alleviate poverty and reduce inequality. Joblessness, homelessness, welfare and access to healthcare and social welfare were also topics addressed by these articles.

For articles on Africa the research area of AIDS generated 68 articles: 57 in the health sciences faculty and seven in the humanities faculty. These dealt with prevention and cure, sexual risk factors, the use of antiretrovirals and health policy.

There were also nine articles dedicated to indigenous knowledge and institutions. The role of traditional healers in the contexts of primary healthcare and dictionaries for African languages were among the subjects examined.

Contracts with researchers

Of the hundreds of collaborations undertaken at the university, UCT academics currently have 32 contracts involving African research institutions and commercial entities in 15 different African countries. The countries range from near neighbours Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe, to East Africa (Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya) to West Africa (Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria and Senegal). The Democracy in Africa Research Unit in the Centre for Social Science Research has the most contracts (11). Nine of these are associated with the African Legislatures Project (ALP) headed by Professor Robert Mattes. ALP is a study of legislatures and legislators in 19 emerging democracies across Africa, with support from the World Bank, United States Agency for International Development and the UK Department for International Development, as well as the UCT Vice-Chancellor's Strategic Fund.



An image of Africa showing the tertiary institutions affiliated to the Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA). Founded in 2005, SARUA is a membership-based organisation open to the 70 public universities in 15 countries comprising the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Over 50 public universities, including UCT, are currently members of the association.

Three of the contracts involve over R1 million. The largest (R2 180 907) involves the Department of Medical Microbiology and the University of Malawi and is funded by the Wellcome Trust. The next (R1 273 109) connects the Democracy in Africa Research Unit with African countries through the Afrobarometer Capacity Building Project. The Afrobarometer conducts public opinion surveys in 20 countries across sub-Saharan Africa. As part of this project, UCT hosts an annual Summer School in the Analysis of Public Opinion Survey Data, which brings young scholars from Afrobarometer partner organisations to Cape Town for four weeks of intensive work. The third contract (R1 098 000) involves the Department of Environmental and Geographical Sciences in a project titled *Coral Reefs and Global Change - A historical perspective spanning the Western Indian Ocean* (with the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association, based in Tanzania).

PhDs on Africa

In 2009 UCT graduated 186 PhDs. Twenty-six of their doctoral theses were related to the rest of Africa while a further 53 were focused on South Africa. Thirteen doctorates that engaged with African content were awarded in the humanities faculty. Among these

are four notable studies. Sikelela Moses Dlamini graduated in education with a study titled *Early Language and Literacy Learning in a Peripheral African Setting: A study of children's participating in home and school communicative and literacy practices in and around Manzini, Swaziland*. Another education student John Naazi Oliphant, completed a study titled *Multiple Arenas and Professional Identity: Locating and defining the professionalism and accountabilities of the teacher educators in Lesotho*. The significance of the study was its examination of Lesotho's unique colonial history, the roles of the Christian missions and the British government.

Two studies examined women in Africa. Mirjam Rahel Scarborough completed a PhD in Religious Studies titled *Called to Mission: Mennonite Women Missionaries in Central Africa in the second half of the Twentieth Century*. The thesis critically examined the personal and cultural problems encountered by women missionaries during their time in Africa and on returning home, the adequacy and nature of the support they received, and the role played by their sense of calling, both in sustaining and in burdening them. Ramola Ramtohul's thesis in the African Gender Institute was titled *Women and Politics in a Plural Society: The case of Mauritius*.

“UCT aspires to become a premier academic meeting point between South Africa, the rest of Africa and the world. Taking advantage of expanding global networks and our distinct vantage point in Africa, we are committed, through innovative research and scholarship, to grapple with the key issues of our natural and social worlds.”

UCT Mission Statement

Growing researchers for Africa

Emerging Researcher Programme

The Emerging Researcher Programme (ERP) is for academics from entry to Associate Professor level who have not yet achieved a NRF rating and need to develop an research and publishing profile. The programme harnesses the expertise of retired and active professors who offer individual and group mentoring, seminars and workshops on a range of topics from how to publish an article to how to plan a research career. The ERP also offers grants twice a year to support research activities. To date 462 academics have benefitted from the programme and about R3 million of grants are disbursed each year. Academics from other African countries form about 12% of the ERP participants and about one quarter of the grant recipients.



Academics from across the continent joined their UCT counterparts at the writers' workshop at Mont Fleur in February to prepare research contributions for a collection on African Knowledge. (From left back) Prof Astrid Jarre (MAR-E, UCT), Dr Lesley Green (Social Anthropology, UCT), Yonina-Hoffman-Wanderer (Gender, Health and Justice Research Unit, UCT), Assoc Prof Lilly Artz (Gender, Health and Justice Research Unit, UCT), Warren Smit (African Centre for Cities, UCT), Dr Barbara Paterson (MAR-E, UCT), Prof Maria Stuttaford (University of Warwick), Selvan Naidoo (African Centre for Cities, UCT), Prof Afe Adogame (University of Edinburgh/Nigeria), Assoc Prof Linda Cooper (CHED, UCT). (Middle) Prof Crain Soudien (DVC), Prof Akosua Ampofo (University of Ghana), Prof Edwin Blake (Computer Science, UCT), Prof Leslie London (Public Health, UCT), Prof Mbugua wa-Mungai (Kenyatta University), Dr Leadus Madzima (Zimbabwe), Prof Brenda Cooper (PERC, UCT), Dr Lucia Thesen (CHED, UCT). (Front) Prof Robert Morrell (PERC, UCT) and Dr Charles Masango (Research Office, UCT).

Developing the Next Generation of Academics

A new programme called *Developing the Next Generation of Academics* aims to develop a cohort of trainee academics which will constitute a competitive pool of candidates for appointment to academic positions, not only at UCT, but also elsewhere in Africa. The programme is for women and black people in the fields of infectious diseases, civil engineering, and economics. Postgraduate training hubs will be developed in each of the selected areas, with 38 doctoral bursaries and seven post-doctoral fellowships provided by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. Tailor-made training models in each of the selected areas will provide exposure to academic life, over and above graduate studies, with the purpose of attracting bursary recipients to academic careers.

The Programme for the Enhancement of Research Capacity

The Programme for the Enhancement of Research Capacity (PERC), which is driven by Professor Robert Morrell in the Research Office, promotes Afropolitan research at UCT. Its goal is to encourage critical research on Africa and to promote and strengthen collaborative research networks on the continent.

