

YOU NISA

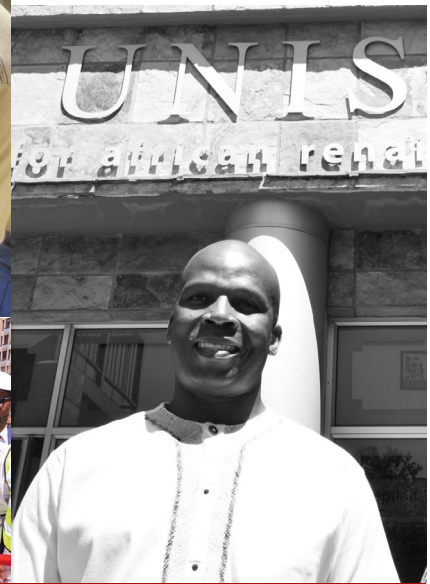
Magazine for Unisa students, alumni and friends

Issue 1 | 2019



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YOUNISA is published by the Department of Institutional Advancement

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CONTENTS

FOR STARTERS

- 4 Editorial
- 5 Wordwise
- 6 Letterbox
- 10 The *YOUNISA* democracy survey



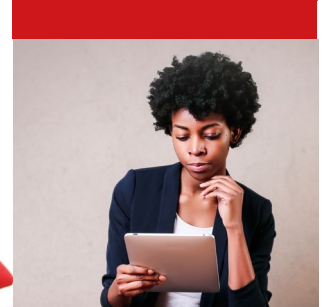
GRADUATES OF NOTE

- 25 The power to keep going conquers all obstacles
- 26 Linda simply refused to give up, and Unisa was there all the way



UNISA FOUNDATION

- 27 Alumna profile: Dr Tshepiso Scott



DEMOCRACY IN THE SPOTLIGHT

- 12 Is higher education meeting the challenge of democracy?
- 15 A truly African democracy incubator
- 18 Student democracy in action
- 22 General Election: Key facts



REGULARS

- 28 Unisa in brief
- 34 Shelf life: Retelling one of Africa's greatest historical narratives
- 36 Study and career advice from the experts: Key findings from the Universum survey



Editorial

In a Twitter post last year, comedian and talk show host, Trevor Noah, had this to say about democracy: 'Democracy is not only [the] freedom to cast a vote, but also includes having equal access to quality education and opportunity. Thus, having skills to seize opportunities and make informed decisions.' Providing such skills is one of the ways in which higher education institutions support the democratic ideal, and in this issue of *YOUNISA* we take a look at a number of important links between democracy and universities.

In our lead article Emeritus Professor Raymond Suttner, activist, former politician and academic of note, shares his considered views on if – and how – higher education institutions are meeting the challenge of democracy. We report on the runaway success of the Management of Democratic Elections in Africa programme, a joint initiative between Unisa and South Africa's Independent Electoral Commission. This programme has already trained 778 election-related officials from 36 African countries in the intricacies of running democratic elections under often taxing circumstances.

NSRC profiles, your wonderfully diverse views on the role of universities in supporting democracy, notable graduates and an analysis of the annual Universum survey are some of the highlights in the rest of the issue.

YOUNISA is your magazine, and we always welcome your suggestions and ideas. Share your thoughts with us by sending an email to younisa@unisa.ac.za.



Edithoriale

Ka go pego ye a e rometšego go Twitter ngwageng wa go feta, rametlae gape e le mogaši wa lenaneo la dipoledišano, Trevor Noah o boletše se ka temokrasi: 'Temokrasi ga e no ba fela tokologo ya go bouta, eupša gape e akaretša go hwetšwa phihlelelo ka go swana go thuto ya boleng bja godimo le dibaka tše lebanego. Ka gona, go ba le bokgoni bja go hwetša dibaka le go tšea diphetho tšeo di theilwego go tsebo yeo e nyakišišitšwego.' Go fa bokgoni bjoo ke ye nngwe ya ditsela tšeo ka tšona diinstitušene tša thuto ya godingwana di thekgago kgopolo ya maleba ya temokrasi, gomme ka go phatlalatšo ye ya *YOUNISA* re lebelela ditswalanyo tše mmalwa tše bohlokwa gare ga temokrasi le diyunibesithi.

Ka go athikele ya rena ya motheo Emeritus Professor Raymond Suttner, molweladiphetogo, radipolotoki wa maloba le morutegi, yo bohlokwa, o re fa dikgopolo tša gagwe tše a di fihleletšego ka morago ga go di naganishiša ka ga ge – le ka moo - diinstitušene tša thuto ya godingwana di itebanyago le ditlhohlo tša temokrasi. Re bega ka ga tsela ye e sepetšwego go fihlelela katlego ya Bolaodi bja Dikgetho tša Temokrasi ka go lenaneo la Afrika, tswalano ye go dumelanwego ka yona ya gare ga Unisa le Khomišene ya Dikgetho ye e Ikemetšego ya Afrika Borwa. Lenaneo le le šetše le hlahile bahlankedi bao ba sepelelanago le dikgetho go tšwa dinageng tše 36 gare ga ditharano tša go sepetša dikgetho tša temokrasi gantši ka fase ga mabaka a boima kudu.

Ditlhalošišo tša NSRC, dikgopolo tše fapanego tša lena tše botse ka ga tema ye e ralokwago ke diyunibesithi go thekga temokrasi, dialoga tša dithuto tše di hlomphegago le tshekatsheko ya tekolo ya Universum ke tše dingwe tša dintlha tše bohlokwa ka go phatlalatšong ye ka botlalo.

YOUNISA ke makasine wa lena, gomme ka mehla re amogela ditšhišinyo le dikgopolo tša lena. Re feng dikgopolo tša lena ka go romela emeile go younisa@unisa.ac.za.



Ukuphawula koMhleli

Umlayezo ofakwe ku-Twitter ngonyaka odlule, usomahlaya nomsingathi wenkulumo yombukiso, uTrevor Noah usho lokhu ngombuso wentando yeningi: 'Umbuso wentando yeningi akuwona kuphela wenkululeko yokuvota, kodwa ufaka ukufinyelela okulinganayo emfundweni efanale kanye nethuba. Ngakho-ke, ukuba namakhono okubamba amathuba kanye nokwenza izinqumo ezinolwazi'. Ukunikezela amakhono afana nalawa ngenye yezindlela lapho izikhungo zemfundo ephezulu zisekela umqondo wombuso wentando yeningi, futhi kulolu daba lwe-YOUNISA sithathe ukubheka ezixhumaniseni ezimbalwa ezibalulekile phakathi kombuso wentando yeningi namayunivesithi.

Ku-athikili yethu ehamba phambili i-Emeritus uNgcweti uRaymond Suttner, isishosho, owayengusopolitiki nosolwazi kwezemfundo, wabelana ngemibono ukuthi izikhungo zemfundo ephezulu zihlangabezana kanjani nezinselela zombuso wentando yeningi. Sibika ngokuphumelela kwempumelelo ngokuphathwa kokhetho lwentando yeningi ohlelweni e-Afrika, isinyathelo esihlanganyelwe phakathi kwe-UNISA nekhomishini ezimele yokhetho eNiningizimu Afrika. Loluhlelo seluqeqeshe izikhulu ezihlangene nokhetho ezingama – 778 emazweni angama – 36 ase-Afrika ebunzimeni bokuqhuba ukhetho lwentando yeningi ngaphansi kwezimo ezikhokhisayo.

Amaprofayili weNSRC, imibono yenu emihle ehlukenekule ndima yamayunivesithi ekusekeleni umbuso wentando yeningi, abafundi beziqubane kanye nokuhlaziya konyaka kocwaningo lwe-Universum kungokunye okuvelele kwalo lonke lolu daba.

I-YOUNISA iphephabhuku lenu, futhi njalo semukela iziphakamiso nemibono yenu. Yabelana nathi imicabango yakho ngokuthumela imeyili ku: younisa@unisa.ac.za.



WORDWISE:

DEMOCRACY

What's in a word? *YOUNISA* takes a look at the origins, meanings and applications of words and terms that we use every day.



The ancient Acropolis in Athens, a city closely associated with democracy

It's election year in South Africa, and we are using – and hearing – the word democracy on a daily basis. It literally means 'rule by the people'. The term is derived from the Greek *dēmokratīā*, which was coined from *dēmos* (people) and *kratos* (rule) in the middle of the 5th century BCE to denote the political systems then existing in some Greek city-states, notably Athens.

In South Africa, the advent of democracy was ushered in by the 1993 Interim Constitution, drawn up through negotiations among various political parties, culminating in the country's first non-racial election in 1994. All legally eligible South Africans were able to cast their vote for the first time on 27 April 1994 to mark the end of apartheid rule and establish a new constitutional order.

Sources: *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (<https://www.britannica.com>) and *South African History Online* (<https://www.sahistory.org.za>)



Letterbox

We look forward to your thoughts on topics covered in YOUNISA.

Email your letter to younisa@unisa.ac.za, or post it to the following address:
YOUNISA, Department of Institutional Advancement; PO Box 392, Unisa, 0003

Please note that letters may be edited to meet stylistic, grammatical and space requirements.

We asked you, our readers, to share **your views on democracy.** Here are the best letters received.

More knowledge is key

I'm a proud Unisa student studying towards a BEd degree. I was born in 1969 so I am definitely not a born-free. I strongly believe that if students have a greater knowledge of politics it will lead to a positive attitude towards democracy.

Therefore we should teach the youth of the today, the born-frees, more about politics, both theoretically and practically, so they will take part in discussions and debates about the pros and cons of the various ways in which governments are organised and run. This greater interaction with political ideas is likely, I believe, to have a great impact on the extent to which students support democracy.

> Nahidah Shaik



Sceptically optimistic

I was born in 1995 so therefore I am a born-free – or at least that is what I am told. My attitude towards South African democracy changed as I grew up and matured. When I was a child and oblivious, I believed everything I saw and heard on the radio about how free and united the people are. But as I grew up I became sceptical and started to do research on what freedom really is.

According to my findings freedom is what enables us to be free from poverty, illness, corruption and senseless death, but in this country we have all the negatives. On to universities. I do not know about other universities but I am a Unisa student and the younger students seem to take politics and democracy more seriously than the older ones. One can sense the burning inferno in their hearts when one brings up the issue of democracy.

>Sabelo Forere



Universities home to freedom and democracy



I grew up before South Africa's transition to democracy. The ideas, knowledge, talent and creativity that we have seen post-1994 compared to pre-1994 in South Africa did not come out of nowhere. Amongst others, it came from universities and TVET colleges across South Africa. Higher institutions of learning have played a huge role in ensuring contributions to a society that is more tolerant and civilised, and that understands democracy and freedom.

