

Sociology NEWSLETTER

Faisal Garba Premieres film on migration, xenophobia and solidarity in Africa pg. 6

"Associate Professor Faisal Garba partnered with colleagues and filmmakers to produce a docudrama titled "Man Must Chop" (livelihood is a necessity), drawing on the expulsion of Africans from Nigeria in 1983.



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Celebrating Michael Burawoy (1947-2025) pg. 7

"Michael Burawoy - a giant in contemporary sociology – died tragically in February when he was hit by a car whilst walking near his home near Berkeley, California. Michael influenced many of us, not only through his scholarship but also personally. He will be sorely missed."

One Key Learning from my first sasa presentation pg. 12

Celine reflects on the benefits of sharing her research at the South African Sociological Association (SASA) conference, receiving constructive feedback, and gaining confidence in her academic journey.

Key Dates

- 📌 Postgraduate Proposal Writing Workshop - 7 April 2025
- 📌 UCT Open Day - 12 April 2025
- 📌 SASA 30th Annual Congress (Abstract deadline) - 20 April 2025
- 📌 Mandela Rhodes Scholarship (application deadline) - 21 April 2025
- 📌 Student Essay Competition for SASA - 15 May 2025
- 📌 SASA 30th Annual Congress (Conference) - 23 - 26 June 2025

Editor's Note

Dear Colleagues & Friends

With the academic calendar having commenced more than a month ago, 2025 is promising to be an exciting year for us, where doors have been opened. This is our first issue of the digital, quarterly UCT Sociology Department Newsletter. As part of our social engagement, we are taking a step towards our vision of access, success, care, and transformation. Through this newsletter, we plan to keep you updated with our sociology community activities; share our students' stories and socio-political involvement; feature opinion pieces and celebrate the examples of excellence from our department.

We would like to welcome all our new and returning students in 2025. Thank you for the resilience you have demonstrated through the challenges we experienced at the beginning of the year. As we come to the end of the first quarter of the year, let us be inspired to make the most of every opportunity that we get.

As the new HoD and on behalf of the department, we would like to thank Professor Amrita Pande and Professor Elena Moore, as well as Associate Professor Ruchi Chaturvedi and Frank Matose (the current deputy HoD), who have ably steered our department for the past five years. We would like to thank the sociology staff for their critical engagement, commitment and support in the transition of headship.

For sustainability, vibrancy, institutional memory and cocreation of this newsletter, the editorial team is made up of both staff and students coming from the Sociology department and related disciplines in the humanities faculty.

We hope that you will enjoy the contents of this newsletter, and we welcome more ideas on how to make it better and more engaging.

We move! Siyaqhuba!

Editor-in-Chief

Nomkhosi Xulu-Gama



Blending Minds and Machines - Teaching in the AI age

by Thelma Nyarhi

On the 13th of February 2025, the Sociology department staff convened to share insights on tutoring. The workshop oriented new and returning staff. This semester the Department recruited 34 tutors who are eager and passionate about the academic exercise! The workshop covered basics around pedagogy, assessment, student academic policy and professional conduct amongst other topics. One of the main concerns was the use and misuse of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and strategies for mitigating its impact.

In 2023, the University of Cape Town (UCT) Centre for Innovation in Learning and Teaching (CILT) launched three guides to assist students and staff in navigating the AI era. Student participation in recent years has revealed a huge reliance on AI for completing assignments. While assessment integrity is a major issue, the AI era also reveals the deep-seated educational disparities plaguing our South African education system. Although AI use may bridge the social divide, ethical considerations regarding AI governance and regulation within the education system is still an ongoing conversation.



The workshop opened to deliberations around AI use with tutors and convenors reflecting on the challenges and opportunities of the previous academic year. The Department does not completely ignore the existence and potential value of AI. However, it also encourages students to learn how to express themselves critically and confidently.

The teaching staff emphasized how 'writing was a form of thinking'. With this in mind, AI reliance deprives the student of the opportunity to develop a critical voice. While most courses in the department rarely encourage AI use, it remains a pertinent issue requiring input from individual convenors to discuss innovative ways of working with or around AI.

Furthermore, the Education Department Unit (EDU) has revised course structures, eliminating tutorials which have been replaced by workshops spread across the semester. This comes after some budget cuts experienced by the unit.