The African Research Project on Knowledge Production encourages cross-disciplinary research that interrogates dominant, Eurocentric knowledge paradigms. A Carnegie Corporation grant totalling R1.8 million has funded 10 projects. These include:

- Assoc Prof Lillian Artz (Gender, Health and Justice Research Unit, Faculty of Health Sciences), *Women's Pathways to Crime: Developing a critical South African criminology.*
- Prof Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela (School of Psychology), *Exploring the Cultural Dimensions of Empathy, Forgiveness and Reconciliation in South Africa and Rwanda in the Aftermath of Mass Violence and Genocide – A comparative study.*
- Prof. Astrid Jarre (Marine Research Institute, Faculty of Science), *Fishers Knowledge for Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management.*
- Prof Leslie London (School of Public Health and Family Medicine), *A Learning Network for the Right to Health: An opportunity for civil society and academic collaboration to contextualise human rights within an African perspective.*
- Dr Justin O'Riain (Baboon Research Unit), *Pioneering Sustainable Solutions to Human-Haboon Conflict in the Cape Peninsula: Local answers for a continental problem.*
- Assoc Prof Ulrike Rivett (School of Civil Engineering), *Information Technology at the Margins: Methodological tools for understanding, designing and developing context-appropriate digital systems in the global South.*
- Dr Tom Sanya (School of Architecture and Planning), *Design and Making Epistemology: In search of an Afrocentric perspective via the*

African informal settlement.

- Warren Smit (African Centre for Cities), *Challenging Dominant Theories of Urban Health: Proposal for the first phase of a research programme on the relationship between the urban environment and health in Cape Town.*
- Dr Lucia Thesen and Assoc Prof Linda Cooper (Centre for Higher Education and Development), *The Postgraduate Condition: Writing, risk and the making of new knowledge.*

Morrell believes the programme has been very successful in generating fresh interest in African research and collaboration.

"Without the PERC it is difficult to see how the interdisciplinary research teams would come together, let alone get funding. The programme therefore is a catalyst for fresh research, new ideas and collaboration, both within the university and into Africa."

A collection of research contributions on Africa Knowledge tentatively titled *Pursuing and Making Africa-*

Centred Knowledge: Theories and cases is being prepared by Professor Brenda Cooper (formerly of the Centre of African Studies) and Prof Morrell. Apart from contributions by the funded projects described above, it includes participation from scholars in the Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. Contributors attended a writers' workshop at Mont Fleur in February 2011.

PERC's Afropolitan work is being fostered by Dr Lesley Green of the Department of Social Anthropology. Green is an associate of PERC as well as co-ordinator of the Sawyer Seminar Series. Working with scholars in the global South (Africa and South America), Green has placed her focus on Contested Ecologies. In 2010 the Sawyer Seminar/PERC Database was launched. This is a bibliographical database to identify scholarship in the global South that "does not turn up at the top of the page in conventional search engines". It supports the development of alternative perspectives and contestations over knowledges. 🌱



VIEWPOINT

AFRICA DAY – whose names did we call?

Africa Day provided an opportunity to reflect on those people who were part of Africa's wave of collective struggle for freedom or independence. Millions of people located in the place we now call Africa were involved in these struggles. As we celebrated this day at UCT this year, whose names did we choose to call?

Worker strikes were a core part of South Africa's struggle for liberation. Many names come to mind: Frances Baard, Lilian Ngoyi, Lydia Kompe, Liz Abrahams, for example. To-

day I remember Emma Mashinini. Mashinini was a founder and president of the Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers of South Africa. She led many workers strikes in the 1960s and was arrested in 1981 under section six of South Africa's Terrorism Act. She published a book titled *Strikes Have Followed Me All My Life* about her experiences in Pretoria Central prison.

Then there is the role of spiritual leaders. In reading about Zimbabwe's liberation struggles, one cannot avoid the name. Nehanda Charwe Nyakasikana (c1840-1898), a spirit medium of the Zezuru Shona people. As a spirit leader of the Shona, Nehanda was a source of inspiration and revolt

against the British South Africa Company's colonisation of Mashonaland and Matebeleland (now Zimbabwe). She was believed to have provided military advice to rebels through local codes for combat. She identified colonial military targets. In 1897, Charwe Nyakasikana, the spirit medium of Nehanda, was charged and hanged for the murder of a Native Commissioner.

As a child I heard strange stories about a woman called Alice Lenshina, who founded the Lumpa Church in Zambia in 1955. It was a Christian church that carried out baptisms administered by Lenshina herself. The church quickly grew to over 150 000 members in the northern and eastern parts of the country.

Lenshina's leadership and the church were influential in Zambia's liberation movement. Unfortunately, due to tension between her followers and the United National Independence Party (UNIP), many members of the Lumpa Church were killed in a gun battle. In 1964, the year Zambia gained independence, Alice was arrested by the new government led by Kenneth Kaunda. She died on 7 December 1978, still under house arrest.

Lenshina's story reminds me of the violence that occurred within Africa's liberation movements. I will never forget stories I heard from Pauline Dempers (see my conversation with her in *Feminist Africa 14*, www.feministafrica.org) who

was tortured and imprisoned at the hands of her colleagues in the South West African Peoples Organisation (SWAPO, Namibia's liberation movement).

These are but four people among many. I often wonder how many undergraduate and graduate courses at UCT address Africa's complex history of resistance against colonial rule. How many of us who work/learn at UCT have family or friends who were involved in these struggles? Whose names did we choose to call as we celebrated Africa Day this year?

*Yaliwe Clarke
African Gender Institute, UCT*

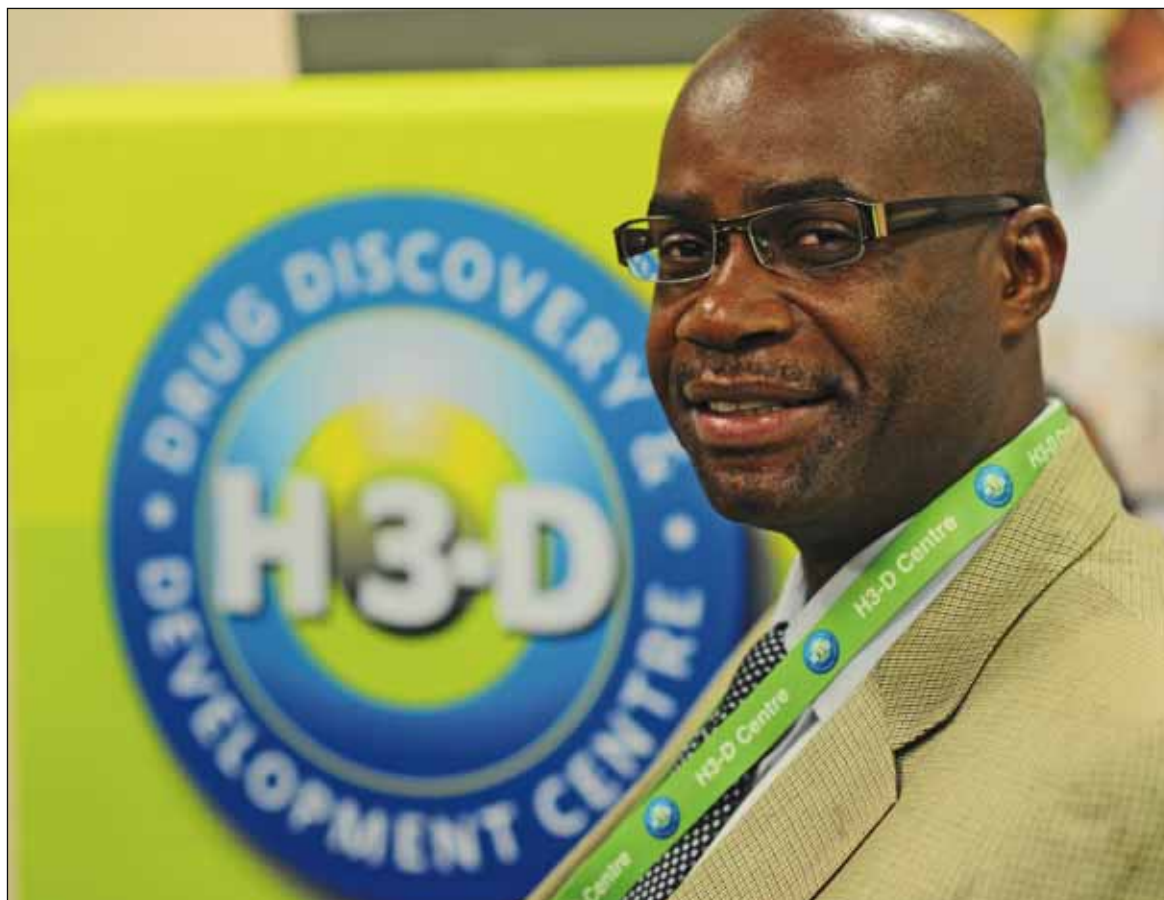
Drug discovery centre prepares new generation of scientists for continent

