

BOUNDLESS

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VICE-CHANCELLOR SPEAKS



Professor Marcus Ramogale
Acting Vice-Chancellor
MUT

This month I launch the first magazine that specifically deals with our internationalisation agenda at Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT). I am heartened at the way this agenda is unfolding for MUT, in line with our strategic goal of increasing “targeted national and international engagements”. I speak passionately about internationalisation because in our day, having an international qualification of any sort was a springboard for one’s success. In the same vein, to be chosen as a student or faculty to represent your

university provided a competitive advantage in your career path. This is still relevant today. Becoming a truly international player will fulfil our vision of being a transformed University, one that is “destined for the world” as part of our strategy to ‘shape and own the future’.

Our global destiny is one where we see our students engaged in internationalised curricula and our staff and students experiencing international, intercultural communication and collaboration.

In our quest to internationalise MUT, we have adopted a comprehensive approach which includes Internationalisation at Home (IaH) and Collaborative Online International Learning, (COIL). We also place an emphasis on inward and outward programmes by staff, students and international partners. I have chosen June, which is known as Youth Month in South Africa, to launch this magazine because as a University our efforts are null and void if they do not prepare our young people to solve the problems of the future.

A few years ago, I was part of the delegation that took the SRC and a few other student leaders on a cultural immersion tour to Tanzania and Kenya, on Africa’s east coast. That trip was an eye-opener for our students who got to experience not only a different culture, but also how students navigate often similarly constrained circumstances.

My passion for internationalising MUT intersects with my passion for entrepreneurship which has been recognised at the highest echelon of the state. As a result, part of our internationalisation drive is to stimulate innovation. You will note from this publication that we have embarked on this and are learning from one of our partner universities, such as the South Bank London University. A key element in all collaborations should be some form of entrepreneurship and/or enterprise development, particularly for our students, and I will be looking out for this keenly.

Coinciding with the start of Youth Month – at a time of rampant youth unemployment, even among university graduates – MUT recently hosted a public lecture on Reclaiming Our Africanness. As I noted to attendees (our staff, students and partners from universities in South Africa and Africa), we are observing the resurgence of xenophobia and Afrophobia in its many forms. I reminded them that when economic opportunities shrink, the struggle for resources often turns into hate and scapegoating. With or without economic opportunities, the value of education cannot be undermined. It was former president Nelson Mandela who once said: “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”.

In South Africa and the rest of Africa, education is a critical antidote to poverty. But we must also recognise that our present education system is part of the legacy of our colonial and apartheid past. It was designed to entrench unequal power relations and privileges for a minority white population. There has been sufficient consensus on the need to “decolonise” our education system as part of a broader plan to strengthen our society and economy. The debate on how to decolonise knowledge and the curriculum has been fierce and contentious, as you would expect it to be.

Part of this publication is dedicated to exploring some of the ideas shared at our recent Africa Day celebrations, of which the “Reclaiming our Africanness” Public Lecture was a key highlight as we attempt to stimulate thought and engagement on the topic. I hope that it, and the news of new international associations and collaborations we share, inspires us all in our quest to engage fruitfully with the world beyond our borders.

Professor Marcus M Ramogale
Acting Vice-Chancellor

Our global destiny

is one where we see our students engaged in internationalised curricula and our staff and students experiencing international, intercultural communication and collaboration.



ACCELERATING THE INTERNATIONALISATION AGENDA AFTER I-WEEK

During MUT's Inaugural International Week (I-Week 2021), Professor Marcus Ramogale, acting Vice-Chancellor & Principal, invited international aid agencies, expatriates and participating universities to collaborate with MUT. "This week we will share with you our accomplishments in research and thus invite you to look at how these accomplishments could augment your own internationalisation agenda and how you could also give breadth and depth to enable us achieve our internationalisation agenda", he said.

In less than six months since I-Week, MUT's internationalisation agenda has been accelerated. The Department of Higher Education & Training, a critical stakeholder, has affirmed this agenda by providing MUT with a grant to set up an International Relations Office. "I always say to my colleagues, that we craft our plan based on the Strategy and we did that when we made a submission to DHET for funding for the Sibusiso Bengu Development Programme. We aligned our submission to the Internationalisation Strategy which are currently rolling out," said Professor Ramogale.

Engaging funders from the I-Week resulted in Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH co-sponsoring a project aimed at improving the capacities of local experts in the field of climate protection and air pollution control. The implementation partners, a Consortium called efa Leipzig GmbH and Siyacanda Energy (Pty) Ltd, is collaborating with MUT as an implementation partner. The Office of the Acting

Dean of Engineering, Professor Bakare, will lead the project. A Climate Change Centre has already been set up at MUT and now awaits technical equipment to be used for the measurement and evaluation of greenhouse gases and air pollutants. "We are now waiting for the importation of equipment from Germany equipment to the tune of R12 million. The students together with technicians will be trained and this allows for access to the world's top technologies by about 30 students per annum. This will thus provide MUT students, academics and lab technicians not only international exposure but an opportunity to undertake practicals using world-class equipment," said Professor Bakare. The project contributes to several Sustainable Development Goals – Quality education (SDG 4), Climate action (SDG 13), and Partnerships for the goals (SDG 17).

Summing up the project, Professor Marcus Ramogale, who is a strong advocate for innovation, internationalisation and entrepreneurship, said, "This project just came at the right time when the University has put in a strong foundation for internationalisation. The project also comes at a point when there is a strong focus on how students need to create jobs and become more innovative. The focus on climate change is a bonus for all of us. We are glad that we will now be at the forefront of measuring the country's adverse contribution towards the environment."