The EDU plays an important role in orienting students into academic spaces by providing augmenting and foundational courses that run parallel to the general courses. Although tutorials have been scrapped, these workshops aim to focus on developing particular skill sets such as academic writing and reading. In addition, the Department has implemented mitigation strategies, such as the Early Detection Intervention.



This serves to trace student performance, identify struggling students, and potentially assist them throughout the semester. The teaching staff also addressed some of the challenges, particularly in the AI age, and explored possible mitigation strategies. Some of these included having tests as opposed to assignments and identifying and consulting students in their AI use. Tutors expressed concerns about the increased workload associated with this exercise. This invited lecturers to think about their module structures in the age of AI.

In conclusion, staff members pledged their support for the ongoing education project. Although the AI era presents us with some challenges, it is also an opportunity for reflections and innovation within the education system. Education, therefore, remains an ongoing process that emphasizes a culture of learning, unlearning, and relearning.

New Beginnings, Endless Possibilities: Your Postgraduate Adventure Starts Here!

by Yonela Mlambo

The 2025 academic year kicked off with a Postgraduate Orientation to welcome all our Honours, Master's, and PhD candidates.

The session oriented the students and served as an information and guidance session. The orientation introduced students to different programmes offered by the department, which are General Sociology, Industry Sociology, Development Studies, the Global Studies Programme, and Theories of Justice and Inequalities.

Additional issues that were discussed included how to get a supervisor, funding, and employment prospects, among others. Most importantly, they were introduced to our staff members, who shared their research interests and some of the interesting research projects they are currently working on. Students were also informed of the different departmental activities such as the sociology postgraduate office earmarked for creating a conducive environment for their academic success. The highlight of the orientation for me was listening to postgrad students' ideas and imaginations of their prospective research projects. These included topics such as the impact of substance abuse on families, focusing on how addiction affects family dynamics, relationships, and overall well-being, as well as the rural-urban migration of South African women to former labour compounds or hostels in KwaZulu-Natal, investigating the adaptation and adjustment processes.

Faisal Garba Premieres film on migration, xenophobia and solidarity in Africa

by Faisal Garba

Associate Professor Faisal Garba partnered with colleagues and filmmakers to produce a docudrama titled "Man Must Chop" (livelihood is a necessity), drawing on the expulsion of Africans from Nigeria in 1983. The docudrama draws attention to the dangers of othering centred on anti-immigrant sentiments and mobilisations.

It premiered on 28 February 2025 at the Silverbird Cinema in Accra Ghana, and will be screened in communities, institutions, and cinemas in select African countries. It aims to highlight the normalcy of mobility in every human society and challenges some common evidence-free assumptions and narratives about migration and migrants.



In the late 1970s, as Africa's economic conditions deteriorated, many Africans went to Nigeria (which was then experiencing an oil boom) in search of greener pastures. Some of these people were professionals such as nurses, teachers and university lecturers while others were artisans such as barbers, masons, carpenters and traders. These individuals worked, took care of their families and saved as much money as they could. All was well until 1983.

On 17th January 1983, facing economic crisis and a sense that migrants were taking on jobs meant for locals, the then Minister of Internal Affairs in Nigeria, Alhaji Ali Baba, made a public announcement that all unskilled migrants in Nigeria as well as those without residence permits were to leave the country within a fortnight. The deadline was extended for another four weeks, but six weeks was little time to organise a proper return home. As a result, many West Africans packed their belongings and headed for home, mostly on foot or bus. The return journey was perilous, with some losing their lives in the process. Those who made it safely back home look back on that episode in their lives with much regret as evident in the voices of the returnees interviewed as part of the documentary. For example, in the words of one man who migrated to Nigeria as a thirteen-year-old,

“Personally, I will say a journey to Nigeria is not worth taking...It affected my academic progression...You can visit any country of your choice, but I wouldn’t advise you to visit Nigeria.”

The research that informed the documentary (carried out in African locations such as Ghana, Burkina Faso, South Africa, and Ethiopia, and places like Nepal, Malaysia, Brazil, Haiti, and Jordan) made it clear that migrant worker rights are routinely abused on a regular basis. There are many efforts to address these indignities. These include micro-level efforts such as identity-based associations that migrants form to tackle the many oppressions they face, meso-level activities such as unionisation, and macro-level efforts such as protests. Citizens sometimes offer support by organising protests where migrant associations can make their unique needs heard.