UCT recently celebrated the official launch of the H3-D Drug Discovery and Development Centre – the first drug development centre of its kind in Africa.

The Centre is poised to dramatically enhance capabilities in the early stages of the drug discovery innovation chain and will focus on finding drugs that combat life-threatening diseases, many of which are prevalent on the continent.

H3-D Director Professor Kelly Chibale says South Africa had previously been working from the polar ends of the value chain of drug discovery and development. “The country is really good at the basic science on one end, and conducting the clinical research at the other. However, it has not been adding value in the areas in between, where the real opportunities exist,” he argues.

Chibale, who also holds the chair in drug discovery in the South African Research Chairs Initiative, says H-3D aims to bridge the gap between the basic and clinical sciences and to build the necessary skills and experience in drug development that have been lacking on the continent. An attendant vision is to deliver clinical candidates ready for testing in humans, which in turn will complement and strengthen the Institute of Infectious Disease and Molecular Medicine’s activities, bridging the



Value chain: Prof Kelly Chibale heads up the H3-D Drug Discovery and Development Centre, the first drug development centre of its kind in Africa.

current gap that exists between basic science and the clinical studies of various diseases at UCT.

He is passionate about developing future generations of world-class

scientists and creating an infrastructure and environment that will spur on drug discovery and related industries. In turn, it is his hope that many more solutions will be found

to counter some of the world’s most devastating diseases, which make their presence felt so overwhelmingly and painfully on the African continent.

While these issues are close to Chibale’s heart, they also lie at the core of UCT’s Drug Discovery Signature Theme – one of several research themes the University is committed to nurturing and supporting in the foreseeable future.

Chibale believes the Centre will add substantial value to projects because potential gaps and weaknesses have already been identified. “We have put in place the necessary platforms and will be looking to bring in relevant pharmaceutical industry expertise, as well as partnerships with pharmaceutical companies and ‘virtual’ drug research and development organisations, such as the Medicines for Malaria Venture and the Global Alliance for Tuberculosis Drug Development.”

“H3-D will create an appropriate infrastructure for collaborative drug discovery and development, and sow the seeds for a viable pharmaceutical industry in South Africa. Its links with a strong global scientific network will also ensure that projects meet internationally recognised standards.”

Chibale believes it is this combination of factors that will produce a critical mass of new scientists who will develop drugs to fight infectious and other diseases, and who will have a greater understanding of the health issues facing sub-Saharan Africa. ♣

New economics unit investigates behavioural issues central to African development

The Faculty of Commerce’s School of Economics is soon to launch a pioneering behavioural and neural economics research unit to understand the way in which people in developing economies assess risk and make decisions – knowledge that will ultimately pave the way for more effective policy-making in Africa and elsewhere in the developing world.

The facility, the first in Africa, will be called the Research Unit in Behavioural Economics and Neuroeconomics (RUBEN) and will be affiliated to the global Cross-University Brain and Behaviour Initiative (CUBBI). CUBBI is an internationally-recognised centre of excellence on brain and behaviour studies, comprising researchers from UCT and the University of Stellenbosch.

Under the directorship of Associate Professor Justine Burns, RUBEN’s aims to create a better understanding of human behaviour and decision-making by giving researchers from around the world – and especially from Africa – opportunities to undertake experimental economic research on the continent. Ultimately the researchers hope to influence policy-makers to create more effective policies, which take human behaviour into account.

RUBEN will serve as the intellectual anchor in Africa around which training, research leadership and technical resources will be concentrated for the benefit of researchers throughout

the continent, explains Dean of Commerce Professor Don Ross, a member of the team responsible for RUBEN’s establishment.

Ross says RUBEN is the coming together of a number of separate research projects – all of which rely on behavioural economic techniques – under a common banner. He believes this convergence is long overdue, and will provide not only an identifiable centre of excellence for work of this kind, but also allow for economies of scale in project design and execution.

“Our work will directly target the study of African social, political and economic systems by providing new evidence on incentive mechanisms that might surmount development challenges in a variety of areas.”

Ross explains that research has shown that the most important variables affecting outcomes in microeconomic development initiatives among vulnerable groups, such as the urban poor and at-risk youth, are attitudes to risk and the cost of waiting.

“The evaluation of any policy to help people respond to uncertainty should take into account risk aversion, the manner in which risk-coping strategies might confound policy-makers’ expectations about future outcomes, and the extent to which beneficiaries of programmes are able and willing to bear the costs of waiting,” he says.

These insights will be integrated into a wider range of development



Face off: In running economics experiments it is important to ensure subject anonymity. In non-university settings this can take on innovative forms, as seen in the picture above, where pupils take part in an economics experiment.

issues in Africa. “The idea is to build capacity that will support the training of African researchers in world-class behavioural economics research, while also facilitating the work done by world-class behavioural economics researchers on African issues,” Ross adds.

RUBEN researchers will employ state-of-the-art technology and pioneering empirical measures, previously unavailable in Africa, to test the effects of risk and uncertainty on development outcomes in order to better understand individuals’ intertemporal consumption. (Economic theories of intertemporal consumption seek to explain people’s preferences in relation to consumption and saving during their lifetime.)

A team of researchers in the School of Economics has developed and demonstrated mastery of a new range of internationally-advanced methods for empirically determining and modelling the effects of attitudes to risk and intertemporal utility among groups of people in specific circumstances.

These methods are based on three kinds of investigation, pursued jointly in each case: field experiments, behavioural experiments in the laboratory, and experiments conducted under MRI neuroimaging – also referred to as ‘neuroeconomics’.

Since applications of these methods to specific problems in development often involve expertise beyond that found in economics, an interdisci-

plinary team of researchers in health, resource conservation, impulsive consumption, and micro-scale investment will be affiliated to RUBEN.