From left, Professor Marcus Ramogale, Dr Godson Gatsha, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic at Botswana Open University (BOU), and Cyril Ndaba, former South African High Commissioner to Carlifonia, US



CONNECTING MUT TO THE WORLD: MUT RADIO'S ONE-YEAR ON AIR



"Life is meaningful if we are connected. This is what MUT Radio stands for," said Prof Marcus Ramogale, MUT Acting Vice-Chancellor, and Principal. The Vice-Chancellor was speaking at MUT Radio's first-anniversary celebration event hosted on 21 June at Anniversary Lane on the MUT main campus. "The station has been connecting us for over a year. Life would be meaningless if a person had everything but was not connected with other people. The radio station has connected students to students, staff to students, and MUT to its community and the world. When we are connected, we stop living in fragments because there is unity. We find meaning when we are connected," said Professor Ramogale. Through the radio station, the university has been able to take the MUT brand to global audiences by connecting via various streaming options. This one-year-old MUT communication medium has attracted listenership across Africa, the United States, Netherland, the United Kingdom, India, Russia, Turkey, and Singapore. At home, the radio station has unveiled great talent in inculcating a culture of volunteerism among MUT students who have embraced radio as their voice and platform.

Since its inception, the station is run with the aid of student volunteers who do the production, presenting, and marketing of the radio programme. More than 100 student volunteers have received professional radio training which has given them skills to do news research, show production, awareness of radio formats, and conduct radio interviews both face-to-face and virtually. The radio station has hosted and interviewed several global leaders including football star Didier Drogba upon his announcement as the World Health Organisation's Goodwill Ambassador for Sports and Health on 18 October 2021. The MUT academic programme features greatly on the station through live broadcasts of public lecturers and subject experts' panel discussions.

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HUGE SUPPORT FOR MUT'S INTERNATIONALISATION AGENDA IN FLORIDA



FAMU President, Dr Larry Robinson, second from left, and the Mut and FAMU teams

As the internationalisation agenda of MUT unfolds, support for the University's participation in the internationalisation space is growing from partners across the globe. In March this year, Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University (FAMU) approached MUT's Acting Vice-Chancellor to play a key role in its EnergyWaterFood Nexus Summit that was scheduled to take place in the city of Tallahassee, Florida. Due to extenuating circumstances, Professor Ramogale could not travel and appointed Professor Roger Coopoosamy, Acting Dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences, to lead the delegation from MUT – which included Professor Babatunde Femi Bakare (Acting Dean of Engineering), Dr Bhekabantu Ntshangase (Acting Dean of Management Sciences), Dr Xolile Mkhize, Dr Yvonne Mvuyana, Dr Taurai Mutanda and Khaya Shabangu.

The team was allocated two sessions which allowed MUT to showcase its own research in the areas of Energy, Water and Food. The first session was chaired and moderated by Professor Coopoosamy, who presented a faculty overview and spoke on medicinal and alternative food resources. This session was well attended by FAMU staff, industrial partners and government decision-making partners.

"The session was interactive, with attendees developing a keen interest in the research activities of MUT. I felt proud at the way my colleagues interacted at international level, and with confidence, making a good case on MUT's research," said Professor Coopoosamy in his feedback to the Executive Management Committee of MUT.

Professor Ntshangase and Professor Bakare also presented an overview of their faculties and research

strengths, and Professor Bakare handed the reins to his junior colleague, Mr Shabangu, to present on wastewater and energy research at MUT.

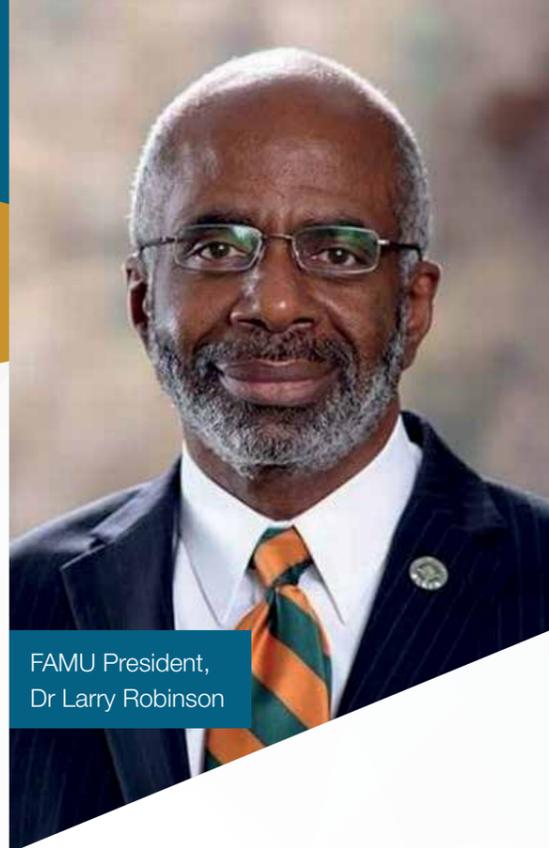
"These presentations have set the stage for MUT to become a global player. Our research is known in the world and the onus is now upon us to follow up on commitments made during the conference. It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge presentations by our team in other research areas, namely human settlements (Dr Yvonne Mvuyana), food security (Dr Xolile Mkhize) and water probiotics (Dr T Mutanda). Being given an international audience will go a long way towards conceptualising research projects that are world class. We also know that what we have is accepted internationally," said Professor Coopoosamy.

Dr Victor Ibeanusi, Dean in the FAMU School of the Environment and chair of the EnergyWaterFood Nexus Summit, reiterated a commitment made by FAMU's President, Dr Larry Robertson, to develop a plan on how both universities can empower each other.

"We are grateful to the MUT Vice-Chancellor and the Research Office for making this opportunity available to us. I have made a commitment with various international partners to pursue the projects through to the end," concluded Professor Coopoosamy.

This relationship is exactly what MUT's "Strategy 2025" envisions in the area of "targeted national and international engagements". The funding support received from the state of South Africa is a gateway towards ensuring that MUT and South African scholarship take their place on the international stage.

MUT ENGAGES WITH THE PRESIDENT OF FAMU AND EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT



FAMU President,
Dr Larry Robinson

“As part of the visit, the MUT delegation was given special laboratory tours at which the heads of matching FAMU departments engaged with the MUT team on how the two universities could collaborate.”

“Getting a call to bring my team for dinner with the FAMU President, Dr Larry Robinson, the FAMU First Lady and his executive is not something we as an MUT delegation took lightly. To us, it showed the commitment and respect that FAMU has for MUT,” remembers Professor Coopoosamy after MUT’s recent trip to Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University (FAMU).

