



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN  
IYUNIVESITHI YASEKAPA • UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD

# UCT COUNCIL

1 July 2016 to 30 June 2020





# THE UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN COUNCIL

The University of Cape Town (UCT) Council plays a central role in the life of the institution by steering the critical decisions involved in running the university. The 30-member Council consists of executive officers, employees of the institution, students, and persons who are neither members of staff nor students of the institution. The Council members are appointed by a wide range of constituencies and bring a diverse range of skills, backgrounds and talents to the institution.

Council responsibilities include determining the mission, objectives, goals, strategies and policies for the progress of UCT; ensuring an environment that is conducive to efficient, effective, economical and ethical attainment of these goals; maintaining a financially secure, healthy and viable environment; and accounting for all decisions taken at the university, including the submission of the required reports and documents to the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology.



# A MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

Sitting on Council at UCT over the past four years has not been an easy task. Council decisions have far-reaching consequences for higher education because of UCT's standing in South Africa and around the world. This is true even during times of stability. But your term of service has been marked by a string of incidents and changes that have formed significant steps in the university's transformation process. Through it all, you have been steadfast in your responsibilities to this institution, to our students and staff members, to the many different stakeholders who are part of the UCT community, to the government and to higher education across South Africa. Your governance has helped UCT stay in the global rankings and maintain our position as the top university in Africa.



UCT Chancellor Mrs Graça Machel invested Professor Phakeng with her robe of office at a special graduation ceremony on 13 December 2018.



You have walked with UCT during very difficult times. You took office during the #FeesMustFall protests on campuses across South Africa, including ours. Your term is ending in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Between those two events you governed the university through a series of challenges, some of them traumatic. They include, among others, getting the university to reopen during the #FeesMustFall protests, maintaining principles of academic freedom during times of pressure, holding Senate accountable to clarify questions around its resolution to institute a boycott of Israeli academic institutions, seeing the UCT community through our period of intense pain and soul searching after the tragic death of Professor Bongani Mayosi, the change of leadership when I took up my appointment as vice-chancellor, and measures introduced to achieve environmental sustainability.



Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng was appointed by Council as the new vice-chancellor of the university from 1 July 2018, only the second woman to hold the office.

You have made decisions that reinforced UCT's commitment to transformation. Three critical Council reports in particular will serve as milestones in our transformation journey: the report of the Institutional Reconciliation and Transformation Commission, the InclusionIndex Staff Inclusivity Survey and the report on the death of Professor Bongani Mayosi. You appointed a Naming of Buildings Committee to reflect the diversity of the UCT community, resulting in the renaming of Memorial Hall in honour of Sarah Baartman. Council itself is an example of diversity, with 70% black members (from 43% previously) and 40% women (from 37%).

I want to give special recognition to the Chair of Council, Mr Sipho M Pityana, and his successive deputy chairpersons, Ms Debbie Budlender and Professor Shirley Zinn. They have each made an enormous contribution, as have the chairs of the committees of Council, as well as all the members who have taken the time to serve on those committees, task teams and various selection committees.

On behalf of UCT, I thank you.

Sincerely

**Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng**  
VICE-CHANCELLOR





## OVERVIEW FROM THE CHAIR OF COUNCIL

As the term of this UCT Council draws to a close, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to each and every member that has served with me. It has been a humbling, enlightening and productive four years. I want to say a special thank you to our deputy chairs, Debbie Budlender and Professor Shirley Zinn, for their ceaseless support; they have made an invaluable contribution to the success of our work.

One of Council's most important functions is to approve senior appointments and ensure smooth transitions in leadership. During our term, we have overseen the appointment of new members of the university's executive leadership, and we have seen the formation of the current Leadership Lekgotla.

Having steered UCT to a number of remarkable milestones over his 10 years in office, Dr Max Price stepped down as vice-chancellor on 30 June 2018, halfway through our term of service. Council approved the appointment of Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng as vice-chancellor with effect from 1 July 2018, and she has made clear her own vision to take UCT into a more sustainable future. Professor Phakeng has also been a driver of the creation of Vision 2030 – a strategic plan supported and overseen by Council that builds on and goes beyond the Strategic Planning Framework 2016–2020.

