

Professor Mohamed Paleker

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CONCISE NARRATIVE

My academic work explores the intersection of legal theory, practical reform, and social justice. Focusing primarily on civil procedure, access to justice, and the law of succession, I have made significant contributions through research, teaching, postgraduate supervision, and national law reform.

Over the past twenty years, I have played a key role in shaping South Africa's civil justice system—most notably through my involvement in developing court-annexed mediation and reforming small claims courts. I have authored leading legal texts, advised important government bodies, trained legal practitioners, and mentored students who have gone on to pursue advanced studies at institutions such as Oxford and Harvard.

As a university leader, I am committed to providing a rigorous, inclusive, and socially responsive legal education—equipping students not only with knowledge but also with the critical tools to interrogate and transform the law.

EDUCATION

- PhD in Law – University of Cape Town (2015–2018)
- LLM – University of Cape Town (1995–1996)
- LLB – University of Cape Town (1992–1994)
- BA – University of Cape Town (1990–1992)
- School for Legal Practice – 1996

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

- **University of Cape Town** – Contract lecturer (2000–2002); appointed permanently in 2002; promoted to Full Professor in 2018
- **Articles and Practising Attorney**, Lionel Murray Schwormstedt and Louw (1997–2001)
- **Researcher**, Constitutional Assembly of South Africa (1995–1996)

TEACHING PROFILE

Undergraduate Courses Taught:

- Civil Procedure (Course Convenor: 2000–2025)
- Law of Succession (2003–2016)
- Civil Justice Reform, Comparative Legal History, and others

Postgraduate Supervision:

- Currently supervising 1 LLM and 5 PhD candidates
- Supervised over 20 postgraduate dissertations, several of which led to international scholarships and influential academic or advocacy careers

Teaching Awards:

- UCT Distinguished Teachers Award (2006)
- Vice Chancellor's Teaching Merit Award (2005)
- HELTASA Award (2012)

RESEARCH & SCHOLARSHIP

Primary Areas:

Civil Procedure | Access to Justice | Law of Succession | Family Law | Mediation | Legal Reform

- Over 30 published works, including peer-reviewed articles, book chapters, and co-authored legal texts
- Author and editor of landmark publications in South African succession law and civil procedure
- Contributor to the Max Planck Global Comparative Civil Procedure Project

LAW REFORM & POLICY IMPACT

- **Rules Board for Courts of Law** (2012–2017) – Chaired the ADR and Small Claims Committees
- **South African Law Reform Commission** – Advisory Member (2020–2024): Focus on family law mediation, relocation of children, statutory and common law revision
- **National Small Claims Committee** – Committee member – 2005 to 2015 – helped establish over 200 small claims courts
- **Chair**, National Ministerial Task Team on Small Claims Courts (2024–Present)
- **Court-Annexed Mediation** – Lead drafter; developed policy and trained over 100 mediators nationwide

INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

- Max Planck Institute Scholar (until 2024)
- Visiting Academic and foreign teaching:
 - University of Florida (Adjunct Professor, 2006–2012), Georgetown University, Stockholm University, Northwestern University, University of Aberdeen
- Conference Presentations: Delivered papers in over ten countries, including Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Japan, Croatia, Malaysia, Fiji, Australia, Japan and UK.

SERVICE & LEADERSHIP AT UCT

- Chair, Law Faculty Library Committee (2020–present)
- Chair, UCT Library Working Group
- Jagger Library Restoration – Chair of the Specifications Committee; Member of the Project Implementation Committee
- Active contributor to faculty governance and university-wide committees, including curriculum review, academic planning, and the UCT Aid Clinic.
- Former chair of the School for Legal Practice
- Former head of Department
- LLB co-ordinator (prelim, intermediate and final year)