MUT and FAMU have had a relationship for over twenty years. FAMU President Dr Robinson first came to MUT in 2001 as dean in the School of the Environment, while Dr Victor Ibeanusi came to MUT as dean in the School of the Environment at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia. MUT’s visit in 2022 shows that both universities are now at a stage to partner more actively in niche research activities.

During the visit, Dr Ibeanusi provided a stimulating overview of current research niche areas at FAMU which align with research taken at MUT. The parties discussed various options for collaboration and engagement, including partnership development, entrepreneurship, exchange

programmes and postgraduate student recruitment (Masters and PhDs) as a joint offering to students.

As part of the visit, the MUT delegation was given special laboratory tours at which the heads of matching FAMU departments engaged with the MUT team on how the two universities could collaborate. Among the laboratories was a simulation laboratory for Health Sciences which provided insight into advanced technologies in developing health care systems without the use of “human guinea pigs” for experimentation.

“We also had an engagement with the new drone technology for monitoring conservation initiatives, and on data assimilation to find solutions for the proper management as well as monitoring of threatened and endangered species. I believe that if we could be armed with these resources, we should be at the cutting edge of research in South Africa and also provide our students with a more competitive edge,” added Professor Coopoosamy.

MUT’s own food security specialist, Dr Xolile Mkhize, was delighted to tour the viticulture centre and small fruit research centre. This tour provided the delegation with insight into various products that could be formed from a single type of fruit. “This could assist in the development of entrepreneurs in SA and aid in food supplementation for the population,” said Coopoosamy.

REFLECTIONS FROM TEAM MEMBERS ON THE FAMU TRIP



“The networking sessions allowed one to find common research interests that can

be expanded. These developed interests caused me to set up meetings and further deliberations with diverse presenters who are promoting sustainable food systems to address food insecurity in the area of Florida. Discussions will give us more collaborative engagements as some of our faculty projects could be interlinked with their projects. A second visit will be necessary to also engage further, for some urban agriculture projects currently running in Florida. This can be in conjunction with also visiting the FAMU laboratory for comparative studies of similar crops that are indigenous with added nutritional crops. Other key interactions in the event included building up technology tools and transfer that can be used to develop data sets for our research projects and improve the teaching and learning environment at MUT which also needs further exploration.”

Professor Coopoosamy and Dr Mkhize



“The summit opened a lot of opportunities for me as an academic and researcher. Besides allowing me to present my research work to other researchers, it allowed me to meet and network with other scientists in the field of research, particularly prebiotics and probiotics, algal biotechnology, phytoremediation, algal metabolites, and others. Several renowned scientists were present who share a similar vision, thereby opening an opportunity for collaboration. The visit made an impact on networking and forming new research partnerships with scientists in the USA. It opened opportunities for funding collaborations, joint publications, joint postgraduate student supervision, student exchanges, scientific visits, and joint workshops between MUT and FAMU.”

Professor Coopoosamy and Dr Mutanda



“Climate change is a global problem and has Professoround implications for human beings. The unsustainable ecology and the trajectory that countries have taken toward human development have failed to provide basic services to the poor population, hence this diminishes the prospects of the future generations. The Summit has been an eye-opener in emphasising that climate change should be seen as a threat that requires countries to respond to the immediate crisis without compromising the future. Two identified areas that we can jointly focus on are climate change and its effects on human settlements, and innovative systems for human settlements.”

Dr Ntshangase and Dr Mvuyana

AFRICA DAY CELEBRATIONS AT MUT

ARE THE MARGINALISED INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF AFRICA DOWNTRODDEN, OR HAS THE AGENDA CHANGED?

For the first time, MUT's annual Africa Day celebrations focused on thought leadership. In late May 2022 the University dedicated two days to an intercontinental programme titled "Reclaiming our Africanness". The programme, spearheaded by MUT and supported by prospective partners from Botswana Open University (BOU), Botho University (Botswana), St Monica's College of Education (Ghana) and the Ghana Institute of Journalism, was a melting pot for the sharing of African culture, customs and practices.



Dr Godson Gatsha

Setting the tone was Dr Godson Gatsha, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic at BOU. He delivered an enlightening lecture on the marginalised and downtrodden peoples of Africa by initially educating the audience about the vastness of Africa (30.37 million square kilometres or 11.73 million square miles). After reminding his audience that Africa has 3 000 tribes and 2 000 languages, he then outlined the African Union's (AU's) vision of "an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena".

The AU's predecessor, the Organisation for African Unity (founded in 1963), strived for the independence and freedom of African states, as well as the end of

apartheid in South Africa. Yet the AU is still challenged when it comes to the treatment of indigenous peoples. For instance, are its present discussions on nutrition and food security inclusive of all indigenous peoples?

Dr Gatsha shared with the audience magnificent images of indigenous peoples of Africa, including the Khoi San of South Africa, the Masai of Botswana, the Himba and Khi San of Namibia, the Pgymy people of the DRC, the Bwindi of Uganda and others. The audience could not help but marvel of this richness in the heritage of Africa, yet these are the people who are excluded.

There is hope though, Dr Gatsha assured his audience. He shared with them some of the cases that have been brought to various courts and won by the indigenous peoples, including those of the African Court on Human & Peoples' Rights vs The Republic of Kenya; the Basarwa CKGR Case; and the Endorois Welfare Council vs The Republic of Kenya.

The discourse on the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples in Africa must continue and universities must keep such discourses current, said Dr Gatsha

IF WE NEED TO AFRICANISE OUR SCHOOL CURRICULUM, WHAT ARE THE DRIVING FORCES TO HELP US?

A thought leadership position by Professor Jane Iloanya, Botho University, Botswana

One of the speakers during the Africa Day celebrations, Professor Jane Iloanya, said, "The implementation of any curriculum aimed at decolonising the African curricula must target the people at the implementation phases. The teachers play a crucial role in the implementation of the school curriculum. Early curriculum theorists such as Harrold Rugg, Hollis Caswell, William Kilpatrick, Ralph Tyler, etc. support the view that the curriculum should be based on students' and societal needs."