Council was proud to announce Dr Precious Moloi-Motsepe's election as the university's new chancellor – a 10-year term that started on 1 January 2020. She takes over the reins from Mrs Graça Machel, who has served the university with confidence, grace and wisdom since her appointment in 1999.

Our term has seen the renaming of several UCT buildings, the most significant being Sarah Baartman Hall, a decision approved in 2018 as part of the university's wider transformation initiatives. Other renamed buildings and facilities include the Vincent Kolbe Knowledge Commons, Harold



Vincent Kolbe's daughter, Juliette Bourne, spoke on behalf of the family at the launch of the renamed Vincent Kolbe Knowledge Commons in March 2017, which honours the "people's librarian".



Cressy Hall, the AC Jordan Building and the UCT Lung Institute Building, among others. Council also approved updates to existing signage to reflect the correct Khoisan spelling of the Hoerikwaggo building: Huriþoaxa.

Serving on Council has not been easy. Our term started with the emergence of countrywide Fees Must Fall protests, and we intervened where we could to ensure the success of the academic project. Gender-based violence persists in our society, and UCT was sadly affected by the brutal and cruel death of Uyinene Mrwetyana. It was symbolic that the campus community celebrated her life outside the Sarah Baartman Hall. Just like Nene, Sarah too suffered exploitation and abuse during her life. We need to remain committed to making UCT a safer place for all staff and students.

Council has ensured the financial security of the institution by approving tuition and residence fees each year and setting surplus targets for the university's recurrent operating income, which allows UCT to fund longer-term projects and support institutional priorities. At the end of its term, this Council has left the university in a positive financial position, with numerous construction and infrastructure projects secured, an increased pool of funding for student financial aid, and funding reserves



The R222 million Avenue Road Residence, which is under construction in the Mowbray precinct, will provide 500 additional student beds, an invaluable addition to the university's student accommodation provision.



that have allowed the university to respond effectively and efficiently to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As you know, I will unfortunately not be available for another term as chair of Council. I want to wish the new incumbent all the best for the next term, just as the honourable Archbishop Njongonkulu Ndungane wished me well when I took over on 1 July 2016.

**Sipho M Pityana**  
CHAIR OF UCT COUNCIL



Thousands of UCT students and staff dressed in black, many carrying flowers, gathered on the steps and plaza below Sarah Baartman Hall in September 2019 to pay their respects to film and media studies student Uyinene “Nene” Mrwetyana.

# HIGHLIGHTS

In response to the 2017–2018 Cape Town water crisis, Council approved a budget request of R2 million to fund research into water management options for the university as part of the work implemented by the UCT Water Task Team.

The University Finance Committee (UFC) advises Council on financial strategy, makes recommendations on revenue and capital budgets, and monitors and reports quarterly on progress against these budgets. The UFC works together with Council and the UCT executive to provide sustainable operations and to allow investment in educational initiatives consistent with the university's mission. It practises conservative financial management by striving for efficient recurrent operations which generate funds to support strategic initiatives.

Hosted by the Works of Art Committee, celebratory performances marked the reopening of the Molly Blackburn exhibition space on campus in September 2019.







The R100-million Graduate School of Business Conference Centre, launched in July 2019, incorporates elements of the historic site and aims to be a meeting place for thought leadership.

Recognising the importance of third stream revenues, Council approved the creation of the UCT Food Services company in late 2017. Council furthermore approved an allocation of 5% of its invested capital to a UCT private equity fund to enable the University to make strategic investments in UCT spin-out companies.

The work of the Remuneration Committee of Council included advising Council on remuneration policy, setting salaries for newly appointed members of the Leadership Lekgotla, approving mandates for the austerity project in 2016, signing off on mandates for the multi-year increase agreements negotiated with the six trade unions, and participating in the Council on Higher Education enquiry into the remuneration of university vice-chancellors and other senior executives.

“I will be forever indebted to the members of Council for their guidance and support through many tough decisions during what were remarkable and tumultuous times for us all.”

**Dr Max Price, vice-chancellor 2008–2018**

As part of its commitment to maintaining a healthy and viable environment, Council confirmed its support for important infrastructure projects, including the construction of the Graduate School of Business (GSB) Conference Centre (launched July 2019), the Neuroscience Centre (launched March 2020), the 500-bed Avenue Road Residence (construction began in 2019), the refurbishment and extension of the Chris Hani Lecture Theatre, and the planned construction of a new School of Education building and a new building for the Hasso Plattner School of Design Thinking (d-school).