We find these forms of solidarity particularly powerful because they recognise the common humanity of us all. Whether citizen or migrant, everyone has basic human rights that must be adhered to at all times. In any case, citizenship status does not make one immune from experiencing the second-class citizenship status that immigrants experience. Even individuals currently located in their countries of origin may one day migrate or have relatives who are potential migrants. Their rights as citizens may also be violated. Thus, the needs of migrants must be of concern to both citizens and migrants. This is a message that the documentary wants to entrench in the younger generation of Africans.

Our common humanity, regardless of national origin or citizenship status, was emphasised. The children asked great questions about what this episode teaches us about Pan African solidarity, what it must have felt like to be expelled, and to have to leave loved ones behind. The children then went off to convert their understandings into meaningful paintings.

Michael Burawoy (1947-2025)

by Jeremy Seekings

Michael Burawoy – a giant in contemporary sociology – died tragically in February when he was hit by a car whilst walking near his home near Berkeley, California. Michael influenced many of us, not only through his scholarship but also personally. He will be sorely missed.

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*He was the first Master's student in the Sociology Department at the University of Zambia. His three years in Zambia resulted in his first book, *The Colour of Class on the Copper Mines* (1972).*

”

Michael was British, but his scholarly career began in Southern Africa. Whilst an undergraduate student at Cambridge, he travelled through South Africa and other parts of Africa in 1966. In 1968, after graduating, he spent six months in South Africa before taking a job in Zambia, working in the personnel department of one of the mining companies. He was the first Master's student in the Sociology Department at the University of Zambia. His three years in Zambia resulted in his first book, *The Colour of Class on the Copper Mines* (1972). By then, Michael had travelled to Chicago to study for a PhD, supervised by William J. Wilson. For his PhD, Michael conducted ethnographic research in a Chicago factory. This resulted in his path-breaking 1979 book, *Manufacturing Consent*. By then, Michael was teaching at Berkeley, where he stayed until his retirement in 2023.

Unlike many sociologists whose ethnographic research ends when they have full-time teaching positions, Michael went on to work and research – through participant observation – in factories in ‘socialist’ Hungary and Russia. His first-hand experience of the labour process in four different countries provided the basis for his huge contributions to comparative industrial sociology as well as sociological methodology.

In South Africa, Michael became well known after 1990 for his examination of ‘public sociology’. Primarily through the universities of the Witwatersrand and Johannesburg, and especially through his lifelong friend Eddie Webster, Michael drew on the practice of sociology in South Africa to refine his argument that there were alternatives to the ‘professional’ and even ‘critical’ forms of sociology that dominated in the USA. Michael was instrumental also in encouraging sociologists in South Africa to engage more fully – and critically – with the work of Pierre Bourdieu and WEB Du Bois.

In 2003, Michael was elected President of the American Sociological Association. In 2006, he was elected Vice-President of the International Sociological Association. Four years later, he was elected its president.

Michael was undoubtedly a great sociologist. But he was also an extraordinarily caring person, not only for social justice in general or for his students and immediate colleagues, but also for the

many senior and junior sociologists whom he met, befriended, mentored and inspired across the world. He dedicated his 2021 memoir (*Public Sociology*) to ‘all of the students who have taught me so much’. He was, in so many ways, an exemplary role model.

Note: In addition to Michael’s own work (which can be accessed through his [personal website](#)), a set of appreciative essays was published in a [special issue of Critical Sociology in 2024](#). These include useful articles on Southern African influences on Michael by Eddie Webster (posthumously) and colleagues, and by Gay Seidman.

Congratulations to The Family Caregiving Programme! The Family Caregiving Programme has been awarded the UCT Vice Chancellor’s Social Responsiveness Award



by Vayda Megannon

The Department of Sociology is home to the Family Caregiving Programme, the first major programme dedicated to understanding family care of older persons in four Southern African countries: South Africa, Malawi, Botswana, and Namibia. Led by Professor Elena Moore, the programme is a collaboration involving the University of Cape Town, the University of

Botswana, the University of Malawi, the University of Namibia and over 20 non-profit organizations operating across all four countries. The programme aims to support family care by improving our understanding of how family care is experienced in the region. Over the past three years, the team has been working with academics, policymakers, and non-governmental organisations from the region and beyond to improve attention on the topic and support caregivers and older persons both locally and regionally. In doing so, the UCT Vice Chancellor's Social Responsiveness Award has recognized the work of the programme as contributing to the country's cultural, economic, political, scientific and social landscape. In South Africa, this work has been done predominantly by a team of graduate students from our department!