Joining the Unit in the application of these methods are researchers from several UCT departments and research centres, as well as international experts on risk and time preferences Professors Glenn Harrison and Warren Bickel, and Dr George Ainslie. A UCT honorary professor, Ainslie is considered a pioneer in the field of behavioural economics.

Researchers also hope to gain an understanding of why individuals may be willing to save or invest in non-financial (as opposed to financial) instruments. “This is an important development question,” says Ross. “This needs much more investigation, in many different settings. We doubt there is a single pattern that uniformly describes all of sub-Saharan Africa, with its rich cultural variance.”

RUBEN will also turn the spotlight on the HIV / AIDS pandemic and look at measuring attitudes to risk, and at understanding the direction of causation between changes in patterns of HIV spread and changes in general attitudes to risk. “In light of repeated empirical failures to find reliable strong links between sexual behaviour, HIV incidence and knowledge about HIV, these findings could be central to designing effective policy interventions,” he says. ♣

Southern lens for global health equity

The Faculty of Health Sciences is hard at work establishing a Global Health Initiative (GHI) to generate knowledge and expertise in global health through research, education and collaboration.

The GHI will address major challenges in global health, through a “southern” lens, with the goal of attaining global health equity, explains Dean of Health Sciences Professor Marian Jacobs.

Jacobs is directing the development of the GHI together with the deputy dean, Professor Greg Hussey, and with support from UCT medical alumnus Dr Salih Solomon, a Rhodes Scholar who studied global health at Oxford University.

“The challenges of global health present a significant threat to the health and well-being of individuals and communities around the world, with the greatest impact on the low- and middle-income countries comprising the global South,” says Jacobs.

Despite the reality that developing countries bear the brunt of global ill-health, the vast majority of global health initiatives are located in universities in the developed countries of the global North. UCT will become the first university in Africa to establish a Global Health Initiative, joining more than 90 global health initiatives at academic institutions across the world.

Jacobs believes this initiative has a pioneering role to play in addressing issues of global health from an African perspective. “With a range of academic activities contributing to research, education and health



Prof Bongani Mayosi, head of the Department of Medicine at UCT, on a ward round with medical students. Mayosi, who completed his PhD at Oxford University, returned to South Africa to tackle the growing burden of heart disease, specifically heart muscle disease. To address skills shortages, the department has created the Clinical Scholars programme, or a ‘pipeline of professors’, to improve training.

development on the continent, UCT is well-placed to generate further knowledge and expertise in global health; and in so doing, to advance the goal of global health equity and – ultimately – health for all,” she says.

The initiative is multidisciplinary, and will harness and integrate cross-faculty expertise within UCT as it relates to health, social, legal and biological sciences, focusing expertise on the aspects that challenge health. The Institute will seek further collaboration with other trans-

disciplinary initiatives in areas such as climate and urbanisation, as well as building on the strong links that have been established with African academic institutions and individuals over decades.

Significant progress has been made in the planning stage: this includes a series of consultations with individuals and groups at UCT and globally. In particular, networks such as the revitalised African Medical Schools Association provide a vehicle through which strong links are being forged.

UCT’s health sciences faculty’s links with counterparts in Africa and elsewhere in the world span several decades and comprise numerous collaborative initiatives in teaching, research and clinical practice. The creation of the GHI will further consolidate new knowledge generated from these collaborations, and help disseminate this information globally.

“At UCT, we believe these collaborations provide an effective way to successfully research disease and the health systems which aim to manage

ill-health. At both Institute and individual levels, a large number of research collaborations and partnerships exist within Africa and far beyond. Through collaborative research, we get to share knowledge and tap into the skills and experiences of our partners.

“We are grateful that UCT continues to be the chosen partner of leading national and international research institutions, foundations, networks, government and non-governmental organisations, industry and academia,” Jacobs concludes. 📌

Law faculty’s new centre will encourage rigorous debate on Africanisation of the law

A Chair of Comparative Law in Africa, situated in the similarly-named Centre for Comparative Law in Africa (CCLA), is soon to be established in the Faculty of Law.

The new Chair and Centre will promote the comparative study of law on the African continent, build research and teaching capacity, and support the faculty’s Afropolitan and internationalisation initiatives.

The faculty’s research director, Professor Hanri Mostert, who is driving this initiative, says the CCLA will devise “fresh, home-grown, and intellectually rigorous” responses to many social problems facing the continent today, including problems of democracy, governance, poverty, HIV/AIDS, land distribution, food security and other challenges.

“The centre will foster rigorous scholarly engagement, supporting the idea of the Africanisation of the law, and create a broader receptive base, both in Africa and abroad, for research emanating from the UCT Faculty of Law,” says Mostert.

“It will forge links between scholars in and beyond Africa, attracting the foremost scholars in comparative law to UCT. As such, it will serve as a gateway to the multidimensional and multijurisdictional terrain of law in Africa. The centre will also contribute



Prof Hanri Mostert is driving the establishment of the Centre for Comparative Law in Africa.

to the creation of better opportunities for African scholars as academic staff at UCT and allow the African worldview to influence the manner and content of our teaching.”

The initiative also represents an important response by the law faculty to popular, polemical debate about the Africanisation of the law and will

create the infrastructure for engaging with this debate in rigorous and critical scholarship, which is a characteristic of the faculty.

It is envisaged that the Chair will be filled by an internationally renowned comparative law specialist. The post is currently being advertised. The introduction of a Chair of

Comparative Law in Africa is the first step in developing UCT law academics’ expertise in (and influence on), African law in all African regions and legal systems.

“In this sense, the initiative responds to UCT’s strategic goal of positioning the university as an intellectual leader in Africa and strength-

ening the university’s international research profile by fostering engaging and significant research,” she says.

The centre will build on the existing collaborations and networks established by the faculty over many years. In the past two years, the faculty has vigorously pursued exchange agreements with other law schools worldwide, but particularly in Africa.

Professor Evance Kalula, the faculty’s deputy dean responsible for internationalisation and outreach, said that of the 14 international collaborative link agreements, including those with leading universities in North America, the UK, Europe, China and India, a number are with African law schools. Among these are the agreements with faculties of law at the Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo, Mozambique; the National University of Rwanda; the University of Dar es Salaam; and the University of Namibia.

The agreements cover research and staff and student collaborations. In addition to the benefits of the University Science Humanities and Engineering Partnerships in Africa collaboration, of which the University of Dar es Salaam is a partner, scores of LLM and doctoral students from UCT’s partner faculties are benefiting from these exchange agreements. 📌

Epicentre of cutting-edge research on African urbanisation

Since its establishment within the Faculty of Engineering & the Built Environment (EBE) in 2007, the interdisciplinary African Centre for Cities (ACC) has been hard at work providing leadership and research in urban development and policy with a particular focus on Africa.

Aside from partnering with African policy-making centres in order to provide viable alternatives to critical urban issues, the ACC has become an intellectual base for interdisciplinary, urban-related research, at UCT and on the continent.

The centre conducts a series of applied research programmes in South Africa and elsewhere in Africa. These research programmes include the State of the Cities project and the Association of African Planning Schools. "The applied urban research focus is complemented with a rich academic research programme that seeks to support and enhance urban scholars, both at the university and elsewhere," explains ACC Director Professor Edgar Pieterse.