In September 2018, following inputs from stakeholder representatives, Council approved the selection of members for an independent panel of inquiry to review the issues raised surrounding the passing of Professor Bongani Mayosi on 27 July 2018. The panel was tasked with reviewing the systems for the management and support of senior leaders, with a particular focus on black leaders at the university.

The Institutional Reconciliation and Transformation Commission (IRTC) was established as a result of a period of unprecedented tension at UCT at the end of 2016. While the IRTC's recommendations have not yet been implemented, the process will stand as a legacy of Council in the future.



**In its efforts to draw contributions from across the university community, the Institutional Reconciliation and Transformation Commission held an assembly in August 2018 on the steps and plaza below Memorial Hall.**



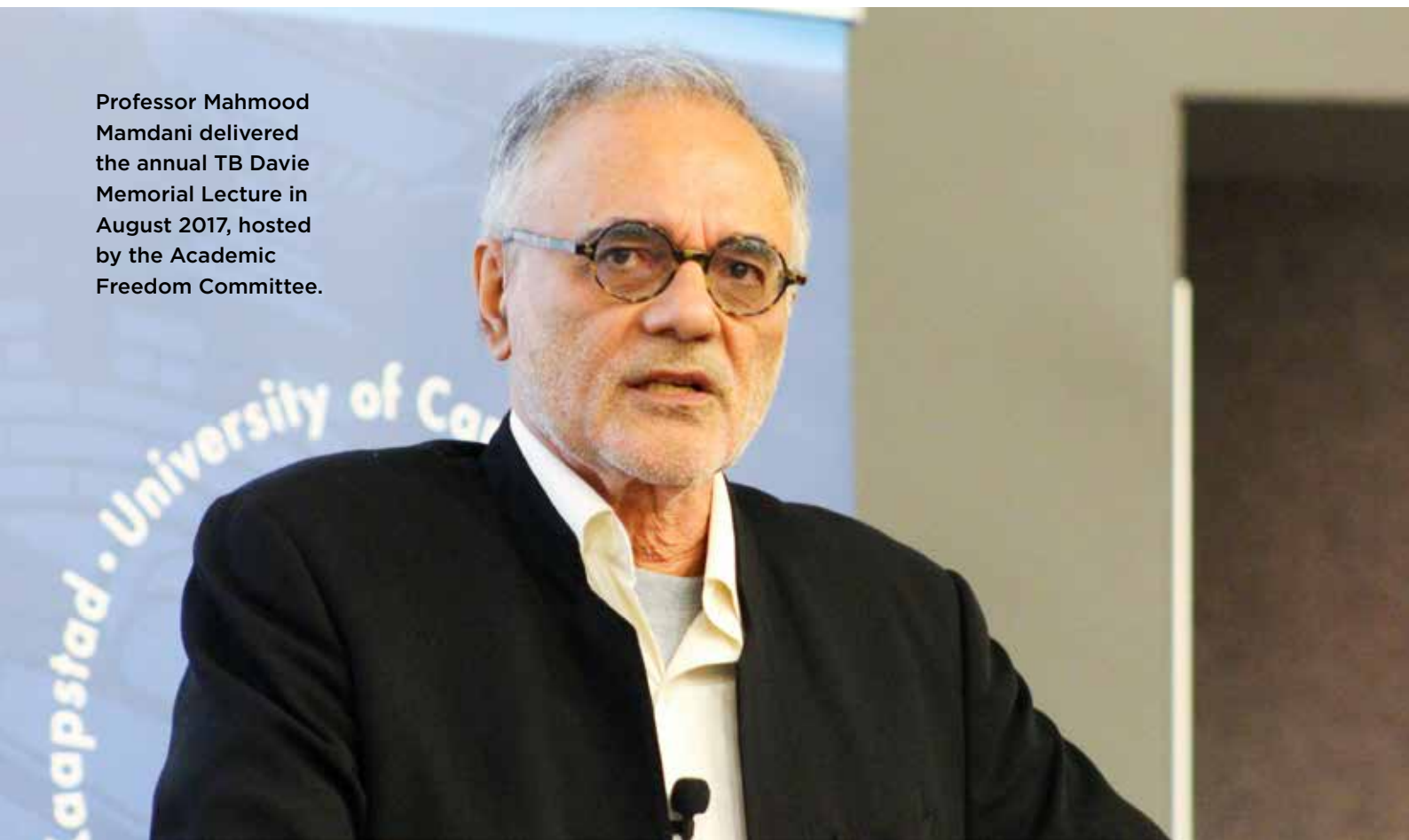
Council, noting that the work of the IRTC, expressed its appreciation to the commissioners for their work at this critical time in UCT's history: Dr Yvette Abrahams, Dr Malose Langa, Mr Mosibudi Mangena, Ms Yasmin Sooka and Justice Zak Yacoob.