A university can be defined as a 'mall of life'; a place where you can dream without being judged, a place where you can beat all the odds, a place where you can learn without limits or boundaries. We have seen how, over the years, the government and universities have ensured that less advantaged students have access to quality education. We have seen how, increasingly, black students have had the opportunity to follow their dreams.

A university to me is a place where freedom and democracy are a norm and a way of life.

>Mongwane Akani Succed

Simple steps, huge impact

I grew up during the transitional arrangements towards a democratic South Africa. I believe that academic institutions, and universities in particular, have a pivotal role to play in the advancement and support of democracy. Universities are the bedrock of innovation and could potentially promote the forward-thinking of industries, economies and societies. It is on this premise and the fact that societies are empowered by academic institutions and universities, in particular, that several key practical steps could be taken by universities to advance and support democracy:

- . Creating and sustaining dialogue around the topic of democracy
- . Deepening and integrating societal wisdom by promoting access to information and material relating to the history and benefits of democracy
- . Advancing research into democracy and elements threatening democratic values in our country
- . Promoting economic transformation by, among others, providing companies with innovative ideas relating to matters such as corporate social investment modelling

The above provides a mere fragment of the role universities can play to advance and support democracy. There is only one way to discover how impactful universities can be – they must do it!

>Bradley Scheepers





Universities a melting pot

Although I was born in 1989, I am a born-free in the sense that I began schooling after 1994, a year into democracy. So I may say I have reaped most of the fruits that came with democracy.

I am of the opinion that universities indeed do advance and support democracy. For starters it is one of the unique environments in which children from different strata and social backgrounds get to mingle and share classes. Even though they may differ in terms of the tiers/ quintiles of basic educational institutions they come from, they get to merge when they get to university.

With the bursary and NSFAS programmes of government and private sector, the financial differentiation overt in other fields in society is obscured if not done away with in the university environment. This does not mean that we must turn a blind eye to some of the entrenched challenges our education system still harbours, yet we can still take an optimistic view of hope and thirst for a better tomorrow presented by the university environment.

Universities give students and greater society a universal view of the world, especially through cutting-edge research and scientific enquiry. Universities challenge us to break out of our cocoons and appreciate diversity for the wonder it is. Personally, I would not trade the experience of university for anything. My thinking was sharpened and developed beyond measure.

> **Lawrence Mokobane**

Only for the elite

Being a young adult who was born in 1995 after the apartheid era, I have always thought that voting is pointless, and not worth the effort. Democracy on paper seems like a well-thought-out system, but in reality you are giving over power to one specific party. If history has taught us anything, it would be that power corrupts.

The sad reality is that the younger generations have not yet seen a democratic system that has succeeded in improving living conditions, they only see the horrendous acts from these democratic leaders and feel discouraged to vote for a new president. Who is to say that a new president will do any better? The rich get richer and the poor never seem to get a foothold in life.

Families are starving on the streets, more people are resorting to criminal activities to manage their finances and nothing seems to get better. All the while our democratic leaders own several mansions, fly private jets and drive the latest cars.

If democracy is supposed to be beneficial to the people of South Africa, I think we need to re-evaluate who the people of South Africa are. Is it the general population or is it only the political elite that are reaping the benefits?

> **Wilco Scheepers**



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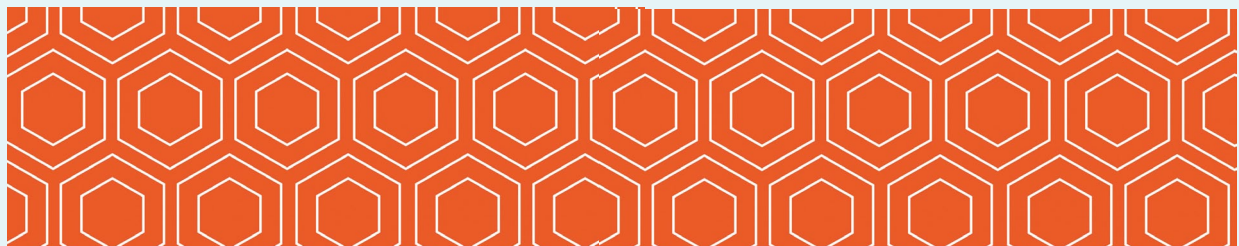




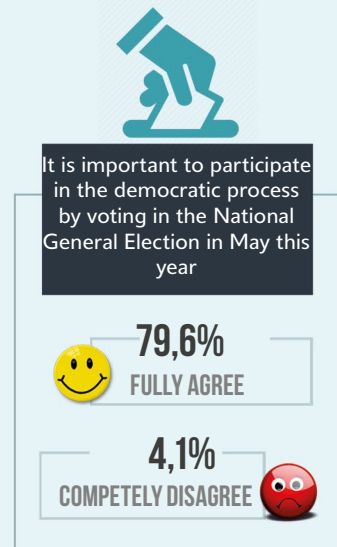
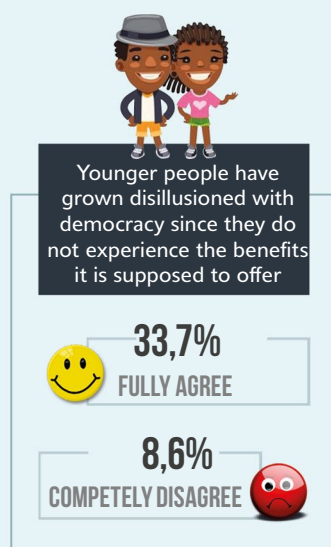
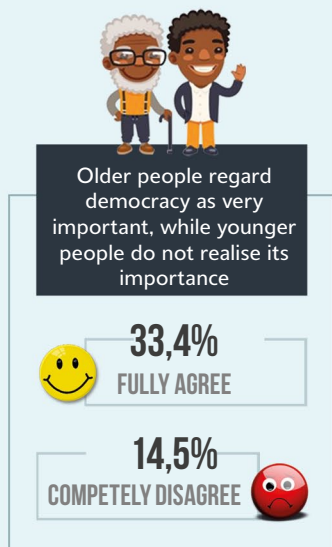
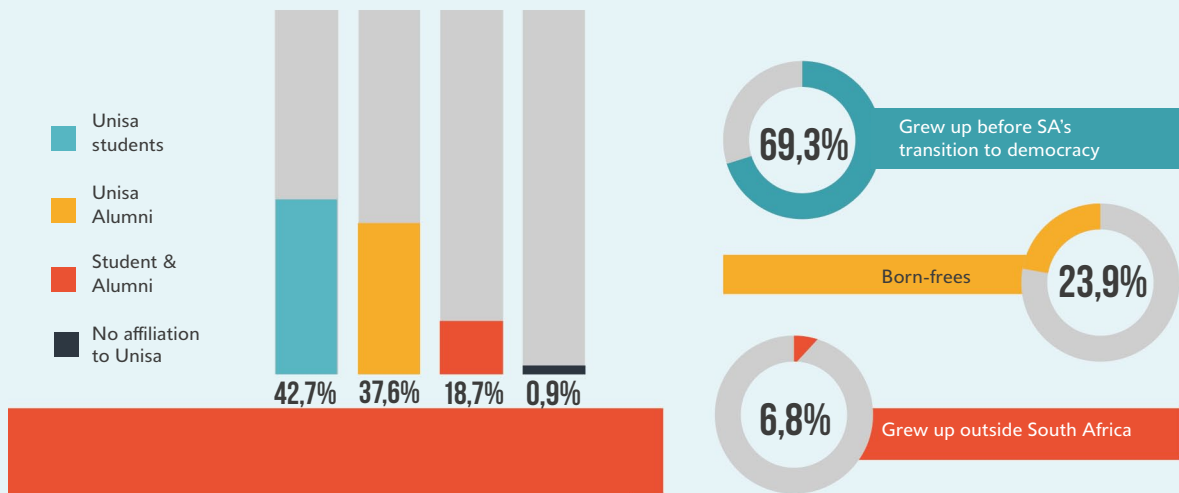
THE *YOUNISA* DEMOCRACY SURVEY

Mindful of the recent General Election, we circulated a brief survey among you, our readers. Here are the results in brief:

- We received a healthy 950 responses to the survey questions.
- The largest respondent group was Unisa students (42,7%), followed by Unisa alumni (37,6%) and individuals who are both students and alumni (18,7%). A very small group (0,9%) indicated that they have no association with Unisa.
- By far the largest group (69,3%) grew up before South Africa's transition to democracy, with 23,9% identifying as born-frees (i.e. they grew up after 1994). 6,8% indicated that they did not grow up in South Africa.
- Regarding the statement 'Older people regard democracy as very important, while younger people do not realise its importance,' 33,4% of respondents indicated that they fully agree, while 14,5% indicated that they completely disagreed.
- Regarding the statement 'Younger people have grown disillusioned with democracy since they do not experience the benefits it is supposed to offer,' 33,7% of respondents indicated that they fully agree, while only 8,6% indicated that they completely disagree.
- In response to the statement 'It is important to participate in the democratic process by voting in the National General Election in May this year,' 79,6% of respondents indicated that they fully agree, while only 4,1% of respondents indicated that they completely disagree.



We received a healthy 950 responses to the survey questions



About this survey

Some readers noted, quite correctly, that our survey questions and the structure of the survey itself do not meet scientific research standards. Rest assured that it was not our intention to conduct academically sound research with the survey – it is merely a conversation-starter.

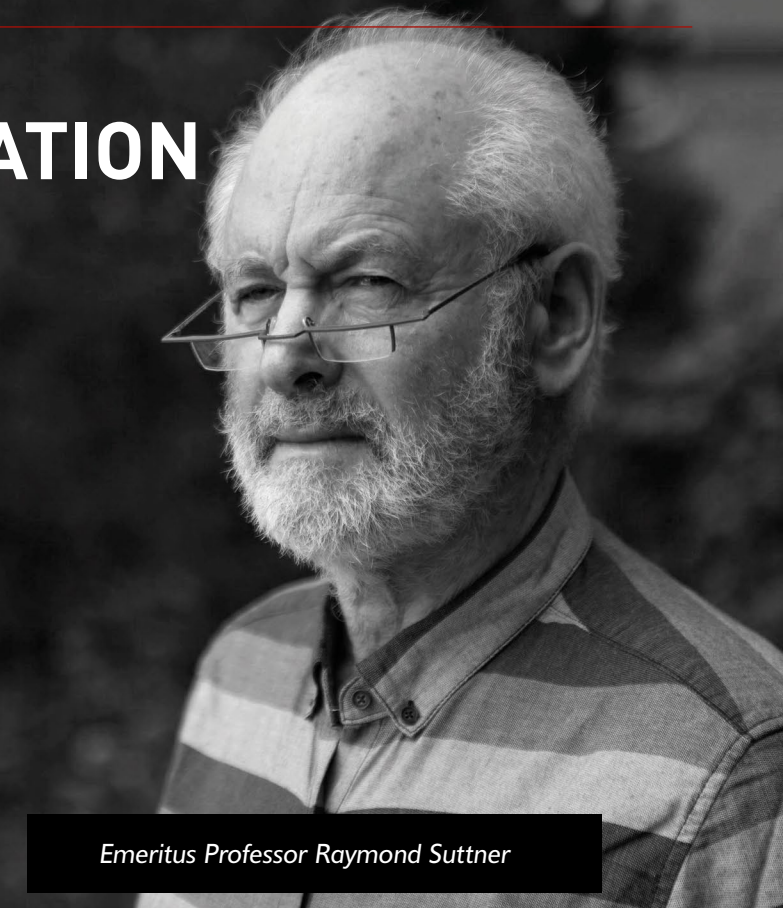
IS HIGHER EDUCATION MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF DEMOCRACY?