Professor Jane Iloanya, Botho University, Botswana

She said, "Teacher education programmes in Africa should drive the forces of infusing Africanness in our school curriculum through the methodologies of instruction and ideologies informing the teacher education programmes. This would help to produce

I am an African, proud of my identity and heritage. That does not mean that I am against internationalisation and globalisation of education. I simply do not want to forget and neglect my roots! All must co-exist as interdependent entities.

Africa after all is not a 'dark continent' – these ideologies have been there, though not being given due recognition.

teachers who will inculcate such ideologies and principles in the students they teach and guide. Ideologies and principles such as social harmony, democracy, unity, development, self-reliance, botho and ubuntu would form the basis of this discussion on infusing Africanness in our teacher education programmes. These principles and ideologies are informed by the philosophy guiding the national

education policies of some countries in Africa. Social Harmony – derived from the Botswana education policy of 1977 – emphasises the need for all Batswana to live in peace, respect for one another, mutual assistance, mutual responsibility and social justice for all (Republic of Botswana, 1977). These African concepts should be emphasised in our teacher education programmes”.

Professor Iloanya concluded by asking if we are promoting Ubuntu (humanity) and Botho (respect) as African ideologies that would help develop, unite, democratise and instil the spirit of self-reliance and Africanness in our student teachers. “Botho and Ubuntu are the tenets of African culture, the concept of a truly educated person who has a well-rounded character,

is well mannered, courteous and disciplined. Botho demands that individuals in society/communities should earn respect by first giving it, and empowerment by empowering others (Republic of Botswana, 1997) whereas the philosophy of Ubuntu symbolises and reflects African indigeneity, teaches the importance of maintaining functional human relations and respect for others (Tutu, 2004; Kasongo, 2018; Asamoah, 2018).”

“We can only achieve quality teacher education in Africa by first being proud of our Africanness and infusing it in the methodologies of instruction used for educating our student teachers who will in turn put this into practice as they go into the teaching Profession to teach the students under their care,” she said.

DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM FROM A DIDACTIC PERSPECTIVE

Professor Marcus Ramogale

Didactics, also known as the science of teaching, recognises that if teaching and learning is to be successful, certain universal conditions (or didactic principles) must be met. Of the several principles recognised in didactic theory, there are three which are of special relevance to the decolonisation of the curriculum.

1. Teaching must proceed from the known to the unknown

In didactic theory, it is universally accepted that for a learner to acquire new knowledge, the new knowledge must form a link with the knowledge and experiences he or she already possesses. If the new knowledge relates to the learner’s experiences, then the learner will find the new knowledge meaningful and will therefore acquire it with ease and enjoyment. If new facts are not connected to the learner’s existing knowledge, the result is likely to be boredom, alienation, and poor motivation. In other words, that learner would be lost forever.

In South Africa, colonial education violated this principle of proceeding from the known to the unknown in its foregrounding and veneration of European culture (the unknown) at the expense of the learner’s African culture (the known). Universities inherited this legacy, and this explains why, even 28 years after the birth of

a democratic South Africa, young people complain of cultural imperialism.

As we decolonise the curriculum, it is important to remember this continuity imperative, for there is always a temptation in a decolonisation project to maintain the status quo for reasons that have no bearing on effective teaching and learning but are more connected with chauvinism and cultural pride. Starting with the known and proceeding to the unknown is inherently progressive because it recognises that while what is familiar is meaningful, a true end of empowering education is mastery of the unfamiliar. In this epoch, where life in the global village has become an inescapable reality, thanks to rapid technological advances, the need to proceed from the known to the unknown, from the local to the global, has become a priority. We must, if we hope to teach for global relevance, decolonise knowledge to enable students to progress from the known to the unknown.

The second principle I want to talk about refers to the need to proceed from the simple to the complex when teaching.

2. Proceed from the simple to the complex when teaching

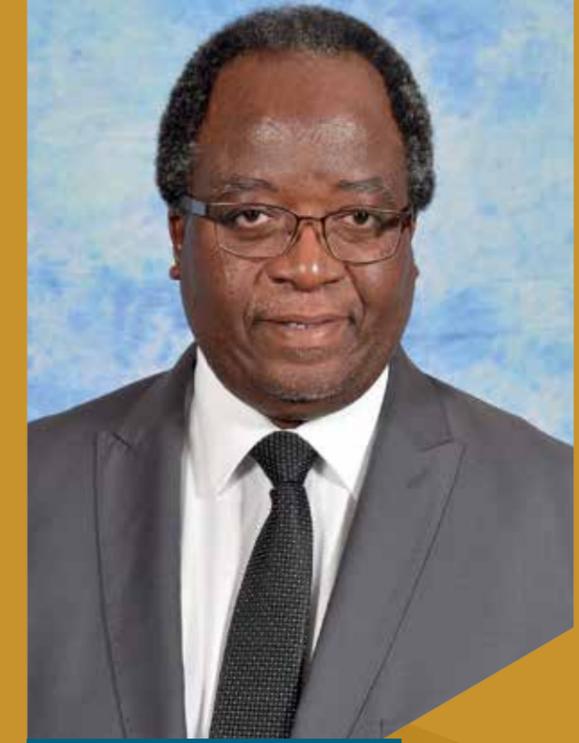
Teaching that commences with the known does not only make learning interesting and memorable, but also makes it easy and manageable, for what is familiar is usually simple to grasp. But when a teacher proceeds to the unknown, an element of complexity is introduced, and mastery of complexity is a key objective of worthwhile teaching and learning. Such mastery is made possible by the foundation that the teacher would have created by having started with the known and simple.

Again, this principle demonstrates the value of the knowledge students bring with them to the classroom. Rather than discard it, this didactic principle advocates for building on this knowledge as a point of departure and continue to the domain of the complex. It is using this principle effectively that has given countries in Asia a significant advantage in subjects such as mathematics.

The final didactic principle I want to refer to is the principle of totality, which others call the global principle or the principle of integration.