In March 2018 Council authorised the purchase of a fully funded positron emission tomography / computed tomography (PET/CT) scanner for the Cape Universities Body Imaging Centre (CUBIC) in the Faculty of Health Sciences. Research in the unit focuses on the role of medical imaging in responding to global healthcare problems, and the addition of the PET/CT scanner will complement and broaden the scope of CUBIC.

"It has been a tremendous pleasure and privilege to serve on the UCT Council for the past year alongside colleagues from the university and highly esteemed external individuals who were all bound by their common affection, respect and commitment to the betterment of our university."

**Dr Ntobeko Ntusi, head of the Department of Medicine**

Professor Mahmood Mamdani delivered the annual TB Davie Memorial Lecture in August 2017, hosted by the Academic Freedom Committee.





In order to monitor the progress of work related to the university's Strategic Planning Framework 2016–2020, reports are submitted to Council on a regular basis by the UCT executive, the academic faculties and the PASS departments. In addition to considering and adopting each of these reports as a record of the significant work that is being done, Council also takes responsibility to submit the required institutional reports and documents to the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology.

Council has been engaging with the UCT executive to discuss key issues in the development of a strategic plan for the university that succeeds the Strategic Planning Framework 2016–2020. Various UCT constituencies have been and will continue to be consulted in the process, which will culminate in the adoption of the Vision 2030 document, which will ultimately be approved by the next Council before implementation.

“Above all I have learnt that the mechanics of governance are clearly laid out in policies and procedures, but bringing the spirit alive requires humility, commitment to continuous learning, willingness to work with ambiguity and care and compassion for people.”

**Dianna Yach, chair of the UCT Alumni Advisory Board**



# A MESSAGE FROM THE CHANCELLOR

This Council said farewell to Mrs Graça Machel as our chancellor and welcomed Dr Precious Moloi-Motsepe.

The Council has played a crucial role in the governance of this prestigious institution, particularly over the past four years, which were marked by events of historic significance for the university and the higher education landscape as a whole.

For their leadership, I'd like to thank all the Council members, most of whom I met in a meeting prior to my installation ceremony. The ceremony was subsequently postponed, and the events that followed the state of disaster declared by the president in light of the COVID-19 pandemic were guided by swift decision-making that assisted students with returning home before the national lockdown.

I wish to welcome back all those who will continue with the new Council and extend my appreciation to the chair of Council, business leader Mr Siphon M Pityana, for the courageous direction he has given the institution over the years.

I am honoured to take on this role and follow in the gracious footsteps of Ms Graça Machel. My hope going forward is that UCT continues to espouse excellence in research, teaching and innovation, maintaining its recognition as the best university on the continent and one of the best globally.

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**Dr Precious Moloi-Motsepe**  
Chancellor

As we approach 2030, we have the next decade to advance the attainment of the United Nations sustainable development goals. Research output contributes to achieving these targets by highlighting the bold and transformative steps which are urgently needed. As one of the top research-intensive institutions in the world, the community of UCT will direct us onto a sustainable and resilient path.

The Council, and the collective expertise and philosophies it brings and represents, is reassuring to the broad range of stakeholders the institution encompasses. As we navigate a new era of challenges, the UCT motto Spes Bona (Good Hope), representing a tradition of optimism, compels us to forge ahead with an outlook of opportunity.

**Dr Precious Moloi-Motsepe**  
**CHANCELLOR**



UCT's new chancellor, Dr Precious Moloi-Motsepe, delivered the keynote address at the fourth annual Heads of Mission Breakfast in February 2019.