In December 2024, the Family Caregiving Programme's South African team walked the stage at the 2024 Staff Awards.

The team includes Dr Nonzuzo Mbokazi (PhD Sociology) as a senior researcher, Zeenat Samodien (MA, Sociology), who is the programme's data officer, Vayda Megannon (PhD candidate) who is the Programme Manager and two research assistants Charis Sass and Simamkele Sidziya who are both master's students in sociology. This award is a major honour for each team member as they pursue their academic goals. It also recognizes the work being done by our fellow peers in our communities. Well done!

To learn more about The Family Caregiving Programme visit www.familycaregiving.org.za or follow our social media accounts for more updates on upcoming webinars. These webinars explore qualitative research on care giving in Southern Africa, focusing on care economics, ageing, social protection, families, and relationships.



First Sociology Seminar of 2025: A Deep Dive into Counter- Surveillance and State Violence

by Sandilë Dube

The Sociology Seminar Series continues to be an essential academic experience in our department, offering undergraduate, postgraduate, and academic staff the chance to engage with critical and timely social issues. These seminars, typically held bi-weekly on Monday afternoons from 13:00-14:00 pm, provide a platform for thought-provoking discussions and an opportunity to explore a wide range of topics that inspire and challenge. Whether you are a student looking to expand your understanding or a lecturer interested in current debates, these sessions offer valuable opportunities to reflect and engage with the dynamics of the social world today.

A recent highlight was the seminar held on Monday, 3 March, by Mina Godarzani-Bakhtiari, titled “*Counter-Surveillance as an Ambivalent Practice of Negotiating In/Visibility: The Case of Forensic Architecture*.” Mina, a qualitative sociologist at the Technical University of Berlin, shared her fascinating research on how visual data can challenge the invisibility of policing, particularly through the work of Forensic Architecture. Her presentation exhibited how investigative videos produced by multiple actors and often in collaboration with journalists, human rights organizations and activists, bring police violence into public view, thus reshaping our understanding of state violence and social order.

To argue for accountability and transparency in policing, Mina used the case study of *The Killing of Mohammad of Al-Arab* to demonstrate how Forensic Architecture constructs a multi-dimensional view of violence by interpreting visual data in various ways. Mina’s seminar offered invaluable insights into the role of mediated technologies in constructing public perceptions of state violence and the new possibilities for engaging with evidence in today’s digital age. The seminar also prompted engaging and thought-provoking questions from participants. One notable question, raised by Nkululeko Mabandla, a lecturer in the department, asked how the investigative approach of Forensic Architecture relates to the situated practice of activists. Mina responded by exploring the relationship between professionalized counter-surveillance and grassroots activism, which led to a further bilateral conversation. This question “*challenged me to think more concretely about different modes of counter-surveillance and their resistance to power*”, Mina shared, which prompted a deeper discussion on the different modes of counter-surveillance and their power dynamics.

Other questions focused on the relationship between knowledge and power such as: What is objectivity? What is evidence? How are investigative decisions made? Can this form of evidence construction be seen as ‘equalizing’?

These questions echoed Mina’s research puzzle, which investigates the complex, interconnected dimensions of negotiating violence through knowledge practices.

Mina emphasized that while Forensic Architecture's work often supports testimony, it also reproduces the hegemonic visual logic of the state, highlighting the inherent ambivalences in creating evidence-based accountability.

Although the topic of a specific seminar doesn't directly align with one's research interests, such seminars are a valuable opportunity to engage with innovative methodologies and theoretical frameworks. They encourage interdisciplinary dialogue and challenge students to think critically about how social issues are represented and negotiated in the public sphere. Attending these seminars can inspire new research ideas and foster a deeper understanding of complex social dynamics and enriching academic experiences for students.