The State of the Cities in Africa (SOCA) Project was initiated to address the demand from cities and practitioners for information and support with surveying and defining urban systems in Africa. Funded by the Cities Alliance, the SOCA Project is responding to the need for improved urban governance, and it incorporates universities and other institutions that support associated skills development and information dissemination.

Pieterse says that aside from creating a network of urban scholars and practitioners in Africa, SOCA aims to publish a series of baseline reports on national urban systems across the continent over the next 10 years, thereby establishing a uniquely African urban knowledge base.

"The ACC model is designed to anchor the development of a State of Cities product in institutions, through partnerships with national ministries responsible for local and urban government; national local government associations; civil society organisations catering for the urban poor; and academic institutions with training programmes in urban development and management."

The Association of African Planning Schools (AAPS) is addressing the reality that cities in Africa face a combination of rapid growth, slow rates of formal job creation and serious service backlogs, resulting in cities in which both work and shelter are largely informal.

"Yet the professionals whose job it is to respond to the issues – the city planners – usually work with

outdated colonial planning laws, and have little understanding of how to deal with informality or address the ideal of promoting 'inclusive cities,'" according to EBE deputy dean and ACC exco member, Professor Vanessa Watson.

AAPS was formed in 1999 in order to help re-evaluate the kind of planning education necessary to prepare professionals for dealing with 21st-century urban issues in Africa. AAPS now comprises a network of 43 programmes and departments at sub-Saharan African universities that offer qualifications in urban and regional planning. Member schools are located in 16 African countries, 11 of them in South Africa.

Both Pieterse and Watson say AAPS serves as a useful 'backbone' for other ACC Africa-wide projects.

Says Watson: "The State of the Cities in Africa project uses planning schools as portals for entry into African work. Linking projects and networks across the continent will go a long way towards creating durable knowledge institutions capable of addressing the issues facing African cities."

Pieterse explains it is the ACC's long-term strategy to build a network of durable knowledge institutions across Africa in order to address the manifold implications of urban growth in Africa. "It is important to keep in mind that Africa's urban population will double in just twenty years, between 2010 and 2030. If we accept that 60% of the existing urban population is compelled to fashion livelihoods and shelters in informal ways, we can begin to appreciate how essential it is to train competent practitioners, researchers and managers to deal with this dramatic process."

Pieterse says collaborations with partners across the continent have been extremely exciting. "There are phenomenal people across the continent who, though deeply committed, are severely constrained by limited resources, overly bureaucratic settings and uneven infrastructures. However, through focused and mutually beneficial networks everyone becomes energised, and this makes the experience deeply humbling and enriching."

Pieterse and Watson both believe that UCT benefits tremendously by deepening its learning about what the Afropolitan mission means in practice.

"ACC collaborations are also establishing UCT as an epicentre of cutting-edge research on African urbanisation and sustainable city building, by serving as a hub for thought-leaders and urban managers," says Pieterse. ♣



Space and the cosmos, as seen from Africa

The National Astrophysics and Space Science programme (NASSP), a South African inter-academic programme hosted by UCT through its Astrophysics, Cosmology and Gravity Centre, has many students and graduates who hail from Africa.

The Department of Astronomy is also strongly involved in postgraduate supervision of students from the African partner countries in the South African Square Kilometre Array (SKA) bid, contributing to the Human capacity Development programme of the South African SKA project.

A recent coup for the UCT Astrophysics, Cosmology and Gravity Research Centre is that four key science proposals were among ten successful bids for the 43 000 hours of observing time allocated to radio astronomers from Africa and around the world on South Africa's MeerKAT telescope. This announcement was made in November last year.

A precursor telescope to the SKA, which will be the largest radio telescope in the world (South Africa and Australia are both bidding to host this multi-billion-euro facility), the MeerKAT telescope consists of 64 13.5m diameter Gregorian offset



Many postgraduate students from across Africa are expanding their horizons through the UCT-hosted National Astrophysics and Space Science Programme (NASSP).

dishes. A MeerKAT engineering test bed of seven dishes (KAT-7) is already complete on the potential SKA site near Carnarvon in the Northern Cape Province. This will contribute to the development of technology required for SKA.

Radio astronomy is the study of

celestial objects that emit radio waves. These objects could be galaxies but could also be exploding stars. Radio telescopes like MeerKAT harness these faint signals, allowing astronomers to probe the 'Dark Ages' of the universe.

The four UCT proposals, or key

science projects, were among 21 involving more than 500 radio astronomers around the globe (including 59 astronomers from South Africa) following the invitation from the MeerKAT project issued in October last year. The other winning proposals were from Australia, the UK,

India, Germany, and the Netherlands. Projects were reviewed and rated on the basis of their scientific merit, and technical and operational feasibility.

Each proposal has been awarded a substantial tranche of telescope time during the first five years of MeerKAT's operation (the telescope comes on stream in 2015). Together the UCT projects (led by ACGC scientists) will account for 40% of the observation time allocated.

Drs Sarah Blyth and Benne Holwerda, together with a colleague from the US, will lead the Deep HI Field project, an ultra-deep survey of neutral hydrogen gas in the early Universe. SARChI Chair in Radio Astronomy Professor Erwin de Blok's Mhongoose study will focus on deep observations of 30 nearby galaxies (25 times deeper than previous observations). The Mightee project, by Dr Kurt van der Heyden and Matt Jarvis will lead the International GigaHertz Tiered Extragalactic Explorations Survey. In their ThunderKAT project, Professor Patrick Woudt and Professor Rob Fender of the University of Southampton in the UK will lead the hunt for dynamic and explosive radio transients. ♣



African Climate and Development Initiative gears ups

As covered in the last edition of *Monday Paper* (Vol 30#07), UCT's African Climate and Development Initiative (ACDI), is gearing up to address issues of climate change with their compass pointed directly at Africa.

Under the leadership of newly appointed Pro Vice-Chancellor Professor Mark New, the ACDI will enhance the value of UCT's climate change research capacity in addressing Africa's climate and development challenges from an African perspective, and will support further growth of the knowledge and research capacity in climate change at UCT.

The ACDI will further strength-

en UCT's role as the leading institution for anyone wishing to research climate change and development on the continent.

New and his UCT colleagues will join an extensive network of multi-disciplinary scientists throughout Africa who will tackle a number of research projects linked to all aspects of the climate system.

New will have to cross the divide between disciplines and departments and research groups, something he was part of at Oxford, where his department's Environmental Change Institute fostered the kind of interdisciplinary collaboration that the ACDI seeks to bring about at UCT.

"I think the key is to create an enabling environment," says New. "True interdisciplinary research is not easy ... but when it is successful, the results can be very exciting and novel."

New will also be working with long-time collaborator and NRF Chair in Climate Change, Professor Bruce Hewitson, who heads up the Climate Systems Analysis Group at UCT.

"There are a lot of different activities going on at UCT on climate change, and we are in a good position to be a leader on the continent, but it requires bringing some synergy to our efforts to be a voice on the continent," observes Hewitson.