3. The principle of totality, the global principle or the principle of integration

When decolonising the curriculum, we must remember the unity of human knowledge. Although each person is a member of a family, a clan and nation, on a higher plane each one of us is a member of a single human race – integrated into the whole by virtue of one’s humanness, confronted with similar human problems on account of being an organic member of the human species, and faced with peculiarities of the same human condition. Decolonised knowledge must therefore be integrated with the totality of human knowledge. This should be easy to achieve if there is acceptance of the need to progress from the known to the unknown, from the simple to complex, and from the local to the global. In this regard, it is important to locate decolonising the curriculum within the broader framework of creating a unity of human knowledge that is universally representative.



Professor Marcus Ramogale



Closing remarks

I want to conclude with a lesson from applying didactic principles to decolonising the curriculum. What applying didactic principles teaches us is that we must not decolonise the curriculum with the intention of basking in the glory of African culture and historical achievements, but with the purpose of employing the known, the simple and the local as a springboard for engagement with the unknown, the complex and the global on a higher international plane, for world citizenship is now unavoidable. Implemented this way, the project of the decolonisation of the curriculum will truly advance our quest for developing knowledge that is truly representative of all in our globalised and networked world.

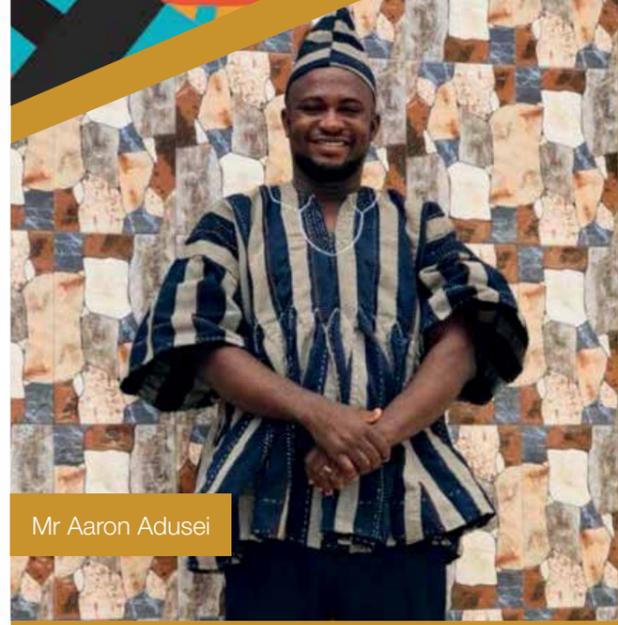
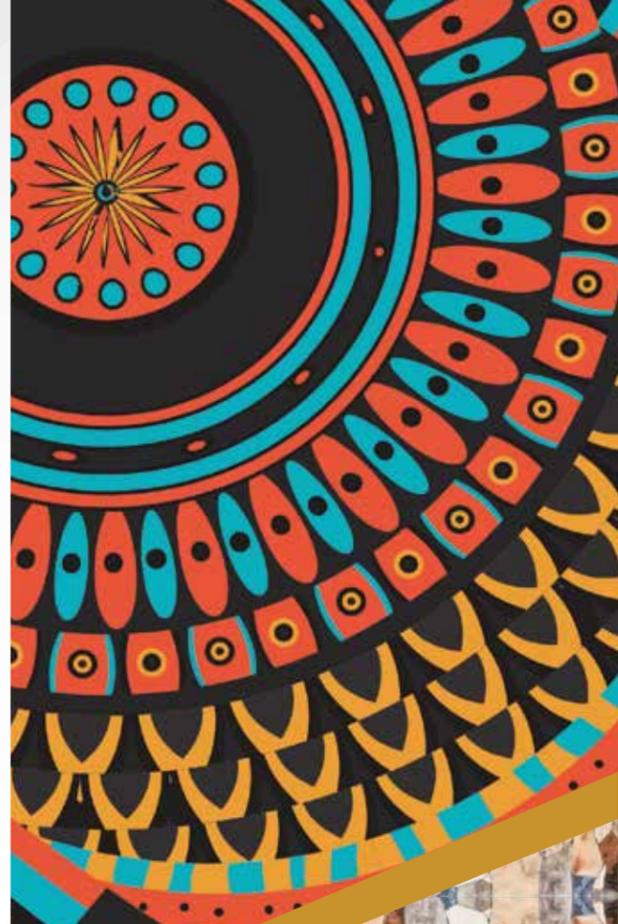
African student voices on culture and customs

MUT's Africa Day provided students across the continent with opportunities to send their voice notes, referred as VNs by students, in which they shared a few things they love about their countries.

GIRLS FROM ST MONICA'S COLLEGE OF EDUCATION IN GHANA WOW MUT RADIO LISTENERS

As part of the Africa Day celebrations, MUT extended its invitation to students from the continent to share their culture and customs with MUT Radio listeners. Christiana Ashma from St Monica's College of Education in Ghana shared her favourite festival where they celebrate a great man – a chief priest who sacrificed himself for his people during a plague that had killed many. Because of this, her village still celebrates him. The way she shared her story enabled many callers to share their cultures. "I really appreciate and love my culture. Respect is at the heart of our culture and the values that have been imparted in us. I love our traditional foods," said Sheila Derry .

These are the conversations that MUT's Internationalisation Strategy wants to deepen. "Students must find formal platforms to listen, share and co-construct knowledge regardless of where they are," said Mbali Mkhize, senior director, Marketing & Communications. "This engagement has been made possible by Mr Aaron Adusei who is in a DAAD fellowship with me. We are in advanced talks with his university and I see a lot of potential in the proposed partnership. Mr Adusei has been at the forefront of positioning MUT at his College and we are very keen to pair our students with theirs in the near future," Mbali added.



Mr Aaron Adusei



St Monica's College of Education in Ghana

AFRICA DAY GALLERY



LONDON SOUTH BANK UNIVERSITY MOA IMPLEMENTED



From left, Dr Mariam Akinlolu, Post-Doctoral Research Fellow, and Co-ordinator of the event, Syeda Rahimunnessa, Senior Student Enterprise Manager – LSBU, and her colleague, Amy Pyle, Student Enterprise Manager



Dr Fundiswa Nofemela

From 26 to 28 April 2022, the London South Bank University (LSBU) – which has a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with MUT through its Built Environment unit – visited MUT to develop a capacity-building programme. The approach was also to allow MUT to share the headway it has made in the placement of students, particularly from the Built Environment, and progress made on entrepreneurship. One of the aims is to enable MUT to have a sustainable enterprise and entrepreneurship programme.

