

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS
2026 UNISA DECOLONIALITY SUMMER SCHOOL
12-16 JANUARY 2026

DECOLONIZING THE CLASSROOM:

FROM EPISTEMIC CRITIQUE
TO TRANSFORMATIVE PRACTICE





2026 UNISA DECOLONIALITY SUMMER SCHOOL

Theme: Decolonizing the Classroom: From Epistemic Critique To Transformative Practice

The 2026 edition of the UNISA Decoloniality Summer School represents a significant milestone in the university's sustained commitment to epistemic justice and transformative pedagogy. Over the past decade, the Decoloniality Summer School has become a vital platform for critical reflection, robust dialogue, and issues-driven praxis rooted in the lived experiences and intellectual traditions of the Global South. It has continually challenged dominant epistemic paradigms and frameworks, fostering alternative ways of knowing and seeing grounded in African worldviews, indigenous knowledge systems, and community-based practices.

In this 12th anniversary, the focus turns to the classroom—one of the most enduring and persistent sites of colonial continuity. Despite decades of educational reforms, many learning environments remain shaped by Eurocentric curricula, the dominance of colonial languages, as well as the pedagogical approaches that marginalise indigenous epistemologies, including indigenous research methodologies. These underlying structural dynamics not only uphold valorised knowledge hierarchies but also profoundly shape how students understand themselves, their identities, and their place and grounding in the world—often reinforcing exclusion, alienation, and epistemic violence.

The 2026 theme, *Decolonizing the Classroom: From Epistemic Critique to Transformative Practice*, calls participants to move beyond critique, toward meaningful, pedagogical reimagining, ontological realignment, and issues-driven praxis. The theme invites educators, students, and cultural practitioners to rethink the politics of voice, knowledge validation, and pedagogy. The classroom is reframed not only as a site where power is reproduced but also as a space where it can be radically reimagined.

Central to this epistemic transformation is the urgent need to confront the persistent marginalisation of African and Indigenous languages in higher education. The dominance of colonial languages in teaching, learning, and assessment, continues to undermine the possibilities of multilingual education and restrict access to knowledge for African and Indigenous language speakers (Heugh, 2014). Entrenched settler languages perpetuate epistemic inequality and injustices, while continuing to structurally uphold colonial hierarchies and legacies within the global university system. Decolonising the classroom, therefore, demands the integration of African and Indigenous languages across all disciplines—not merely within language or linguistics departments. Doing so creates space for African and Indigenous philosophies, pedagogical practices, and epistemologies that are currently sidelined in Eurocentric academic frameworks (Maseko & Vale, 2016).



The Decoloniality Summer School seeks to reimagine the classroom as a generative space for justice, dialogue, and relational learning. Participants will engage with leading decolonial scholars and educators from across Africa, the African Diaspora and the Global South, to explore critical themes such as:

- Curriculum transformation and epistemic disobedience
- Language politics and multilingual pedagogies
- Teacher-student relationalities and power
- Embodied, land-based, and community-rooted forms of learning
- Epistemic erasure and injustices
- Decoloniality as intervention

In alignment with the Decoloniality Summer School's commitment to praxis, sessions will integrate participatory and experiential methodologies, including role-playing, collaborative writing workshops, peer-led sessions, and simulation activities. These scenarios are designed to empower participants to implement decolonial strategies in their own classrooms, institutions, and communities.

Ultimately, the 2026 UNISA Decoloniality Summer School affirms that the struggle for epistemic freedom is inseparable from the decolonization of education. It calls for a radical reorientation of teaching and learning—from systems of transmission to practices of transformation. By centering dignity, cultural affirmation, and epistemic plurality, we envision classrooms where all learners are valued, where all histories are acknowledged, and where knowledges are co-created in the service of liberation.

Join us in reimagining the classroom as a space of liberation, co-creation, and epistemic justice. Together, we can transform education into a practice of freedom.

The 2026 Decoloniality Summer School lectures will be delivered by renowned scholars and practitioners of decoloniality and indigenous research methodologies, including Prof Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Prof Reiland Rabaka, Prof Nampombe Saurombe, Prof Bagele Chilisa and others. The keynote address will be delivered by Prof Linda Tuhiwai Smith.

TARGET GROUP

The Summer School is targeted at graduate students and academics from South Africa, the rest of the African continent, and other countries. Admission to the Summer School is on a first-come, first-served basis.

PROGRAMME

Registered participants will receive reading material and the final programme in preparation for the seminars, a month in advance. Lectures will be conducted over five days. These are content-intensive seminars in which participants engage in critical discussions and reflections. In addition, there will be working group sessions facilitated



by the presenters. Spaces for self-organised workshops and discussions will also be created.
ALL THE LECTURES AND DISCUSSIONS WILL BE OFFERED IN ENGLISH.

REGISTRATION & FEES

Prospective participants will be expected to complete a registration form on the link below. Please ensure that you complete it and submit it no later than **15th of November 2025**. **NO LATE APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

Please note that the Decoloniality Summer School is **capped at 150 paid participants**. Upon submission of the completed registration forms and acceptance to the school, participants will be required to **pay tuition fee of R3500.00**. This fee is **inclusive of tuition and lunch** for the duration of the Summer School (**i.e. 12-16 January 2026**).

Do note that the full tuition fee is payable by 15th November 2025. No extension will be granted.

(Payment reference: 35874/1155X INITIALS AND SURNAME)

Proof of payment must be sent to Mokguwk@unisa.ac.za

The tuition fee of R3500.00 does **NOT** cover accommodation and travel costs. These are at the expense of the participants.

ACCOMMODATION

Please note that participants are responsible for arranging their own accommodation for the duration of the Summer School. Participants are advised to secure their accommodation well in advance of the commencement of the Decoloniality Summer School.

[CLICK HERE TO APPLY](#)