Writing in *University World News* (24 June 2017), Sharon Dell cites former United Nations secretary-general Kofi Annan who said that universities should become primary tools for Africa's development – not only because they can help develop African expertise and enhance analysis of African problems, but because they could strengthen domestic institutions and serve as model environments for good governance, conflict resolution and respect for human rights.

To what extent are our universities living up to these high expectations? *YOUNISA* sat down with Raymond Suttner, struggle activist, renowned scholar and Unisa Emeritus Professor to gain his views based on his extensive experience in both the South African political and academic spheres.

YOUNISA: As a scholar you have been attached to a number of South African universities. What, in your opinion, have South African universities contributed to support and advance democracy in the country? And what have they not done that they should have been doing?

Professor Suttner: There cannot be a set formula on what universities should or should not be doing in order to support and advance democracy. How we understand democracy is contested and ought to be one of the debates within universities. Also, how we understand the roles of universities has been subject to continual debate during apartheid and today. At a general level universities have a professional duty in terms of their being institutions of higher education, to exercise their right to academic



Emeritus Professor Raymond Suttner

freedom and generally to be unfettered in carrying out that duty.

The question arises over what that means. Is there not both a freedom and a social responsibility that attaches to a university beyond merely 'seeking the truth', as the various scholars see it? My belief is that universities, each in their own way, have engaged in specific disciplines over the challenges of the post-apartheid South African democratic order.

The discipline of law, for example, has acquired a new lease of life under the present constitution and related laws, in so far as apartheid law and constitutions were rights-denying. The present law and constitution are generally rights-bearing. My sense is that many legal academics have made important contributions in debates over the meanings of the constitution and of specific laws. This has a bearing on the quality of democracy.

In a discipline like politics my sense is that much of the scholarly contribution on a day-to-day basis, in the form of media commentary, has been fairly useful. But most of the theoretical analysis has tended to be gripped by approaches deriving from conventional United States

political science and this has not really given a fresh input. I would have preferred if scholars had drawn more from what has been written in the South – from the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA, headquartered in Dakar) scholars to the North and from India. I believe we have a lot to learn there. This is not to say that no scholars look to other parts of the South, but that is a weakness in much of the work, not only in political studies but in other disciplines—again, with some exceptions.

I know that Unisa has brought scholars from Africa, many associated with CODESRIA, and others from the South, but I am not sure to what extent such scholarship is integrated into the thinking of our scholars. If we look at the source material in these disciplines, most is from the North. I am not saying discard the North, but we need more from the South, insofar as it may provide answers to many of our questions.

I do believe as institutions universities need to work rigorously. While I respect much that appears in a journalistic mode, the difference between that and scholarship is that the academic takes more time to produce her work. We need to defend that while not condoning tardiness or laziness. Being a scholar at this time is challenging and while we do not expect universities to be there on the radio giving commentary immediately (though many academics do), there are some important issues that require comment now – for example, land restitution, xenophobic discourse and violence, but also violence more generally. Universities could help to entrench a culture of non-violence which has never really taken root in South Africa. There are many other questions. We rely on universities to employ and train people with sufficient capacity to equip them, where it is necessary to engage in these urgent debates and take them further.

YOUNISA: You have written about the spectre of fascism and the dangers it holds for democracy. What role, if not responsibility, do universities have in defending democracy in the face of what appears to be a worldwide shift towards authoritarianism?

Professor Suttner: I did speak of the danger of fascism but I would caution against throwing the label around too readily. There is an extreme authoritarian populism that

sometimes becomes fascism that is found in a range of parts of the world, for example, India, Brazil, the Philippines and parts of Eastern Europe. Some of the features of those societies that provided the opening for fascism are present in South Africa and we have to identify these and address them. One cannot devise an adequate means of defence until one has first identified the problem. The Filipino scholar Walden Bello has written a number of important studies on fascism that help us to get round the problem of a single definition that is applicable to all manifestations of fascism. His argument seems to be that it may arise in a number of different ways in different times.

What is characteristic of fascism today tends to arise when people see their lives as insecure, not improving and in fact worsening. This creates a space for demagogic solutions, one of which is authoritarian populism or fascism that tends to scapegoat people. Hitler did that with Jews, very often it is done with foreign nationals or other minorities.

YOUNISA: Unisa is uniquely positioned in terms of its large number of students and their geographic distribution across the country and, indeed, the continent. How can the university leverage this advantage to advance and support the democratic agenda?

Professor Suttner: I am not sure that this positions Unisa, especially, to make a democratic intervention. The location in a range of places makes it difficult to speak with one voice, though having one voice is not always desirable. Nevertheless, to support a democratic agenda needs debate as to what that entails and Unisa's highly developed IT could facilitate debates amongst its various centres. But my guess is that this is hard to organise on a regular basis and may in fact work best on a small scale, without trying to develop one voice.

My final point on contributing to democracy is that the most important thing is to treat nothing as given. Academics must themselves allow students or encourage them to challenge what they teach and not view their teachers with awe, as people whose words are sacred. A culture of debate is needed in society generally and obviously, university classes are a key element of this, even in a distance learning university.

Other Voices

'The level of civic education in universities [has] dropped precipitously and by the 2000s, there was real concern that higher education was not doing enough to prepare democratic citizens. Many saw students as apathetic and pushed universities to re-engage with issues of citizenship; however, these efforts often get caught up in the culture wars and the partisan divide that we find ourselves in today.'

- Professor Julie Reuben, Harvard Graduate School of Education, *Harvard Advanced Leadership Initiative Blog*, 5 September 2018

'Surely, institutions of higher education cannot limit their role to training at a time when democracy is under assault around the world. Colleges and universities must define themselves anew as a public good, a protective space for the promotion of democratic ideals, of the social imagination, civic values and a critically engaged citizenship.'

- Henry Giroux, Chaired Professor for Scholarship in the Public Interest in the Department of English and Cultural Studies, McMaster University, *The Conversation*, 7 September 2017

'The work of think tanks and universities is premised on independence, integrity and the search for truth. They are part of the very fabric of liberal democracy and embody the values of open societies. They stand for everything authoritarians despise: open debate, independent judgment, freedom of thought and freedom of speech.'

- Thorsten Benner, *The Washington Post*, 16 January 2019

'Education is not only a vehicle for the transmission of democratic cultures, values and beliefs, but also reproduces them. At places of higher education citizens interact, socialise and learn together. This should make African universities ideal places to foster new common democratic cultures, values and beliefs — and to actively defend them.'

- William Gumede, Associate Professor, School of Governance at the University of the Witwatersrand, Public Seminar, 25 March 2015

ABOUT RAYMOND SUTTNER

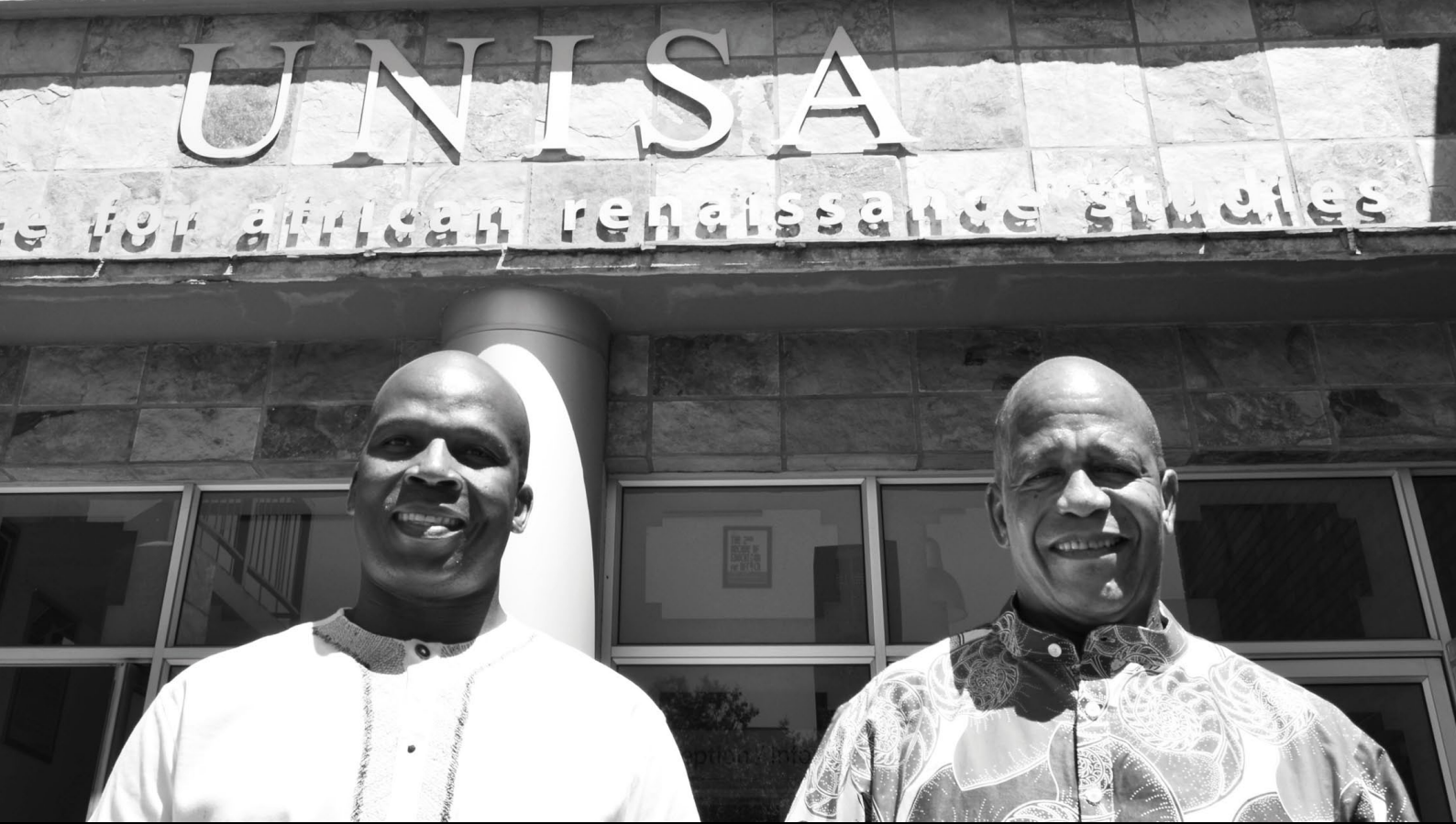
Raymond Suttner is Emeritus Professor at Unisa, Visiting Professor at the University of Johannesburg and Senior Research Associate at the Centre for Change.