Protest action on university campuses nationwide under the #FeesMustFall banner drew attention to critical issues affecting the higher education arena, including calls to end rising student fees, insource workers and confront patriarchal practices on campus.



## KEY POLICIES

UCT's groundbreaking Inclusivity Policy for Sexual Orientation was ratified in December 2018. The policy aims to facilitate a campus environment for staff and students that is free from discrimination in all spheres, including teaching content and language, the university's code of conduct and institutional culture. One tangible outcome of the policy was allowing students to choose their own titles when dealing with university administration, whether Miss, Ms, Mrs, Mr, Mx or a blank option.

In a process led by Dr Debbie Kaminer and Dr Memory Muturiki, the Student Mental Health Policy was adopted by Council in August 2018. This policy recognises UCT's responsibility to address the mental health needs of our students as part of their overall health and well-being.





The university remains acutely aware of how its staff demographic compares with that of the province and the country. As such, work on employment equity forged ahead in 2018 with Council's approval. As the policy nears implementation, Council continues to support transformation efforts at the university.

Through its work with the University Human Resources Committee (UHRC), Council has oversight of processes relating to human resource strategy and policy, including transformation and employment equity, with a specific focus on creating the conditions to attract, recruit and retain appropriate talent. Ensuring staff wellness, both mental and physical, and making sure that staff are appropriately recognised for their work



remains essential to maintaining UCT's position as an employer of choice. The UHRC received reports on multi-year increase agreements negotiated with the six trade unions and continues to provide oversight of the many key human resource and staffing related projects and policies.

In October 2018 Council approved retrospectively the change in the policy on permanent appointments of professional, administrative support and service (PASS) staff in pay classes 1 to 8. In terms of the revised policy, a coalition of unions will be invited to appoint one union representative and an alternate (from a pool of union-nominated trained representatives) to serve on selection committees for the affected posts.

In agreement with union representatives, the UCT executive agreed in 2018 that medical aid should be optional for pay class 6 staff – a decision which required a change in their conditions of service. Council approved the policy change, allowing optional medical aid cover for staff in pay class 6 on the same basis as was approved for pay classes 2–5 in 2017. In 2019, further negotiations with the coalition of unions culminated in the design and implementation of compulsory primary healthcare cover for pay classes 2–6.

“The last four years on Council have been challenging ones for the governance of the university, bookended by the #FeesMustFall protests and the current COVID-19 crisis. ... Serving UCT and the Council under the leadership of its chair, Siphosiso Pityana, and alongside my fellow Council members, has been a singular honour.”

**Professor Tom Moultrie, director of the Centre for Actuarial Research**



## PASSING THE BATON

**A**long with my colleagues, I thank the members of the 2016/20 Council for the significant contribution they have made to the institution over their four-year term.

During a fascinating period in UCT's history, Council has been steadfast in carrying out its governance obligations. Members have been generous in accommodating the extraordinary demands on their time, often at short notice. A collective of 30 individuals, drawn from multiple constituencies, is effective when it is able to carry out the most fundamental of fiduciary responsibilities: to act in the best interests of the institution. Well done and thank you, members of Council.



A few statistics provide a vivid picture of your hard work over the past four years. During your terms of office, Council convened 25 regular and special meetings encompassing 135 hours of discussion and the consideration of agendas and related documents totalling nearly 6 000 pages. This is apart from documents that were circulated separately, such as research, transformation, teaching and learning, social responsiveness and UCT annual reports. This is testimony to the scale, depth and range of issues that Council has been seized with.

Successive annual reports, from 2016 to the most recent report for 2019, record the successes of the university, most notably in the area of the institution's core business: its academic enterprise, which is thriving thanks to your governance role. The quality of our graduates, the impact and relevance of our research, the esteem of the institution's reputation and the boldness of our transformation objectives are important markers of UCT today. It is also noteworthy that the end of the Council's term coincides with another unqualified audit for UCT for the 2019 year.

The baton will be passed on to a new Council with effect from 1 July 2020. As we usher in a new era, we will build on the solid foundation, commitment and achievements of the 2016/20 Council.

With sincere appreciation

**Royston Pillay**  
REGISTAR



Members of the Leadership Lekgotla celebrate with members of the UCT Council at their 2018 year-end function.