Proposed school could give proper expression to Afropolitan ideals, argues Ntsebeza

If the university is serious about transformation and the practical realisation of UCT's Afropolitan ideals, it must necessarily embark on initiatives that traverse uncharted territory, says Professor Lungisile Ntsebeza of the Department of Sociology.

Ntsebeza heads up the Faculty of Humanities' task team assigned to explore the way forward with regard to the operational and intellectual location of the Centre for African Studies (CAS) at UCT (see article on page 3).

The current issue flows from an administrative imperative to make small departments more sustainable, including CAS.

"There were justifiable concerns that the closing of CAS would be a political blunder, even if there were sound academic and financial reasons for doing so," he said. "The dean, Prof Paula Ensor, listened to those arguments and set up a task team to explore proposals about the location of CAS."

Ntsebeza says that there is also an intellectual argument that the study of Africa is all-encompassing and spans every discipline, and that it should not be confined to one department.

The way this issue is resolved, he adds, will be an indication of how UCT will give meaningful expression to Afropolitan policy.

"I have looked at whether UCT has ever committed itself to an Afro-

centric approach, and whether UCT has ever put Africa at the centre of its activities. I came to the conclusion that, as an institution, this was not the case. But in the process of setting up the task team, I discovered there were key players within departments across campus that are committed to those Afrocentric ideals and that there were members within the task team who were part of that group."

He says that the task team ended up thinking beyond the immediate operational location of CAS and came up with the idea of establishing a bigger structure that could incorporate smaller departments studying elements of Africa.

"Ultimately, it makes sense to bring together relevant departments and individuals into a school whose focus would be to foreground Africa in their research, teaching and social responsiveness."

He added: "At the Humanities Faculty Forum on February 25 it became clear that there are people in humanities who have made interesting investments on the continent in terms of teaching and research and these academics were in departments across the board, not just those in departments like African Studies or the African Gender Institute. They also came from English, religious studies and other departments. Those academics who were affiliated with the latter departments asked the questions: "What will happen to us? Will we be left out?"



Uncharted territory: Prof Lungisile Ntsebeza of the Department of Sociology.

Their concerns are valid, says Ntsebeza, and that the establishment of a school will provide a space and forum to collaborate around issues that concern Africa.

A school would present the additional advantage of flexibility in that not everyone would have to be a full-time member. There is also the possibility of making joint appoint-

ments with colleagues from other departments which will help facilitate cross-disciplinary research.

Ntsebeza says critics of the idea of a school argue that this research is happening anyway, but that the study of Africa needs to be centrally co-ordinated and driven also.

"The structural constraints present in departments mean that

this could not be accomplished at a departmental level. There has to be interaction within the humanities faculty as well as across the faculties."

In conclusion, he says, whatever the outcome with regard to CAS and the study of Africa, UCT must ensure that resulting research findings are widely disseminated to students and to the broader society.

African milestones in student mobility

- In 1997 the Southern African Development Community (SADC) adopted a treaty establishing cooperation amongst member states in education and training.
- In 2001 the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) was adopted by 15 of the 53 African Union states and seeks to

promote the socio-economic development and integration of Africa. Many of the principles laid out in its framework document have been translated into cooperation in education and increased student mobility across the continent.

- In 2004, the Association of African Universities (AAU) met to discuss

the Internationalisation of Higher Education in Africa, and the World Trade Organisation's General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) which made education a tradable service. The Accra Declaration on GATS and the Internationalisation of Higher Education in Africa was issued, in collaboration

with UNESCO and the Council on Higher Education of South Africa, which further promoted international student mobility across and beyond the borders of Africa.

- In 2007, 51 717 international students in South Africa were from the rest of the African continent, making up 85% of the international

student total. This represents a defining feature of international student inflow into South African higher education; the majority of international students are from Africa (particularly SADC countries).

- Currently South Africa attracts more international students than any other country in Africa.

Teaching and studying Africa in the 21st century

Professor Harry Garuba
Centre for African Studies

A few weeks ago the media published a remarkable photograph of Barack Obama and his National Security team watching live images of the US Navy Seals' attack on a compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan, in which Osama bin Laden was killed.

This photograph is remarkable, not for the event it records, but for the story it tells about our world and the order of knowledge we inhabit. Here is a small coterie of people watching an event happening far away, in another area of the world; and soon after, the same people or their agents announce what happened to the world; and then they set in motion the terms and frameworks through which the event will be discussed and debated, understood and evaluated.

As academics are wont to say, they provide us with the problematic and frame the terms in which the discourse will be conducted. All of this, far away from the scene of the event. In this rendering, the people of Abbottabad-the Pakistanis, on whose home ground the event takes place-become simply objects in the narrative, present only as evidence of failure, lack, or corruption; located within a narrative teleology constructed from elsewhere.

Reading this image, the discourses circulating around it, and the institutional sites of their production and dissemination, provides an insight into what 'area studies' is all about.

The scholarly study of Africa in institutions of higher learning began within the domain of area studies

as knowledge constructed from a distance about an area of the world by 'experts' from outside of the area in question. But with political independence in many African countries from the late 1950s onwards, African scholars entering into the academy were disconcerted by this and by the absence or marginalisation of 'Africa' from the disciplines and sites of knowledge production. Rejecting the logic of area studies, they endeavoured within their various disciplines to make 'Africa' more visibly the object of intellectual engagement and academic production.

Two major trajectories may be identified within this new endeavour: the first was to produce and place more 'African content' at the forefront of research and the curriculum while the second focused on the more formal and structural struggle to question and extend the various disciplinary apparatuses they had inherited. This second struggle operated at the level of the authorised objects of study, theories, methodologies, and the paradigms and practices that make up the canon of the discipline. The one invariably fed into the other: it is one thing to insist that students study some pre-colonial African emperor, for example, but it is quite another to produce disciplinarily validated knowledge on the subject. As a consequence, many of these African scholars found themselves straining to break out of the methodological and conceptual constraints of their disciplines.

That was the era in which debates about issues such as "Is there an African Philosophy?" flourished, and with it came appellations such as 'sage philosophy', ethno-philosophy, and so on. These debates raged



Prof Harry Garuba of the Centre for African Studies.

within many of the disciplines of the humanities from the 1960s to the early 1980s. With hindsight, it is clear that a certain unmaking of disciplinary boundaries was taking place but it was unnameable at this time. The disciplinary boundaries soon adjusted to this new reflexivity, and reaffirmed themselves as a new generation of African scholars settled into their allotted spaces within the disciplinary

architecture of the university.

The question that we should be asking ourselves today in the humanities in Africa is this: how do we teach and study Africa in an African institution of higher learning in the 21st century in a way that does not reproduce the legacy of area studies and the blinkers of the inherited disciplines? And what will the study of Africa look like if the problem is

constructed from a standpoint of embodied intimacy rather than distance? And what if the critical and methodological frameworks that orient the process of knowledge production take that previously unnameable trans-disciplinarity as their point of origin?