He was actively involved in the liberation struggle against apartheid, both in legal political activities and illegal underground work. He served two periods of imprisonment and after release in 1988 was under house arrest, totalling 11 years.

He was in the leadership of the African National Congress, South African Communist Party and the United Democratic Front.

He has authored and co-authored six books and more than 85 articles in academic journals.

You can visit his website at www.raymondsuttner.com.



Lesibana Matjila, MDEA training administrator, and Mpho Mothoagae, course coordinator and lecturer

A TRULY AFRICAN DEMOCRACY INCUBATOR

From relatively humble beginnings in 2011, the Management of Democratic Elections in Africa (MDEA) programme is now the gold standard for the training of electoral officials in sub-Saharan Africa and beyond.

A joint initiative between Unisa and South Africa's Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), the MDEA programme was funded and supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) until the end of last year. It is located within the Institute of African Renaissance Studies (IARS), a multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary graduate academic institution within Unisa promoting the furtherance of Pan-Africanism within the global context.

Steep upward trajectory

Training administrator Lesibana Matjila explains that, following the signing of a memorandum of understanding by Unisa and the IEC in 2010, planning got under way for a certificate programme for the training of elections-related officials across Africa. 'We started rolling out the MDEA

programme in 2011,' he says, 'and at the time we had no inkling that it would grow to be as big as it is today. For the first intake we had 24 students, and the intention was to train around 125 participants over a five-year period. Due to the success of the programme and the major demand we far exceeded that goal; to date, we have trained 778 participants from 36 countries, and have expanded from the Tshwane-based training sessions to also offering in-country training on request. Moreover, the four-week training sessions are now supplemented by a five-day executive programme for commissioners.'

Funding partner USAID was so impressed with the results achieved through the programme that it extended its support beyond the initial five-year period up to the end of December 2018. Unisa is now actively seeking sponsoring partners to ensure that Africa continues to benefit from what has, in essence, become the gold standard for the



A typical MDEA intake

training of electoral officials on the continent. The sustainability of the programme beyond the USAID funding is critical for Unisa and the continent, and the university has committed itself towards sustaining this Pan-African flagship programme. Another intake is scheduled for June 2019.

Mpho Mothoagae, course coordinator and lecturer, says that each intake in the programme spends three weeks at Unisa in Tshwane. 'During this time we engage both theoretical and practical themes across the electoral management spectrum from a predominantly African context, referencing international best-practice where applicable,' he says. 'Interactive facilitation is provided by academics from a broad background and practitioners from the electoral management bodies and institutions such as the Electoral Institute of South Africa and the African Union's Political Affairs Department. In the fourth week, students go out to the field for experiential learning under the supervision of the IEC in selected provinces and municipalities. On the last day, students present a debriefing on the experiential learning as part of feedback.'

Generating research a key component

In addition to the obvious link to teaching and learning at Unisa, yet another of the university's core business areas, that of research, also benefits from the MDEA programme. Since its start in 2011 the programme has resulted in a number of journal articles, books, chapters in books and research papers. Explaining how each component of the programme contributes to research and knowledge generation, Mothoagae says the material is designed so that it can be used for research purposes. 'Research

and instruments were developed by team leaders and data is being collected in the different electoral management bodies and electoral commissions,' he says. 'As a result research is being generated in the programme's three research areas – elections and gender dynamics in Africa, the role of ICT in election management, and elections, conflict and security in Africa. It is envisaged that these research areas will also attract potential master's and doctoral students from the intakes of the MDEA programme as well as from participating EMBs on the continent.'

Ongoing engagement with alumni

Matjila is enthusiastic about an exciting innovation in the programme, that of convening and meeting with MDEA alumni chapters in various African countries. 'These chapter meetings essentially allow us to establish a community of practice and networking platform across the continent, and to follow up on the extent to which our training is effective' he says. 'We have been humbled by the success stories shared by MDEA alumni at these meetings, and are heartened by the ties that are forged between alumni in different countries, and the information that takes place as a result.'

As part of its ongoing engagement with alumni, the unit publishes and distributes *Election Watch Quarterly*. 'This publication,' says Matjila, 'provides a useful research and analysis platform for brief opinion editorials that reflect on the diverse democracy challenges facing the continent. the diverse democracy challenges facing the continent. These may also serve to identify key issues that underlie a particular electoral process or something new and brewing,



An alumni seminar in Accra, Ghana

considered sufficient to have an impact. The publication also contains comment on the post-election period, focusing on whether or not an election has served to consolidate democracy in a given context.'

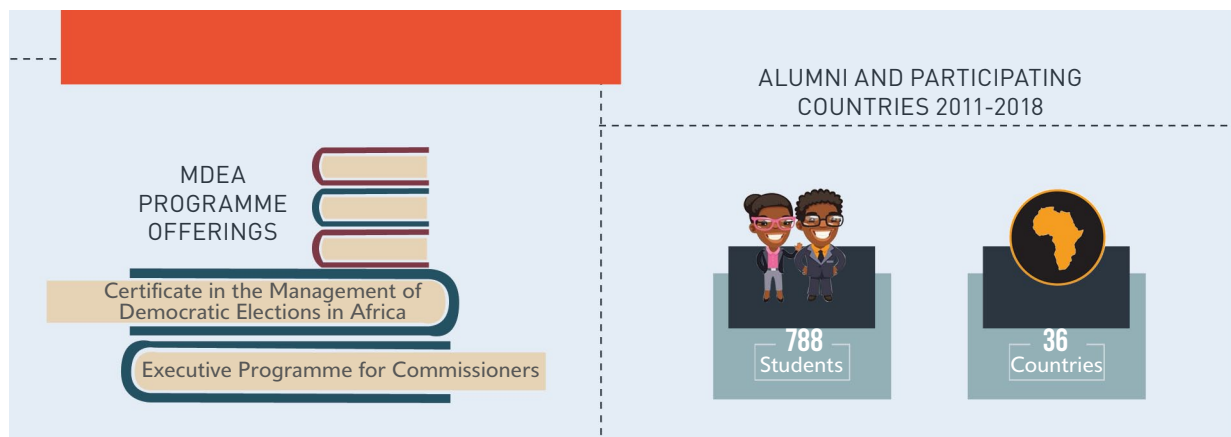
Supplementing the certificate course is the Executive Programme for Electoral Commissioners. Presented over a five-day period, the course covers, among others, governance, administration and implementation relating to the roles and responsibilities of electoral commissions and commissioners.

The road ahead

Currently in the pipeline is a Postgraduate Diploma in the Management of Democratic Elections (PGD-MEA). Says Mothoagae: 'The success of the certificate programme has highlighted a need for a higher diploma to cater for the growing research in the field. We have completed the curriculum design steps, and the intended PGD-MEA is

now going through the approval process. The PGD-MEA is expected to attract a number of scholars, students, researchers and electoral officials across the African continent and among the diaspora.'

Professor Dries Velthuisen, Head of IARS, who developed the study material for the programme and conceptualised it together with the founding Head of IARS, Professor Shadrack Gutto, points out the strategic importance of MDEA. 'The programme puts into practice the intent of Unisa to implement scholarship of teaching and learning, bringing knowledge production to where it can make a difference in the lives of people all over Africa,' he says. 'In this way knowledge discovery is not only taking place for the sake of research. It is taking scholarly activity beyond physical boundaries set by the colonialists and mental boundaries established by academic disciplines towards the integration of disciplines. MDEA is, in essence, the transdisciplinary application of knowledge to revive and grow a democratic and peaceful Africa.'



STUDENT DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

Quite unusual for an open, distance and e-learning institution, Unisa students have been represented in the university's structures by means of an elected Students Representative Council since 1996. Elections take place every two years, and much like the South African General Election, a party-representation electoral system applies.

Under the National Students Representative Council (NSRC) sit eight Regional Students Representative Councils (RSRCs), ensuring that students from all over

the country are represented. The Council-approved electoral policy requires that elections be overseen by an independent body. This body may be constituted either by an external election body or by internal staff members appointed by the management committee having been advised by the Dean of Students. In respect to the recent elections the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) was constituted by five staff members who were appointed at the recommendation of the Dean of Students.

YOUNISA spoke to two members of the current NSRC.

WADZANAI WILL BREAK DOWN BARRIERS, REPRESENT PERIPHERAL STUDENTS

YOUNISA: Please give us a brief summary of your responsibilities as President of the NSRC.

Wadzanai: I am the spokesperson, head and chief executive officer of the NSRC in totality. I oversee the implementation of the SRC programme of action at national and regional level. I liaise on a continuous basis with university structures, including management. I am responsible for ensuring sound corporate governance, sustainability and ethical conduct in the NSRC. It is my duty to do whatever is practical and possible to preserve and protect the reputation and integrity of Unisa's NSRC. The NSRC secretary, treasurer and I act as signatories to transactions in accordance with the finance policy.

YOUNISA: Tell us about your background.

Wadzanai: I was born and bred in Gweru, Zimbabwe, a place where poverty is a harsh reality. Having grown up in an impoverished background I understand the plight of the



LLB student Wadzanai Mazhetese is President of Unisa's NSRC

people. Yet the community I come from is also a vibrant place with strong, Christian-based values, hence I bring a lot of humility to the Unisa student community. I used to walk long distances to school, which equipped me with endurance and the ability to struggle for a purpose, and a desire to make a change.

YOUNISA: In what way has your university journey motivated you to take on the role of NSRC President?