As part of the visit, academics from MUT’s departments of Civil Engineering and Construction Management attended a 2-day workshop on “Building the Future: Talking Enterprise and Entrepreneurship in Curriculum Development”, facilitated by LSBU.

LOOKING UP TO LSBU TO ENHANCE DIGITAL EMPLOYABILITY

MUT’s Cooperative Education Directorate, headed by Dr Fundiswa Nofemela, is at the forefront of exploring how MUT’s Work Readiness Programme (which all students, must do before being placed for their work-based training component) can be used to enhance enterprise and digital skills. The workshops offered by LSBU offered the Cooperative Education Directorate an opportunity to embed

employability skills, particularly enterprise and digital skills, in the curriculum of Construction Management and Civil Engineering.

The collaboration between LSBU comes at exactly the time when the Cooperative Education Directorate is beefing up its programme to enhance graduate employability. “Our work-readiness training programme prepares students for the world of work and one of its modules is on innovation. This module seeks to help

students think about solving real problems in society”, said Nofemela.

She explains that as part of the collaboration with LSBU, enterprise skills will be included in the innovation section of the Work Readiness Training Programme. “Through this, we hope that the students will be encouraged to consider Social Entrepreneurship as a way of demonstrating Professional values to society as well as creating employment for others,” she concluded.

ROAD TO COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENTS

Contrary to the belief that universities merely sign MoAs, two women at the forefront of these collaborations share their stories of the hard work that takes place behind the scenes. The role of the Research Directorate must be commended in the effort it plays. Dr Anette Mienie has taken it upon herself despite her busy schedule to ensure that she develops a template that will enable that MUT gets a fair share in the collaborative process. “It is a lot of work which I felt that I had to contribute to, given my legal background. It is actually one of the reasons why after years of heading up a research directorate, I added a legal qualification into my key competencies. I have discovered that being legal-savvy is now instrumental in driving how we commit to collaborative agreements,” said Dr Mienie. To this end, Dr Mienie has been of great support in guiding the University with the MoAs that are now in existence.

Mbali Mkhize, senior director, Marketing & Communications says, “There is no way I can commit the University to signing an MoA without the support of the Research Directorate. My role is also not easy because to court universities who read about your university is not easy. The engagements are usually back and forth between myself and my counterpart who also has to engage her own counterparts. At times, you even find yourself engaging the very senior members of some universities where you need to clarify something they may have picked up about your university.”

Over the past nine months, this is MUT’s status quo with regard to raising its Professorile internationally:

Name of university partner/s	Lead person	Current activities
National Institute of Namibia (NIT)	Ms M Mkhize	Internationalisation at Home (IaH) activities focused on multicultural communication. Virtual learning discussions underway with three faculties.
Manchester Metropolitan University (UK)	Professor B Bakare	Research focused engagements.
London South Bank University (UK)	Dr JM Makua	High powered delegation to MUT from LSBU. Training delivered at MUT. Support programmes for entrepreneurship and WIL.
Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University (USA)	Ms M Mkhize	Research focused engagements. Plans to discuss a joint PhD/a Master’s programme underway. Thought leadership award from FAMU.

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ONE DEPARTMENT: GLOBAL NORTH AND GLOBAL SOUTH RECOGNITION

Two staffers in the Marketing and Communications department at MUT raised their hands in response to University notifications, resulting in fellowships at global north and global south universities. “When we issue notifications, we hope these are a call to action for staff members for self-actualisation purposes,” said the department’s Senior Director, Mbali Mkhize.

Carl Rogers (1955) described self-actualisation as “the continuous lifelong process whereby an individual’s self-concept is maintained and enhanced via reflection and the reinterpretation of various experiences which enable the individual to recover, change and develop”.

MUT staff members’ first opportunity to participate came from the Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies (DIES) which is funded by the German Academic Exchange Services (DAAD) and the German Rectors’ Conference. Mkhize herself was among the three South Africans that received fellowship awards for training, among 110 applications from Africa, Latin America and Asia. “There are 30 of us and over a period of 18 months, we will be sharing strategies on internationalisation and we are receiving high-end training from the best lecturers from Germany,” said Mkhize. “Each quarter we are assigned a project that we have to action. I am deeply humbled that we are seeing results of internationalisation and I am grateful to the Vice-Chancellor that an opportunity of this nature arose under his leadership and that he gave me permission to participate when I first submitted my application,” she said. In the process, Mkhize has received her first certificate on internationalisation from Leipzig University.



Leibniz University, Hannover



King Mongkut's University of Technology



Mbali Mkhize



Zama Sishi

“ We believe our exposure to both the global north and global south would help us **add value to MUT** and enhance the internationalisation agenda of MUT. ”

Another opportunity for participation saw the department’s Stakeholder Relations Director, Zama Sishi, participate in a Cultural Diversity and Staff Mobility Seminar hosted by King Mongkut’s University of Technology North Bangkok (KMUTNB). The programme is an annual cultural diversity immersion programme for non-academic staff to share cultural integration strategies that can be used to promote workplace diversity and an inclusive campus experience for international staff and students. Facilitated by the Vice-President for International Relations at KMUTNB, the 2022 programme was attended by university support staff from Thailand, Indonesia, Japan, Canada, Germany, Ethiopia and South Africa, with MUT being the only represented institution from South Africa.

“The interactive programme was not only a learning experience but also an opportunity to showcase our institutions as each delegate provided a virtual tour of their institution showcasing institutional history, growth, and unique value proposition which is set to result in new international partnerships and networks among the participating universities,” said Sishi.

The seminar covered several cultural dimensions found in the workplace and specifically at higher education institutions, as the sector is fast becoming interconnected. Sharing cultural similarities, differences and contrasts relating to cultural, social, economic and emotional integration across the seven represented countries highlighted the importance of adopting and understanding multiculturalism so that institutions can attract and retain diverse staff and student populations.

