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“Universities, the market and academic freedom” under the spotlight at UCT

TB Davie Memorial Lecture, 13h00, 25 July 2013, at Leslie Social Science Building, Upper Campus

The need to seek scientific research funding from corporations could subordinate academic freedom to commercial confidentiality. This is one of the issues that will come under the spotlight at the University of Cape Town’s upcoming annual TB Davie Memorial Lecture, titled “Universities, the market and academic freedom”.

Jonathan Glover, a professor in ethics from King’s College in London, United Kingdom, will give this year’s lecture at 13h00 on Thursday, 25 July 2013, at Lecture Theatre 2D, Leslie Social Science Building, University Avenue South, Upper Campus. The public is welcome to attend.

Academic freedom plays an important role in assisting universities to fulfil their core functions, such as supporting fundamental thinking, transmitting knowledge to future generations, and creating informed and rational democratic discussion. This year’s TB Davie Memorial Lecture will look at how these aims can be threatened by the view that higher education is a marketable commodity. Such a view creates a climate in which the humanities and fundamental science are undervalued by comparison with technology and business studies. Long-term fundamental thought is discouraged.

A noted scholar and writer, Professor Glover has written a number of books on ethics, including *Humanity: A Moral History of the Twentieth Century* and *Causing Death and Saving Lives*. He has just completed a book called *Psychiatry as a Human Science*. Professor Glover was Director of the Centre of Medical Law and Ethics at King’s College from 1998 to 2008. He completed his BA in Philosophy and Psychology, and BPhil in Philosophy, at Corpus Christi College in Oxford, where he taught Philosophy until 1997. Some of his other published works are: *Responsibility, What Sort of People Should There Be?*, *I – the Philosophy and Psychology of Personal Identity*, and *Choosing Children: Genes, Disability and Design*.

The TB Davie Memorial Lecture is held annually at UCT in honour of Thomas Benjamin Davie, UCT Vice-Chancellor from 1948 to 1955, who fearlessly defended the principles of academic freedom and university autonomy. Davie understood academic freedom as the university's right to determine who shall be taught, who shall teach, what shall be taught and how it should be taught, without regard to any criterion except academic merit.

Members of the public who wish to attend the TB Davie Memorial Lecture should please RSVP to Megan White at 021 650 3730 or megan.white@uct.ac.za.

ENDS

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