Wadzanai: A university is a space of hope despite social constraints and conditions, as it enables a person to breathe with hope. Also, it gives us a platform that equalises economic and social dynamics. It has also opened up the world to me; there are so many contradictions in life, and the university articulates these things in a clearer sense. For me the university is a big space that has expanded my thinking and given me the ability to challenge the system. It gives me the strength to fight against the visible poverty we thought we had left behind in our communities. We have fought for insourcing and free education, so that everybody can be equal.

YOUNISA: What are your priorities in this role?

Wadzanai: One of my main priorities is to make sure that students who exist in the periphery and are not covered by the system are taken care of. Unisa has to make sure that disabled students and international students are recognised and assisted. Education must be accessible to anybody who qualifies and is deserving. To achieve a global presence, Unisa should undo the notion of distance and break down all the barriers that exist to make a real difference.

YOUNISA: What is your leadership style?

Wadzanai: My approach is informed by a school of thought that says engagement is the most important thing. We must understand the narratives that exist. When we lead we must take people from this point to another point. We must be able to understand our society, and take decisions and actions at the same time.

YOUNISA: How do you juggle your academic and leadership responsibilities?

Wadzanai: The most important thing is to understand that you are a student first. Priorities should be clear. During the day I fulfil my responsibilities as the President, and late at night I attend to my academic development.

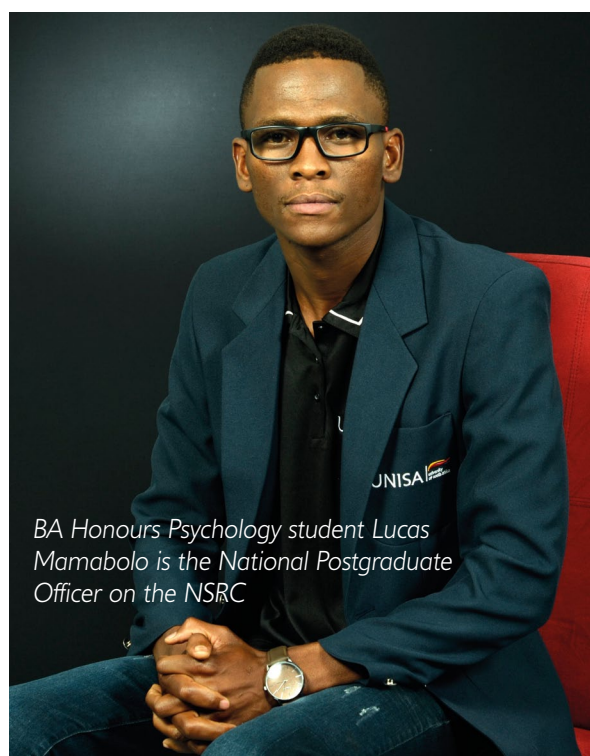
YOUNISA: How will you add value to the Unisa student community?

Wadzanai: The 'One student, one laptop' campaign is a big initiative. No student should be without a laptop. I am excited to drive this narrative and would like to be remembered for it. As it is the biggest transformation project, we know it's difficult because of unemployment and other reasons but we are not giving up.

BUILDING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR POSTGRAD STUDENTS

YOUNISA: Please give us a summary of your responsibilities as National Postgraduate Officer on the NSRC.

Lucas: I am responsible for all academic matters affecting postgraduate Unisa students at a national level. The NSRC provides an interactive, conducive and accessible system of communication that gives students an opportunity to express their academic concerns and needs. We also represent students in the Senate of the University and its sub-committees, which include the Senate Library Committee and the Student Funding Committee.



BA Honours Psychology student Lucas Mamabolo is the National Postgraduate Officer on the NSRC

YOUNISA: Tell us about your background.

Lucas: I was raised in Ga-maja, Limpopo, where I completed both primary and secondary level education. Like any other rural area in our country, social ills such as poverty, unemployment, crime, substance abuse and teenage pregnancy make it difficult for many young and talented people in the community to realise their potential. Education remains a hope to many to better the circumstances of their families, and many young people show interest in the development efforts of the community.

YOUNISA: How do you juggle your academic and leadership responsibilities?

Lucas: Being a servant of students is a demanding activity, which requires time, focus, passion and commitment. On the other hand, NSRC members are students and ought to set an example of good academic performance. We are sometimes expected to apply our minds to complex student issues, and this requires a certain level of understanding, knowledge and skills to bring about change in areas of concern and injustice. Therefore, it should be a priority for members of the NSRC to acquire as much knowledge and academic skills as possible to contribute to the productive nature of the NSRC-student relationship. Student leaders need to devote much effort and time to academic issues of students and at the same time be able to maintain their academic standards to meet the demands of their studies. I balance my responsibilities through the following activities

- Managing my time properly
- Keeping a diary of academic and NSRC activities
- Being punctual, especially regarding meetings
- Doing relaxation exercises to keep my body and mind healthy

Participating in social activities keeps my leadership and academic demands always balanced, and not distressing.

YOUNISA: How will you add value to the Unisa student community through your portfolio?

Lucas: Being a postgraduate student of the university, I understand the academic language, needs and concerns of students at this level, and this gives me a good opportunity to relate well with them, in their context. Through my office, postgraduate students would primarily experience an enabling academic environment built on conditions of

of trust, respect, transparency, accountability, and open communication as these are fundamental factors in the success of a student.

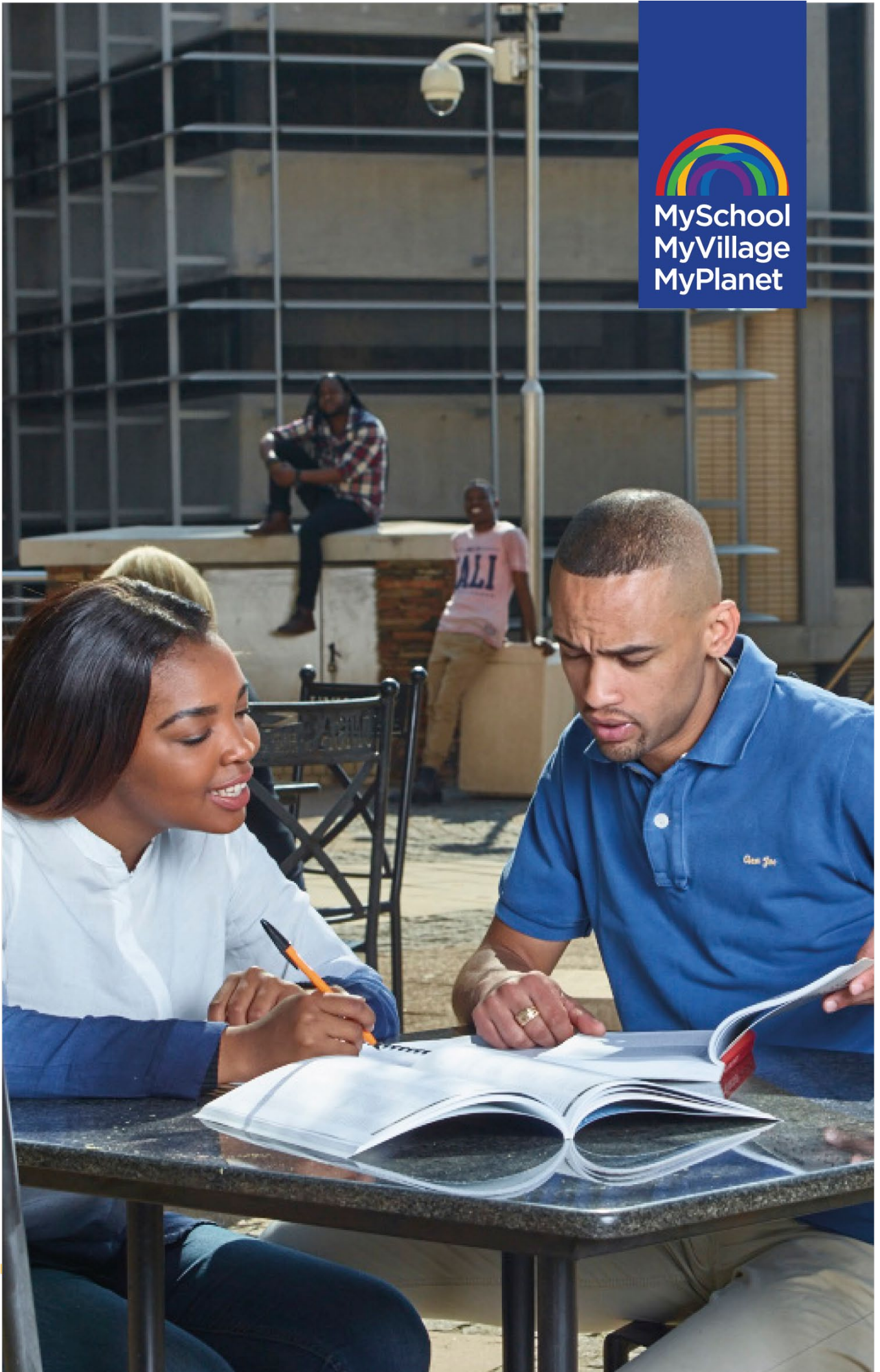
Postgraduate students, mostly, are inspiring future knowledge developers in the field of research, and maximum attention is required in this area to help in programme development in my office. Having knowledge in research, it is also important to conduct research on new methods of teaching and learning as adopted by the university, to discover what its implications might be, particularly for students. Providing feedback to students regarding their concerns and needs is important as it keeps them up to date and on task with their studies.

The Unisa Library is a source of knowledge, and students in the postgraduate level make use of it to the maximum. The library resources need to be accessible and up to date so that teaching and learning in the university speaks to issues the current developments as well as changes in our country. Postgraduate student bursaries need to be accessible to all students in need of funding, and be distributed fairly to students regardless of who they are. In a nutshell, a good working relationship between students and lecturers is paramount, and needs to be improved to satisfy their academic needs. Information needs to be collected regarding their concerns and needs, to contribute to programme development.

From a student perspective, research must be conducted to discover how newly adopted e-learning methods impact on student success, and what the disadvantages are. Library services must be improved, and student funding services made accessible to all needy students.