It is here – with these questions – that we begin at the UCT Centre for African Studies. ♣

Continental co-operation brings shared priorities to the fore

UCT and six other African universities pooled ideas and resources recently in order to submit a joint bid to establish a postgraduate project aimed at cultivating academic mobility on the African continent.

The project is an initiative of the European Union in partnership with the African Union. UCT has bid to lead a consortium of African universities in a project in which staff and students can undertake complete Masters and 'sandwich' PhD degrees at collaborating institutions.

The Programme intends to grant scholarships to facilitate exchanges between African universities and is supported by the European Union via the Intra-ACP University Mobility Programme. The latter programme promotes cooperation between higher education institutions and supports mobility in Africa, as well as in the Caribbean and Pacific regions. It encourages sustainable development and poverty alleviation by increasing the availability of trained and qualified high-level professional manpower in those regions.

For the uninitiated, a sandwich degree allows postgraduate students



Participants in the Nyerere Bid discovered their institutions shared many priorities when they met recently. (From left): Prof Abdoulaye Niang (Dakar); Teshome Nekatibeb (Addis Ababa); Dr Nana Aba Appiah Amfo (Ghana); Prof Thandabantu Nhlapo (UCT); Prof Verdiana Grace Masanja (Rwanda); Prof E Katunguka-Rwakishaya (Makerere) and Lara Dunwell Hoffenberg (UCT). (Absent: Prof Moctar Doucure (UCT) and the representatives of the University of Nairobi and the Catholic University of Leuven. The latter gave invaluable technical support in the bid process.)

the flexibility to initiate a degree at one university and then carry out research or further study at another institution – usually in another country. In the final phase of this degree, students return to the first institution

to complete their studies and present a thesis or dissertation.

In preparation for the Nyerere bid, a team which included staff from UCT's International Academic Programmes Office (IAPO), led by

Prof Thandabantu Nhlapo, collaborated with Makerere University, the National University of Rwanda and the Universities of Addis Ababa, Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar, Ghana, Nairobi and European technical partner Katholieke Universiteit Leuven to prepare the bid.

IAPO's Mobility & Links manager, Lara Hoffenberg, explained that the project had been dubbed 'ARISE' – the African Regional International Staff/Student Exchange. In short, the idea behind this programme and others of this nature is to create "brain circulation" as opposed to a brain drain, Hoffenberg says.

"It also offers an invaluable boost to students at the start of their academic careers, as well as staff at a later point in their careers, to meet and interact with academics and students from other countries and to gain new perspectives and ways of seeing the world.

"Whether our bid is successful or not, all the institutions that came together for this joint bid are already benefitting from the spirit of cooperation that has permeated the bidding process," maintains Hoffenberg.

"The bid has served as a catalyst to make contact with our counterparts elsewhere in Africa. In the process we have got to know our colleagues and partners from participating universities, discovered many shared priorities and have been able to work together in meaningful ways."

If the bid is secured, the ARISE initiative should contribute to ensuring an increase in Masters and PhD African graduates in the selected academic fields of agriculture sciences, education and teacher training, engineering, technology, medical sciences, natural sciences, and communication and information sciences.

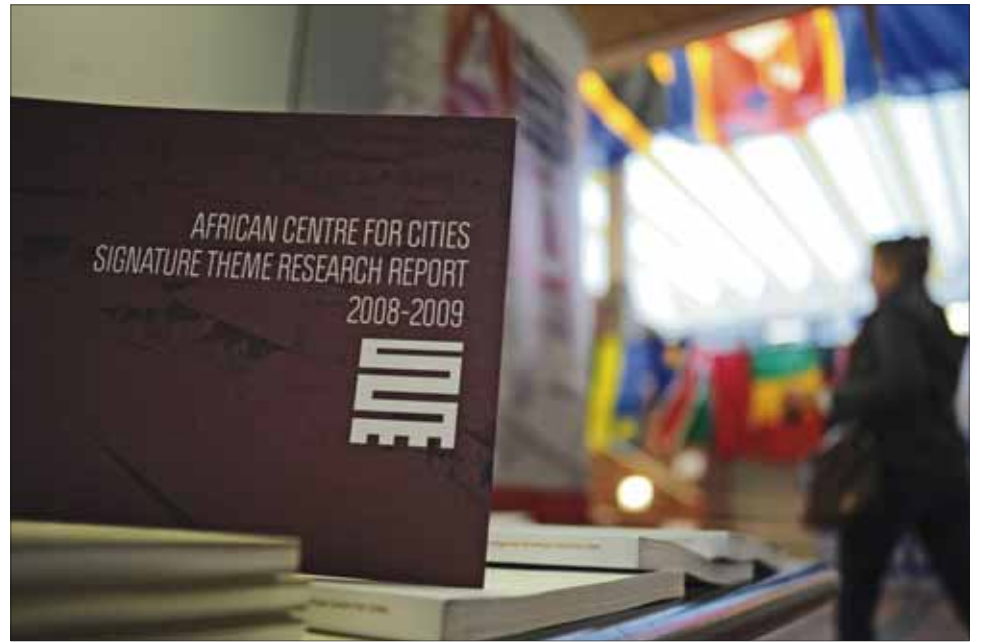
The ARISE programme plans for 55 full degree scholarships for Masters students and 33 sandwich PhD mobilities. Provision has also been made for a further 22 academic and administrative staff mobilities to address the need for the professional development of university staff. While staff opportunities are reserved for the partner universities, student opportunities will be competitively available to all African nationals.

The outcome of the Nyerere Bid will be published in July. ♣

Linked in: Exhibition shows UCT's African collaborations



Mapped out: The African Cultural Heritage Sites and Landscapes Project was one of the exhibits marking Africa Day.



Urban foundations: Exhibitors included the African Centre for Cities.

As part of UCT's Africa Day celebrations, the International Academic Programmes Office (IAPO) hosted an exhibition to spotlight the university's academic links with institutions around Africa.

Among the programmes on show

were the African Centre of Excellence for Studies in Public and Non-Motorised Transport, the Khayelitsha Cervical Cancer Screening Programme, the African Centre for Cities, the Democracy Africa Research Unit and the African Cultural Heritage Sites and Landscapes Project.

The latter is run by Professor Heinz Rütther of the School of Architecture, Planning and Geomatics. The project consists of a database that holds spatial, geographic and photographic information of heritage sites and structures across the continent and beyond. These

were collected by Rütther and his scientific officers via laser scanning, conventional surveys, GPS, traditional photography and photogrammetric imaging.

This data is then used to compile information-rich geographic information

systems, faithful 3D computer models, maps and building plans of these hardly-seen sites.

"The idea was to create an integrated database of African heritage, where we take a holistic approach," says Rütther. 📍

Cornucopia of events marks Africa Day

From eye-catching outfits to lip-smacking buffets of local foods, there was plenty to savour as UCT hosted a parade of events around campus to celebrate Africa Day on 25 May.

Among them was an Africa Day festival, organised by the Faculty of Commerce, which saw the pensive artwork by artist Maurice Mbikayi of the Democratic Republic of Congo, setting the tone. The UCT jazz ensemble and third-year dance student Janine Booyens also entertained guests.