“We believe our exposure to both the global north and global south would help us add value to MUT and enhance the internationalisation agenda of MUT. It does not necessarily need to be a huge programme that one engages in with international partners; but touching base and sharing knowledge may be the springboard to enhance one’s career and broaden one’s understanding of other cultures and how they do things,” said Mkhize

JETTING OFF TO THE UK FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

For Professor Bakare, Acting Dean of the Faculty of Engineering at MUT, the opportunity to travel to the UK shows that hard work pays off. This time, he will be leading a delegation of six staff members to Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) to attend a specialised staff development training programme from 2 to 10 July 2022, and also to establish collaborations with MMU in areas that can further enhance the MUT internationalisation agenda.

The other staff members selected are Krishnambal Gonaseelan (Biomedical Science), Thobile Sharon Zikhathile (Environmental Health), Nomfundo Ndlovu (Chemical Engineering), Sanele Patrick Mngadi (Administrative), Bongani Qwabe (Office Technology), and Ma-Ntoi Ntoi (Nature Conservation).

In 2019, when there was a call for proposals to be submitted for a jointly-funded University Staff Doctoral Programme by the South African Department of Higher Education and the British Council, Professor Bakare collaborated with colleagues from Manchester Metropolitan University in the UK and the University of Johannesburg (UJ) to develop a proposal with the theme "Sustainable Societies and Disruptive Technology". This resulted in the collaborative proposal being funded. The programme seeks to develop



Professor Babatunde Bakare

capacity through supporting ten University staff for doctoral studies in line with the project theme.

"The purpose of this collaborative project is to promote multi- and inter-disciplinary cross-pollination across broad areas of research to increase the chances of community-focused research interventions. The programme supports 6 MUT and 4 UJ staff members through a bursary stipend for research purposes, specialised staff development training that will take place in the UK and South Africa, and co-supervision support by academics at MMU. A collaborative agreement has already been signed by all three Universities involved," said Professor Bakare.

MUT INVITED TO FRANCE FOR SA HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH WEEK

MUT has been invited to be a part of the South Africa Higher Education Week in France by the French Embassy. More than 135 delegates from South African universities will be participating in this event. Dr Manyane Makua, MUT Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Principal, was delegated by Professor Marcus Ramogale, Acting Vice-Chancellor, to choose a team that will represent MUT and see the implementation of collaborative activities with French universities.



Dr Manyane Makua

"Once the Vice-Chancellor had identified individuals to select the delegates, I took it upon myself to ensure that the delegation will represent the university and sustain the programme of action. Planning this trip has not been easy. It is a complex trip which requires a lot of planning between the embassy and the French universities. I am grateful to Dr Anette Mienie for her research leadership, which has also been endorsed by the National Research Foundation by awarding much-needed scholarships to two of the delegates, Professor Babatunde Bakare and Dr Njabulo Gumede," said Dr Makua.

SAHE will commence with tone-setting by both the French and South African authorities based in France. The SA delegation will get to meet about 40 French universities and

research institutions. A roadmap towards building partnerships will be explored, followed by various sessions ranging from building partnerships (challenges and opportunities) to research and innovation. High-level meetings will take place with the French Ministry of Higher Education Research and Innovation, as well as with internationalisation offices and research and innovation directorates. The capstone programme will take place in the south of France in Montpellier where SAHE has been invited to celebrate Sustainability Day – a takeaway project for all conference attendees as they think about future sustainability projects.

"I am saddened that the Research Director, Dr Mienie, will not be able to join the delegation because of prior commitments. Her role in research may not be understated. I am happy though that those conversations have already commenced between Ms Mbali Mkhize with the French university counterparts who are now reviewing the Professorial of MUT. We hope that the trip will be a success and that the delegation is tailor-made for themes that have been identified. Ms Xolile Ngubane will be representing the innovation agenda of the university," said Dr Makua.

Each of the delegates will be paired with various counterparts while Mkhize and Makua have been identified as key university individuals that will look into the sustainability of the programme. The team has begun to teach itself a few expressions in French in preparation of this landmark visit by MUT.



STUDENT RECRUITMENT BEYOND SA BOARDERS

The stakeholder engagement team heeded the call to meet the University's goal of positioning the University nationally and internationally. In a quest to appeal to the interest of high school learners in Lesotho, the University's Department of Marketing and Communication sent a team to spend a week in Lesotho to recruit future students to enrol for qualifications that are offered by the University upon successfully completing their high school studies. Time spent in the Kingdom of the Basotho afforded the University's team an opportunity to interact with 11747 matric learners from 129 high schools. The learners came from far and near to listen to MUT's School Liaison officers telling them about the University's qualifications, and how the more than 40 000 graduates benefit from having acquired these qualifications.

Recruitment beyond borders is proving to be a very fruitful investment for the University. The best observation was that most learners in Lesotho do more than eight subjects; this allows them to fit within any of the available streams at MUT. "The curriculum in Lesotho allows learners to do commerce, sciences, agriculture, and engineering subjects. This cross model of subject choice is very interesting and worth the effort and the struggle because MUT recruits from a pool of learners who fit across the three MUT faculties. "This situation encouraged MUT to be more vigorous in spreading the message to both learners and educators to choose



Sthembile Maphumulo

MUT as their go to institution in South Africa, especially in Durban," said Sthembile Maphumulo, Schools Liaison Officer.

Sustainable partnerships have been formed with education department officials and Career Guidance counsellors in Botho-Buthe, Mkhotlong, Mafiteng, Maseru and Mohale regions in Lesotho. These MUT partners got a lot of comfort when they were told how the University takes care of international students. The main worry was finding safe, suitable, and affordable accommodation for the young Basotho, who aspire to venture out of their birth country and study at MUT while exploring further opportunities as they meet with learners from different backgrounds. MUT internationalisation would bring great experience and opportunities to international students to learn other cultures and fit within a diverse campus environment.



A Lesotho High school that was visited by MUT



INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON LOCAL ISSUES



Mark Hunter



PUBLIC LECTURE: TACKLING DRUG ABUSE

Concerned about the level of drug abuse in society, Professor Busi Nkonki-Mandleni, Director of the Community Engagement and Development Directorate (CEAD) at MUT, organised Professor Mark Hunter, a Professor of Human Geography at the University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC), to speak at a public lecture at MUT.