MySchool
MyVillage
MyPlanet




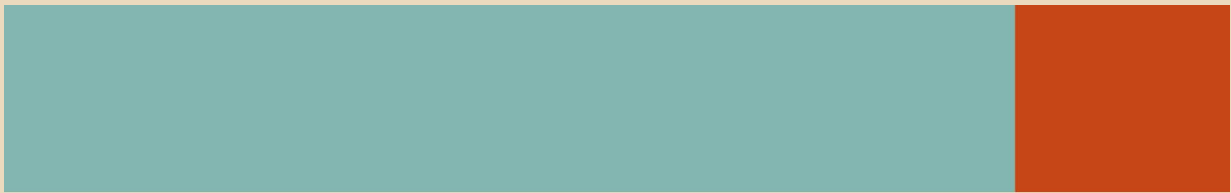


GENERAL ELECTION

KEY FACTS

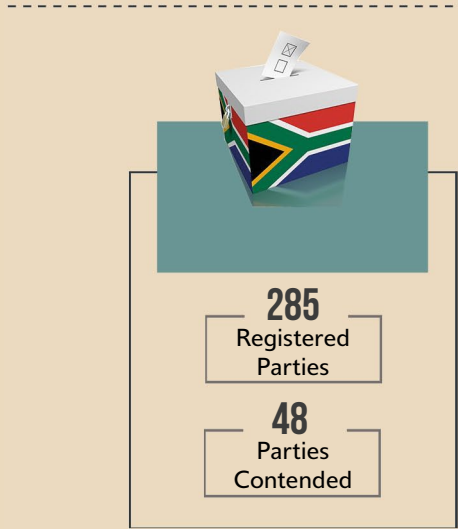
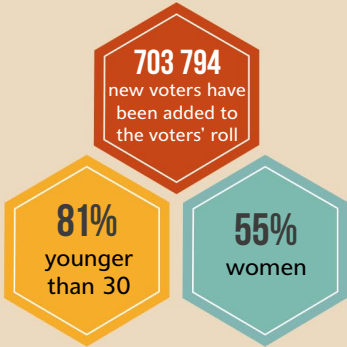
Interviewed by Thabo Leshilo in *The Conversation* in March this year, Unisa's Professor Kealeboga Maphunye, Chair of Department: Political Sciences, highlighted some interesting facts concerning the upcoming General Election.

- Almost 27 million people have registered to vote. But this excludes about 9,2 million eligible voters that are not registered for these elections. Moreover, being eligible to vote merely signals one's intention, and not necessarily that one will cast one's vote on election day.
 - Altogether, 703 794 new voters have been added to the voters' roll ahead of the elections. This is normal by South Africa's election standards, but worrisome because the number of new voters has not been consistent every five years.
 - A vast majority of new prospective voters (81%) are younger than 30.
 - In total, 55 percent of all registered voters are women.
 - Gauteng, the country's economic hub and its most populous province, has the highest number of registered voters according to the electoral commission.
 - Altogether, 48 parties will be contesting the elections from the initial 285 parties that had registered.
 - The three key contenders are the ANC, the ruling party, the Democratic Alliance, the main opposition party, and the Economic Freedom Fighters, the third largest party in the country based on their national parliamentary representation.
 - Ten other parties are represented in the country's parliament but currently pose less challenge to the incumbent. They are the Inkatha Freedom Party, the United Democratic Movement, African Christian Democratic Party, the Freedom Front Plus, the National Freedom Party, the Congress of the People, the Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania, Agang, the African Independent Congress and the African People's Convention.
- 



27 MILLION
Registered Voters

9,2 MILLION
Eligible voters not registered



- Number of key contenders
- Number of main opposition parties
- Number of parties represented in the country's parliament but currently pose less challenge to the incumbent.





GRADUATES OF NOTE

Unisa is not only the largest university in Africa, but it produces the highest number of graduates in the country. For the 2019 autumn graduations, the number of qualifications is more than 30 000, which makes the institution an epicentre of knowledge production.

Provisionally included in this figure are **109 doctorates**, **190 master's degrees** and **1 278 honours degrees**. Graduates with both three and four-year bachelor degrees number 9 566, while there are 16 389 undergraduate diplomas and certificates. Of the colleges, the College of Education has produced the most qualifications at 16 302, while the Gauteng Region heads the overall list with 7 023 degrees.

In total, **30 690 students** (this figure is provisional) will receive qualifications during Unisa's current graduations that began on 4 March and will finish on 28 June 2019.

Due to the challenges associated with open, distance and e-learning, Unisa regards all its graduates as exceptional individuals who have remarkable time-management abilities and who are highly skilled at balancing the demands of work, family life and academia.

Within this select group there are certain individuals who distinguish themselves even further by dint of overcoming obstacles and shining bright. We look at two such individuals in this section.

THE POWER TO KEEP GOING

CONQUERS ALL OBSTICALS



Despite challenges she encountered along the way, Lotharice Nkomo graduated with 21 distinctions in her Bachelor of Accounting Sciences in Financial Accounting during Unisa's autumn graduations. A married mother of two from Kokolombeni in the Nkosikazi Nyathi District, Zimbabwe, Nkomo went to Tshazi Primary School where she discovered her love for mathematics. Since she knew she liked working with numbers, she decided early in her life that she wanted to become a chartered accountant

However, her life as it would unfold had many obstacles that stood in the way of her realising her dream. Her first challenge was that she did not pass all her subjects in high school; however, she did well in mathematics. Following her failure, her parents could unfortunately no longer afford to send her to school.

Not one to give up easily, Nkomo worked as a domestic worker while self-teaching and studying to repeat the subjects she had failed. After completing her O levels (the equivalent of a South African Matric), she started to pursue her dream of becoming a chartered accountant. But with limited information, she first tried various accounting short

courses, assuming these would lead her to her dream.

When Nkomo eventually learned about Unisa, she still did not qualify for a degree. 'I applied at Unisa in 2014 for the 2015 academic year for a Higher Certificate in Accounting Sciences and a Higher Certificate in Economic and Management Sciences, which I passed with six distinctions (cum laude),' explained a joyful Nkomo.

Excited to finally start her Bachelor of Accounting Sciences in Financial Accounting in 2016, Nkomo experienced some financial challenges. 'Getting funding for my studies was a huge challenge. Even when I met the requirements, my nationality automatically excluded me from any funding. I remember I got an e-mail from Unisa merit bursary during my second year of study; I was so excited that I was going to get the funding I so needed, but to my disappointment when I enquired I was told that my application was not processed,' recalled Nkomo.

So, what kept Nkomo going despite obstacles along the way? 'I have always had a dream of being a chartered accountant, so when I got an opportunity 15 years later, I had to grab it with both hands and run with it,' Nkomo asserted. And run with it she did, 15 years later and many obstacles along the way, Nkomo graduated with her Bachelor of Accounting Sciences in Financial Accounting in a three-year record time with 21 distinctions.

Speaking of her achievement, College of Accounting Sciences Executive Dean, Prof Lungile Ntsalaze, said: 'We are very proud of Nkomo's achievements—her journey is very special; a score of 21 distinctions deserves a huge celebration. We wish her all the best with her current studies and we will definitely be looking out for her name in the top achievers list of the SAICA exams.'

Besides her academic demands and stellar performance, Nkomo was Chairperson of the Association for the Advancement of Black Accountants in SA (ABASA) Unisa Tshwane Student Chapter. This is a platform she has used to benefit many Unisa students on opportunities she could not access as a foreign national.

Nkomo teaches us that no obstacle is big enough to stand in the way of our dreams. From her story we take away that often the moments we are most proud of are the ones where we overcame adversity to accomplish something worthwhile - be inspired!

LINDA SIMPLY REFUSED TO GIVE UP!

AND UNISA WAS THERE ALL THE WAY



Linda Maponyane

Linda Maponyane recently experienced a massive upsurge in 'likes' on Facebook when she shared her story of starting as a domestic worker to being a Unisa graduate. She graduated on 7 March 2019 with a BA Psychology degree.

Said Linda: 'I decided from day one to never give up. The study journey was never easy; at one stage I took a break because I had to build a house for my mom. And then I was kidnapped, robbed and raped, leading to subsequent depression. I took breaks from my books and slowly slipped into a dark world. But God was always there, He pulled me out of a deep clay morass and now I walk with joy.' Linda's story reflects especially two of the Cs in Unisa's credo of 11Cs+1, these being courage and caring: the courage she exudes as a student, and the caring nature of this massive open distance and e-learning university.

Linda Maponyane in her own words

I was raised in different places, seven households to be precise, including Soweto, Moletjie, Benoni and Seshego. Many people were involved in bringing me up, but my grandmother stands out as a superwoman who was also a single parent. I also give credit to my great-grandmother, whom I dearly miss, for her impact in my spiritual life, and my mother, who fought to give me a better life. Education in my family was a foreign thing, all my grannies could read and write, and unfortunately they sadly didn't get far hence that wired me to win no matter how hard it was!

Working as a domestic worker was a choice I made due to unemployment reasons. In 2003 I came to Jozi to look for a job and my mother's former boss gave me an opportunity to work at her house. That's how I found myself continuing to carry the baton of domestic work in my family.

My academic journey with Unisa was challenging because this university needs self-discipline and focus. Because of financial constraints at home, and being the breadwinner, my situation was more unbearable, but I pushed.

It was initially very hard for me to study through open distance learning because life is demanding. You quickly learn to become your own pillar. So it is good to surround yourself with like-minded people who want the best for you and will remind you that the finishing line is ahead. Big ups to Unisa staff members such as Ms Motsaidi Zitha who played a major role in keeping me motivated for the last leg of my F1 concession for the module 'The explanation of crime'.

ALUMNI PROFILE:

DR TSHEPISO SCOTT



Dr Tshepiso Scott

A major mover and shaker in the South African legal fraternity, Dr Tshepiso Scott is putting her Unisa qualification to practical use in the field of consumer protection law. At age 28 this qualified corporate and commercial attorney, reader, explorer and gym lover holds a Unisa Doctor of Laws degree and is the managing director of TumboScott Incorporated, a law firm she established and co-founded in 2017 while completing her thesis.

Scott's doctoral thesis was entitled *The realisation of rights in terms of the Consumer Protection Act 68 of 2008*, and she considers herself a practical academic as her work is relevant to what consumers experience on a daily basis.

Concerning the impact of the Consumer Protection Act (CPA) on the ordinary person, Scott has this to say: 'The CPA is a far-reaching statute that affords consumers various important rights. Moreover, what many people are not aware of is that the CPA extends its protection to juristic persons, such as companies that fall within its threshold in the region of R2m turnover annually or

in asset value. This essentially means that small businesses and individuals legally have much more bargaining power than they did in the past.

Scott's thesis places her in a position to understand what it takes to be adequately protected by this specialised legal framework. 'This statutorily backed bargaining power only carries weight if the people in the street fully understand their rights and how to enforce them,' she says. 'After all, what is the true value of rights if they cannot be fully realised?'

