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UCT appoints leading academic to Van Zyl Slabbert Chair

The Open Society Foundation for South Africa has provided an initial five-year grant to fund a series of Van Zyl Slabbert visiting professorships in the Political Studies and Sociology departments at the University of Cape Town between 2013 and 2018. The two departments fall within the Faculty of Humanities at UCT.

The Van Zyl Slabbert Chair in Politics and Sociology honours Dr Frederik van Zyl Slabbert's commitment to an open, democratic society, his excellence in public service and his research and teaching interests in politics and sociology.

Professor Roger Southall, who was Head of the Department of Sociology at University of the Witwatersrand, has taken up the Van Zyl Slabbert Chair for 2013.

During his tenure, Southall will be working on a major research project on the emerging black middle class. He will also contribute to postgraduate teaching in the departments of Sociology and Political Studies, and he plans to deliver a public lecture dedicated to the memory of Van Zyl Slabbert later in the year.

He was the Distinguished Research Fellow at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) from 2001 until 2007 and Professor of Political Studies at Rhodes University from 1989 until 2001. Professor Southall enjoyed a distinguished career at universities in Uganda, Lesotho, Canada and the UK.

Professor Southall is author and editor of more than a dozen books. He founded the HSRC State of the Nation project and is editor of the *Journal of Contemporary*

African Studies.

They are expected to engage in research and publication, public lectures and presentations on issues that align with Van Zyl Slabbert's legacy, especially the issue of electoral democracy.

They are also expected to encourage cross-disciplinary engagement and synergies between the academic departments and disciplines of Politics and Sociology.

Professor Roger Southall can be contacted via email: roger.southall@uct.ac.za

ENDS

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