There was also a best dress competition which was won by staffer Nonnie Falala, with Claudia Kalil and Olufunke Adekayode as runners-up. Deputy-vice chancellor Professor Crain Soudien read a story, *When We First Met*, a tale of cross-cultural meetings in Africa, while the faculty's human resources consultant Ronelle Anthony-Jones recited a poem.

Welcoming visitors to the event, Anthony-Jones spoke of how Africa Day was initiated by the African Union, with its aim to celebrate identity, diversity as well as the potential of the continent and its people. She urged her "fellow Africans" to rise together and give the best for the continent.

Just down the road, the Uhuru Ensemble performed at the UCT Irma Stern Museum, playing indigenous African musical instruments. 📍



In step: (From left) Dancers Claudia Kalil, Janine Booyens, and Chiedza Khumbula.



Colourful attire: Ronelle Anthony-Jones (middle) is flanked by the Faculty of Commerce best dress competition runners-up (from left) Olufunke Adekayode and Claudia Kalil at the faculty's Africa Day celebration.



African way: Staffer Chanelle Appollis enjoys the commerce faculty's Africa Day celebrations.

Afropolitanism is a multi-faceted goal

At a recent Students' Representative Council-organised panel discussion on Afropolitanism, one of the most commonly-voiced questions from those attending was: "How African, and how cosmopolitan, is Afropolitanism?", says SRC President Amanda Ngwenya.

This discussion, which took place in Graça Machel Hall in April, was one of a series of discussions around the broad title *To whom does UCT belong?* This featured speakers Professor Thandabantu Nhlapo (deputy vice-chancellor) and Professor Jane Bennett, head of the African Gender Institute who engaged in a lively exchange of ideas with a mainly student audience.

Ngwenya says that in crystallising the SRC and the student body's understanding of Afropolitanism, the SRC's initial approach had been to invite discussion on its meaning.

"One thing became certain from these discussions – Afropolitanism means different things to different students."

She said although the SRC sees Afropolitanism as a practical strategic goal, which is well-outlined in the university's concept document on its strategic goals, it is often a difficult idea to pin down conceptually.

"There are questions that need to be answered before a complete understanding of the concept can be grasped. Basic questions, such as what is African knowledge? What makes knowledge African? Is this a question of principles or is it merely one of geographical location? Is this knowledge unique to Africa? Is this a requirement to finding 'African solutions' to 'African problems'? What is the importance of this knowledge in relation to other knowledge? Is it a rejection of 'other' knowledge or merely an exploration of what other knowledge there could be? And so on and so on."

Ngwenya says that while the SRC is clear on how and why the university is positioning itself, its Afropolitan stance does not yet directly affect the SRC operationally.

"It does not mean that our work is



Discuss meaning: SRC president Amanda Ngwenya.

necessarily focused on Africa, but it does mean that we are aware of the trajectory the university is following, and where we can endeavour to play our role in furthering that mission when we engage with universities around the continent."

She added: "The idea of Afropolitanism also carries the danger of becoming an issue of sentiment instead of logical reason. On a leadership level one must be aware of that."

She believes that explicit outcomes from this Afropolitan thrust, such as research, the interaction with African scholars and a focus on the African context, can only be beneficial.

However, she cautions that the more 'covert effects' could be problematic.

"It would be a pity if the study of Africa reinforced a sense of victim-

hood instead of optimism and agency. Further, it would be problematic if the study of Africa enforced a sense of nationalism, which could lead to a false sense of justness of something just because it is your 'own', and a suspicion of the 'other' just because it is foreign."

Ngwenya said she believed UCT generally provided a welcoming environment to students from the rest of Africa and elsewhere in the world and said this was supported judging by her interaction with international students and IAPO.

"However, institutionally more could be done to integrate international student activities with those of local students, especially during the orientation period.

"Beyond that I don't see it as the university's role to engineer social

interactions between students. People must organise themselves as they wish. But the message from UCT is that it encourages interaction, and – where it is the organiser of an event – UCT should do its utmost to facilitate this interaction."

Discussing the role and meaning of Africa Day, Ngwenya says there is no easy answer.

"I think what being African is, is contested. Is it purely a matter of birthplace, or of being a citizen of an African country? Or is it a matter of possessing a concern for Africa? For some, being African is deeply personal and a matter of identity."

She voices concern about the sometimes superficial arguments mooted about African values, saying she is not convinced that Africa has a unique set of values.

"For example, I have a set of values and principles I identify with, but I am not sure how many of those, if any, can be called 'African' I am not sure they need to be. But if they were, I would want to advance more than the usual response of Ubuntu. It's an altogether slippery concept and often used because of a lack of other knowledge about African values. If I said we need to value Ubuntu I think it would be rhetorical and not persuasive.

"I think the African continent is a beautiful place that few have the opportunity to fully explore. Many think of Africa from just an arts and culture point of view, but there are also new ideas and innovation coming from the African continent.

"It also is home to a mix of cultures and languages, so there is much to enjoy and learn from this continent." 🌍

USHEPiA builds capacity in Africa



USHEPiA Fellows Rafiki Yohana (left) of the University of Dar es Salaam and Norbit Musekiwa (right) of the University of Zimbabwe were congratulated by vice-chancellor Dr Max Price at UCT's June 2010 graduation ceremony. Yohana completed her PhD in English. Her UCT supervisor was Professor Raj Meshrie and her home supervisor was Dr Daniel Mkunde. Musekiwa completed his PhD in political science. His UCT supervisor was Emer Prof Robert Schrire and his home supervisor was Dr Billy Makumari.

Since its inception in 1996, the University Science Humanities and Engineering Partnerships in Africa (USHEPiA) has served as a one of the SADC region's flagship capacity-building programmes.

The programme was established to develop African academic staff, and a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the Universities of Botswana, Cape Town, Dar es Salaam, Nairobi, Makerere, Zambia, Zimbabwe and the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology.

The programme offers postgraduate fellowships, mainly at doctorate level, to staff members in the partner universities. It benefits from funding mainly from the Rockefeller Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation and the Andrew W Mellon Foundation.

Since the programme's inception 71 full degree Fellowships have been in operation, and to date 43 postgraduates with specialties in Africa have graduated. All have remained on the continent, with most still working at their home institutions.

Director of the International Academic Programmes Office (IAPO), Dr Loveness

Kaunda, believes this to be significant in the light of USHEPiA's objective to develop capacity in the partner universities.

"This is great news for Africa, as it means the programme has led to 'brain circulation' — as opposed to a brain drain!"

Kaunda believes USHEPiA provides a unique platform for capacity development in higher education in sub-Saharan Africa.

"Some 250 academics from the eight partner universities have now worked together building a network that incorporates professional expertise, leadership collaboration, and personal relationships."

"The potential for the USHEPiA model is enormous now that trust and mutual understanding have been achieved. The future, and the possibility of endowment funding, are being considered by all the partners this year."

She added that a number of capacity-building programmes are being developed and funded throughout Africa, based on the USHEPiA model as a benchmark.

"This in itself is an important indicator of USHEPiA's success." 🌍