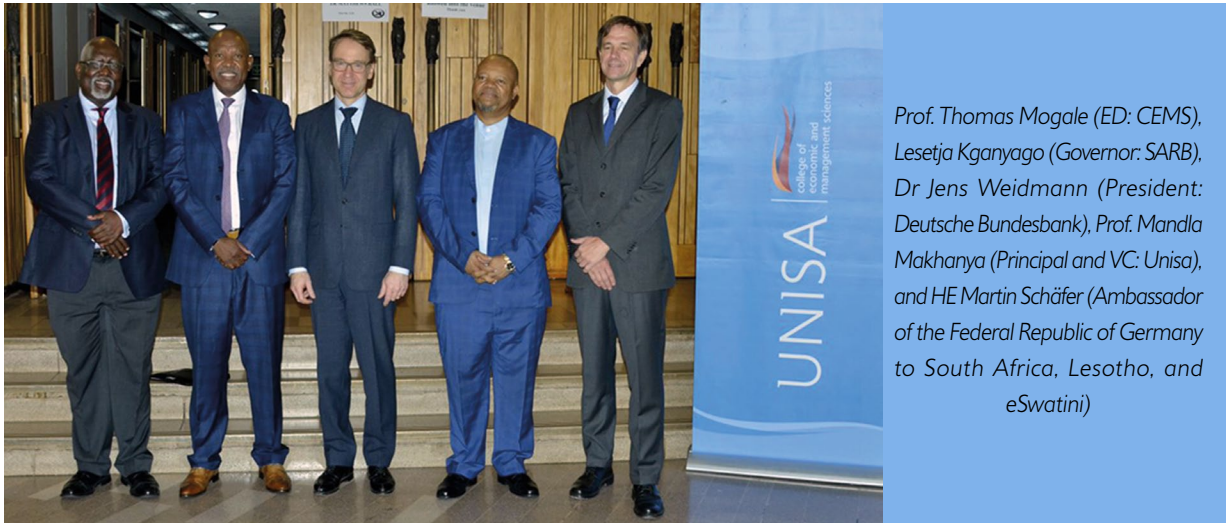
Dr Scott concedes that the consumer protection law framework is not simple and must be revised through a combination of both legislative amendments. 'This should include the implementation of practical steps by the consumer law enforcement bodies concerned, if the CPA is to have any meaningful impact on day to day commercial engagements.'

Asked if the true value of consumer rights been fully realised in South Africa, Scott says that this is not entirely the case at this stage. 'The lack of clarity in the hierarchy to follow when enforcing ones' rights is one of the challenges that holds back the consumer from truly realising their statutorily enshrined rights. The CPA only came into force on 1 April 2011, meaning that the current specialised consumer protection law framework has only been in effect for less than a decade. The importance of the protection of these rights rests on the fact that the consumer is always at the back foot when dealing with suppliers, manufacturers and retailers. It is thus critical that a statute such as the CPA becomes a staying force in order to level the playing fields.'

Scott says that she would definitely encourage others interested in the legal profession to follow in her footsteps. 'It is an important field because it affects our everyday lives in real ways. The various specialised fields also mean that there are abundant opportunities out there.'



CENTRAL BANKS ARE NO SUPERPOWERS



Prof. Thomas Mogale (ED: CEMS), Lesetja Kganyago (Governor: SARB), Dr Jens Weidmann (President: Deutsche Bundesbank), Prof. Mandla Makhanya (Principal and VC: Unisa), and HE Martin Schäfer (Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to South Africa, Lesotho, and eSwatini)

Price stability is the best contribution a central bank can make to enhance social welfare and to support sustainable growth, Dr Jens Weidmann, president of the Deutsche Bundesbank, said during a public lecture hosted by the College of Economic and Management Sciences (CEMS) at Unisa.

Weidmann delivered the lecture on the role of the central bank in a modern economy from a European perspective on 12 February 2019 during a short visit to South Africa and Namibia. The purpose of the visit was to foster international relations between the Deutsche Bundesbank, the South African Reserve Bank (SARB), and the Bank of Namibia. During his stay, he met both central banks and the governments of South Africa and Namibia.

UNISA SIGNS MoU WITH COMMONWEALTH OF LEARNING

Unisa and the Commonwealth of Learning (CoL) have entered into an agreement to establish a co-operative agreement and provide a framework for collaboration in selected and strategic areas of higher education, quality assurance, open distance learning research, teacher education, open educational resources and cooperation on a multilateral basis.



Prof. Asha Kanwar (President and CEO: CoL) and Prof. Mandla Makhanya (Principal and VC: Unisa)

PROFESSIONAL SCEPTICISM IN AUDITING A TOPICAL TOPIC



All smiles at the College of Accounting Sciences' first public lecture: Prof. Bienkie Shuttleworth (Head: Graduate Studies and Research, College of Law [CLAW]), Prof. Philna Coetzee (Deputy ED: CLAW), Prof. Nonna Martinov-Bennie (Guest speaker and facilitator for the day), Nolo Pududu (Manager: Centre of Accounting Studies), and Prof. Lourens Erasmus (Department of Financial Governance, CLAW)

On 15 February 2019, Unisa's College of Accounting Sciences (CAS) hosted, for the first time since its inception in 2014, a public lecture. Delivered by Prof Nonna Martinov-Bennie from Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia, the topic was Professional scepticism in auditing.

In the light of ongoing investigations into several South African corporate and government governance scandals and possible audit failure in these instances, a public lecture by a leading international scholar on the topic of professional scepticism in auditing was highly topical.

ARE AFRICANS LINGUISTICALLY ALIENATED FROM THEIR HERITAGE?



(From left) Dr Mongane Wally Serote, renowned poet, author and activist, Elinor Sisulu, Executive Director of the Puku Children's Literature Foundation, Dr Somadoda Fikeni, Advisor to the Unisa Principal and Vice-Chancellor and Director of VC projects, and Zanele Ndlovu, who performed a traditional song

On 21 February 2019 Unisa, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Puku Children's Literature Foundation hosted a roundtable discussion themed 'My language, my heritage: promoting children's literature and reading in South Africa's indigenous languages' at the university's main campus.

The event marked International Mother Language Day and UNESCO's International Year of Indigenous Languages, which seeks to promote, preserve and revitalise indigenous languages. International Mother Language Day is a worldwide annual observance held on 21 February to promote awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and promote multilingualism.



SHAPING PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION IN AFRICA



Hon. Abdullahi Godah Barre (Minister: Education, Culture and Higher Education, Federal Republic of Somalia), Prof. Mohamed Ahmed Jimale (Rector, SNU), Dr Ahmed Omar Alasow (Dean: Faculty of Engineering, SNU), Prof. Mandla Makhanya (Principal and VC, Unisa), Prof. Thenjiwe Meyiwa (VP: Research, Postgraduate Studies, Innovation, and Commercialisation), and Prof. Veronica McKay (Acting VP: Teaching, Learning, Community Engagement, and Student Support)

In a meeting held on 21 February 2019, Unisa signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Somalia National University (SNU) to respond to the intellectual and academic needs of the African continent in advancing academic research, research programmes, and processing conflict resolution and disputes.

The Honourable Abdullahi Godah Barre, Minister of Education, Culture, and Higher Education of the Federal Republic of Somalia, ambassadors, vice-principals, and representatives from the South African Department of Higher Education gathered to reflect and celebrate the partnership's cooperative and collaboration efforts.



Prof. Christine Ofulue

AFRICAN EXPERIENCE OF ODEL TAKES CENTRE STAGE

'It is important to look at our own issues and incorporate them into the (research) framework. Anything you want to do on the continent must be contextualised.' Prof. Christine Ofulue of the National Open University of Nigeria was one of the opening-day speakers at Unisa's Research & Innovation Week.



Dr Jonas Gwangwa and Abigail Kubeka in front of the portrait of Mama Africa by Amita Makan that graces the foyer of Unisa's Dr Miriam Makeba Concert Hall

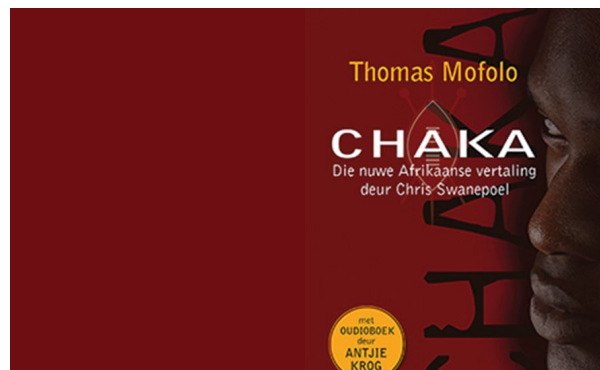
REMEMBERING MAMA AFRICA

Unisa, the Sowetan, and the Institute for Dispute Resolution in Africa hosted a dialogue remembering Miriam Makeba on 4 March 2019, a day that would have been her 87th birthday. The event took the form of a screening of the documentary, *Mama Africa: Miriam Makeba*, and was followed by an inter-generational dialogue between her peers and the younger generation.



SBL LAUNCHES EDUCATION PROGRAMME FOR MILITARY VETERANS

The education of military veterans received a boost with the launch of a management and leadership programme at the Unisa Graduate School of Business Leadership (SBL). Initiated by President Cyril Ramaphosa, the programme was specifically developed for members and veterans of, amongst others, the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), the South African Police Service (SAPS), Metro Police and the South African Safety and Security Agency, particularly senior leaders employed as executives in their respective deployments.



GOOD THINGS COME IN TWOS

The 2017 Hiddingh-Currie Award was presented at the Research and Innovation gala event on 8 March 2019, to *Chaka: Die nuwe Afrikaanse vertaling*, by Chris Swanepoel, and *Violence in schools: South Africa in an international context*, by Clive Harber and Vusi Mncube.

Announced by the university's Senate Publications Committee at its meeting on 8 November 2018, this prestigious prize is an annual award to recognise Unisa Press books deemed to be of the highest academic merit and original scholarship. These two books were nominated from a list of 12 books that were published by Unisa Press in 2017.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



Trine Jensen (Workshop chair) (centre) and presenters Ram Gopal Raj, Agata Lapedriza, Mandla Makhanya, and Daniel Burgos at a workshop jointly organised by the Section for Higher Education at UNESCO and the International Association of Universities

Professor Mandla Makhanya, Principal and Vice-Chancellor (VC) of Unisa, presented at a workshop during UNESCO's Mobile Learning Week in Paris, France, on new opportunities provided by AI in higher education. The VC said that he saw massive opportunities cascading from AI for higher education in general. 'Africa, and the higher education system

in particular, must not only prepare for the current technological turn, but we must catapult ourselves into a space where AI is the name of the game. We must effectively use it to stimulate growth and development, as well as democratise our landscape,' he stated.