“Drug abuse is a problem everywhere. This impacts communities and hampers development. As people that deal with communities, we witness the impact of drug abuse on a daily basis. Being aware that Professor Hunter is undertaking research on drug abuse at Umlazi Township and being aware of his accomplishments in research focusing on inequality and human rights, we felt that he would be the right person to lead this discussion and raise awareness to academics and the community that attended the public lecture,” said Professor Nkonki-Mandleni.

Professor Hunter completed his Master's degree in Development Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and his PhD in Geography at the University of California-Berkeley. His first book, *Love in The Time of AIDS: Inequality, Gender and Rights in South Africa* (2010, Indiana and KwaZulu-Natal presses) explores the history of South Africa's HIV/AIDS pandemic and won the C. Wright Mills Award and the Amaury Talbot prize. His second book, *Race for Education: Gender, White Tone and Schooling in South Africa* (2019, Cambridge

University Press), winner of the Joel Gregory Prize, explores South Africa's transformation from the system of apartheid through the lens of education marketisation. Hunter's current research explores the upsurge in drugs that include cheap heroin and Xanax. Professor Hunter is still continuing with his research on the use of drugs in Umlazi Township.

His presentation covered aspects such as drugs' classification, the historical context of their use, the racial connotation of the use of drugs, their social impact on users and possible interventions. Highlights are shared below.

Classification of drugs

Professor Hunter pointed out the contradictions in the classification of drugs as being legal or good as well as illegal or bad for human consumption. Examples of 'legal' drugs are alcohol, tobacco and prescription medications such as opioids, whereas cocaine and others are 'illegal'. Some substances are seen as medicines while others are banned. He highlighted the fact that some of the illegal and detrimental drugs are manufactured using similar ingredients to those that are useful and legal.

The history of drug use and abuse

He then traced the use of drugs from the colonial era

where they were used by settlers to create dependency and control labourers as they had to work and earn money in order to feed their habits. Umlazi Township, which was established by the apartheid government to be a dormitory for Black labourers, was built using proceeds from beerhalls and farmers paying their workers with 'dops' of wine. The development of capitalist work relations and racial segregation under apartheid resulted in the proliferation of townships and squatter camps where illicit business in drugs boomed. Records from the nineteenth century indicated that the use of traditional beer (utshwala) and cannabis (insangu) was acceptable, based on age and gender and location. Drinking utshwala during gatherings and the use of insangu by the elderly was acceptable but it was deemed inappropriate for youngsters.

Currently used drugs

There are many drugs that are circulating currently such as cough medicine added to carbonated drinks called incika or lean, ecstasy (qoh), cocaine and crystal meth (tik). For the purpose of the lecture, Professor Hunter focused on mandrax, whoonga (heroin-based) and Xanax as these capture key challenges in society, especially unemployment.

- **Mandrax, also known as ingidi or buttons**

Mandrax is currently being used by school-going learners or recent leavers who are struggling to find work. It was first produced as a pharmaceutical product to aid sleeping but has been misused in South Africa since the 1970s. The sleeping tablet is crushed and mixed with cannabis. After its banning it is now illicitly produced inside and outside the country. The button was first associated with working class Indians in Durban and then adopted by the Zulus and referred to as ingidi, “a lock”, referring to the locked experience that a person experiences. It's a source of a booming trade that culminates in the deadly turf wars among drug lords and dealers. It is more expensive than cannabis (insangu).

- **Whoonga, heroin and sugars**

From the 2000s heroin was reported to be used in Durban's Indian areas and known as 'sugars'. From the 2010s it was used in African townships and called whoonga, which is also mixed with anti-retroviral (ARV) HIV medication. While cocaine and ecstasy are expensive drugs used in the middle-class areas, whoonga is used in under-resourced areas. Whoonga addicts are known for committing petty crimes including stealing from their own families and neighbours to feed their habit. However it is worth noting that some whoonga users get up very early in the morning to work diligently so that they can earn money to buy their drugs. They mainly do menial jobs that will give them enough money such as gardening, carrying goods for shoppers, collecting water and others.

- **Xanax**

Professor Hunter discovered that Xanax, an anti-anxiety prescription drug, is used by learners throughout Durban and is the second most popular drug after “weed” (cannabis). Learners, especially females, take it to distract them from their social problems that include family or school matters and peer pressure, or simply to make time pass more quickly. Xanax and weed are used while learners attend classes and is said to be taken less during examination times and more during weekends. Xanax causes drowsiness among learners which interferes with their concentration levels in class.

Suggested interventions

Professor Hunter proposed that:

- Treating rather than punishing drug abusers should be prioritised.
- The police must arrest drug lords, and corruption between merchants and the police must be dealt with.
- Rehabilitation centres must be available in all communities. Currently Umlazi does not have any.

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON LOCAL ISSUES



Ntombifuthi Mthembu



shape and own the future

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MUT ENTREPRENEURSHIP COORDINATOR WINS WADHWANI FOUNDATION AWARD

Ntombifuthi Mthembu, the Entrepreneurship Coordinator and Lecturer in the Department of Human Resources and Management at Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT), has won the annual 'Start Me Up Award' from the Wadhvani Foundation. The announcement was made on 2 June 2022.

"It is the quality of the students' submissions that earns you this award. Nothing makes a person content than being recognized for one's efforts," said Mthembu.

Mthembu said the event was about recognizing and celebrating the efforts of top lecturers facilitating the Wadhvani Entrepreneurship globally.

The awards were divided into three regions, namely, South East Asia (SEA), India, and Africa. Mthembu was recognized in the Africa Region as one of the lecturers who excelled and contributed positively to the development of entrepreneurship education for the year 2021.

MUT offers the Wadhvani Foundational Entrepreneurship Course that is computer laboratory-based. All assessment submissions (or Milestones as they call them) are uploaded on the LearnWise Platform for evaluation purposes. The very same Milestones are further adjudicated by a jury which could be located anywhere in the world. This jury validates the submissions in terms of quality and the potential of turning the students' venture (Practice Venture) into a real venture, should the student pursue it beyond the classroom.



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