FIRST LADY CELEBRATES UNISA'S STUDENT'S ACHIEVEMENT

South African First Lady Dr Tshepo Motsepe and Unisa BA Honours in Psychology graduate Livhuwani Maphorogo

On 18 March 2019, Dr Tshepo Motsepe, wife of President Cyril Ramaphosa, graced Unisa with her presence to attend the graduation of Livhuwani Maphorogo, who studied towards her BA Honours Degree in Psychology with full support from the Cyril Ramaphosa Education Trust.



GAUTENG UNWRAPS R54 MILLION GIFT TO UNISA



Wadzanai Mazhetese (President: Unisa NSRC) and Moipone Masalesa (Regional Director: Gauteng Region) (left) and Prof. Khehla Ndlovu (VP: Strategy, Risk, and Advisory Services) (right) watch David Makhura (Gauteng Premier) and Prof. Mandla Makhanya (Principal and VC: Unisa) get ready to cut the ribbon symbolising the R54 million gift to Unisa

Gauteng Premier David Makhura, together with the MEC for Infrastructure Development, Jacob Mamabolo, hosted a sod-turning ceremony on 26 March 2019 for Unisa's new learning centre in the Johannesburg CBD within the central corridor of the Gauteng City-Region. The centre will be built on land donated by the Gauteng Provincial

Government as announced by Makhura during the State of the Province Address in February. Speaking at the event, Mamabolo said, 'As part of government's rapid land release programme, we are giving Unisa a piece of land valued at R54 000 000 for free.'

AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES STRENGTHENED BY MILITARY STRUCTURES LIMIT THE POSSIBILITIES OF DEMOCRATIC ALTERNATIVES



Prof. Wendy Isaacs-Martin (Acting HoD: AMRI), Prof. Michael Neocosmos (Rhodes University), Prof. Crain Soudien (CEO: HSRC), Sandile Swana (Nephew of Prof. Archie Mafeje, representing the Mafeje family), Prof. Brian Raftopoulos (UFS), Prof. Siphamandla Zondi (University of Pretoria), and Prof. Jimi Adesina (CGS, Unisa)

Brian Raftopoulos, leading Zimbabwean scholar and researcher, delivered Unisa's annual Archie Mafeje Memorial Lecture, titled State and politics in Zimbabwe: Lessons for post-settler colonial politics in Southern Africa.

Hosted by Unisa's Archie Mafeje Research Institute (AMRI) in collaboration with the Africa Institute of South Africa (AISA) in the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), the lecture continues to commemorate the academic and intellectual contribution to the African continent of the late Archie Mafeje, to perpetuate his legacy.

UNISA LIBRARY CELEBRATES THE SPIRIT OF COLLABORATION

Friday 29 March 2019 was a red-letter day for the University of South Africa (Unisa) and its students as it marked the start of a massive rollout of laptop computers to students funded by the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS).

The rollout is the culmination of a process jointly spearheaded by Unisa's Office of the Dean of Students and Office of the Registrar. It goes without saying that one of the main cornerstones of ODeL is unhindered access to information and communications technologies, but the cost of such access and devices is a major obstacle to many students. 'This,' says Ms Mavis Sibanda, Deputy Director in the Office of the Registrar, who is managing the initiative, 'is why Unisa embarked on a mission to ensure that many thousands of our deserving but financially constrained students are issued with laptops.'



Smiles all round as a student receives her Unisa laptop from Ms Mavis Sibanda, Deputy Director in the Office of the Registrar



RETELLING ONE OF AFRICA'S GREATEST HISTORICAL NARRATIVES

The South African Democracy Education Trust (SADET) believes the history of the liberation struggle in South Africa is one of Africa's greatest historical narratives. The SADET *Road to Democracy* series encapsulates the past four decades of South African history and the country's journey to becoming a democratic nation and beyond. SADET, in partnership with Unisa Press, has also launched abridged versions of their acclaimed series for all South Africans to enjoy.

The SADET board was established in mid-2000 and the Road to Democracy project on 21 March 2001 by then

President, Thabo Mbeki. The project was then brainchild of President Mbeki who believed that there was not enough historical material on the arduous and complex road to South Africa's peaceful political settlement after decades of violent conflict. The first volume of the book series appeared in 2004.

Dr Sifiso Ndlovu, CEO: South African Democratic Education Trust and Honorary Professor of History at Unisa, says the volumes are a series by South Africans, for South Africans. 'The volumes are a basis for our people in South Africa and the continent, to reduce their ignorance



about each other for a better future and also in terms of development of Africa. We are simply saying that as South Africa and Africa we do have a history and we do belong to that history of the continent.'

One of the key differences in the SADET series when compared to other historical compendiums is the inclusion of the voices from below. Ndlovu is particularly proud that they've canvassed the opinions and experiences of ordinary

South Africans. "For the first time in South African history, you can read the history from page one up until the index where you have the common South African surnames and names. That is why we deliberately avoided the Thabo Mbekis and other leaders. The predominant voices are the voices below because they are part of that history."

For more on these and other great titles, visit Unisa Press online at www.unisa.ac.za/press

STUDY AND CAREER ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS



Key findings from the Universum survey

* By Winani Ndlovu from Universum's Research Desk

Universum has opted to share some insights which are key from the Unisa /Universum survey for 2018. The insights are about what is important to you in your career with employers. It also gives the employers ideas of what to incorporate into their plans and structures.

Universum Global is an employer branding organisation that conducts extensive annual research to understand the next generation of talent's career expectations and preferences in over 60 markets. The 2018 survey gave us some very clear insights into how both the macro and micro-environments have impacted talent in their career expectations and preferences.

Last year, over one million students and young professionals globally shared with companies and universities what they are expecting from them. They shared their career goals and what they want their future jobs to look like.

Locally 45,000 university students and just under 22,000 professionals participated in the survey. From the findings, Universum is able to generate a range of in-depth insights that shed light into how you as talent evaluate employer brands, what you find attractive in these employers, and ultimately, which employers are the most attractive in South Africa. In the survey respondents also shared some insights into how they view their university/alumni and the alumni offerings.



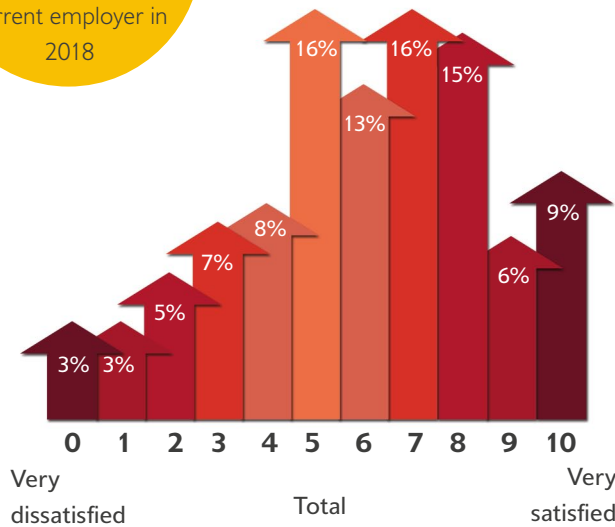
UNIVERSUM

As part of Universum's mission to connect talent with the future, the organisation partners with the world's leading universities to engage top talent in its annual research. Universum helps universities understand their students' career aspirations and employer expectations, adopt best practices for employer relations, improve career services quality and position their university brands. Together, Universum and Unisa are creating a more transparent world around education and career readiness.

ARE PROFESSIONALS HAPPY AT THEIR JOBS?

6,0

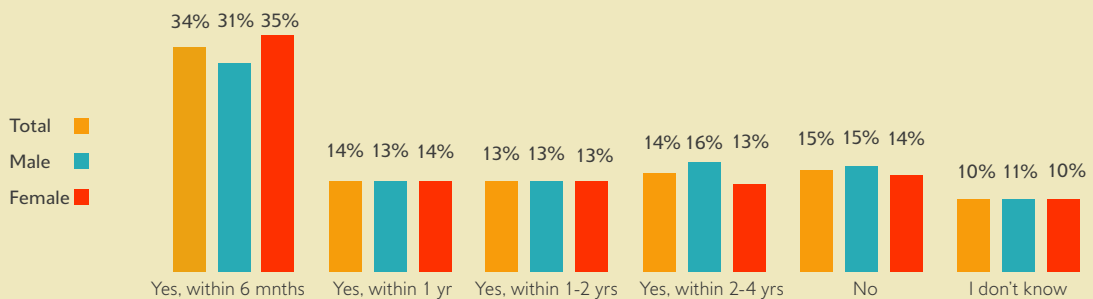
is the average level of satisfaction among professionals with their current employer in 2018



What do these low satisfaction numbers mean? What is talent doing about them?

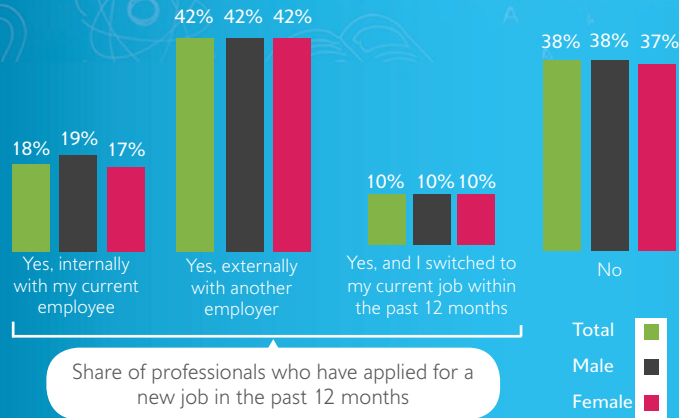
Due to the lower satisfaction levels we see high mobility rates with an average of 47% of the 22,000 indicating that they would like to change jobs within a year and equally going out to look for alternate jobs.

ARE PROFESSIONALS INTERESTED IN CHANGING THEIR EMPLOYER?



47% Of the target population is interested in changing their employer within the coming year

ARE PROFESSIONALS APPLYING FOR NEW JOBS?







What else did we learn from the findings?

From the students survey we have seen that females expect to be paid less than their male counterparts when they finish their studies and start working. The professionals' data revealed that they actually go on to be paid less as shown in the table below.

CURRENT SALARY BY LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE AND GENDER

Current annual salary by number of years worked (ZAR) | All professionals

	0-3 years	4-9 years	10-24 years	10-24 years or more
	270 524	353 149	448 163	585 475
	296 514	404 697	527 772	685 909
	250 503	312 606	393 334	465 808
	46 010	92 091	134 438	220 101

Freedom and
democracy are
dreams you never give
up. ”

- Aung San Suu Kyi

Tokologo le temokrasi
ke ditoro tšeo o sa
nyakego go di tlogela.”

- Aung San Suu Kyi

Inkululeko
nedimokhrasi
ngamaphupho
ongeke wawadela. ”

- Aung San Suu Kyi