-this association is a critical step in your development as a scholar. Join us at our annual conference from 23rd to 26th June 2025 hosted by the University of Mpumalanga, where you are afforded the opportunity to present your recent research in a supportive academic learning environment. The annual conference also allows one to build critical skills, with targeted workshops to help postgraduate students in the crucial areas of research and writing. You can be part of working groups including but not limited to African Languages, Indigenisation and Knowledge Systems, Crime, Violence and Security, Economic and Industrial Sociology, Family and Population Studies, Gender Studies, Race, Ethnicity and Class, Sociology of Poverty, Inequality and Social Policy, and the Sociology of Schooling.

Recruitment drive for the Sociological Association of South Africa (SASA)

by Teboho Moloko

Are you looking for a learning space to test what you have explored, discovered, or observed in your studies thus far? Are you looking to meet and network with emerging and senior sociologists? Then join the Sociological Association of South Africa (SASA), where you will become acquainted with scholars from over 20 South African universities from varied intellectual disciplines. As a SASA member since 2022, I've personally experienced the many benefits of being part of this community. I believe being a member of



As a member of SASA, you will also be informed about opportunities, including local and international conferences, upcoming webinars, and employment opportunities. Some key offerings in our 2025 seminar series include *Ethics in the Age of AI*, which was held on 18 March, *How to Write a Journal Article*, and *Navigating Post-University (Careers and Networking)*. The dates and times for the upcoming seminars will be confirmed.

It would be remiss of me not to mention that membership in SASA allows you to run for office as one of the associations' elected officials. I currently serve as a council member for the 2024-2025 year. This opportunity has enabled me to strengthen my leadership and governance capabilities.

Click [here](#) for information on how to join and be part of this incredible community of scholars.

One Key Learning from my First SASA Presentation

by Celine Mashelani

I sometimes use the phrase “the shy academic” to describe myself. It can be a very jarring experience to share my work and ideas when dealing with the uncertainty that I am engaging with the theories correctly, or even that an interest in a particular topic or idea is justified. This insecurity has been an ongoing challenge throughout my academic journey and, as a result, conferences and paper presentations have always felt daunting. However, as I go through my PhD journey, I am learning to navigate these fears in different ways.

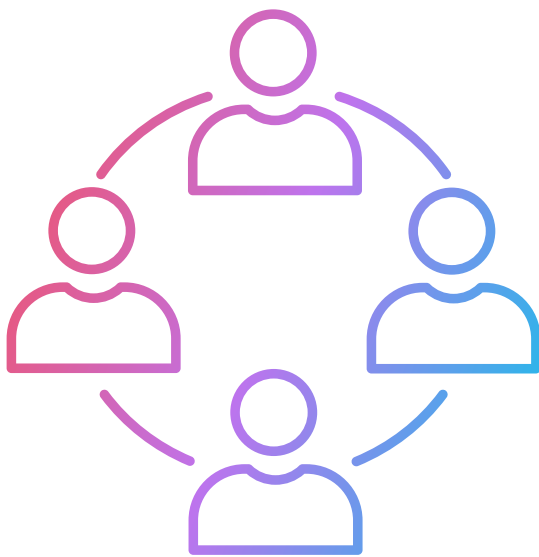
Most recently, I had the opportunity to present at the South African Sociological Association (SASA) conference at the University of Stellenbosch, in July 2024. This was an experience that pushed me to confront these anxieties head on.

It was also my first official SASA presentation and my first one with colleagues within my specific field in the Economic and Industrial Sociology working group – who knew my work well. Leading up to the conference, the expected feelings of excitement and anxiety incrementally bubbled up, although – diligently – I was practicing my talk to anyone who would listen.

My presentation focused on my PhD research on migrant placemaking, specifically, *The Geopolitics of Migrant Workers in Cape Town's Uber Economy*. Fortunately, other conference participants were exploring similar topics, and attending their presentations quickly helped ease some of my anxieties. It also helped that I was fortunate to present after others. I had the opportunity to engage in a vibrant discussion, learn from others, and exchange insights with people whose work I greatly admire, such as Dr. Crispin Chinguno.

People always say, “*You know your research better than anyone else.*”, and that is true! But the moment you're standing in front of an audience, it can feel like everything you crammed just vanishes. I wanted to avoid that, so I practised, and practised, and practised! However, ironically, even with that knowledge, once I started speaking, all my preparation seemed to blur into the background. I managed to present well still, and had a great discussion, but I realise now that I had to bring myself back into the process and into the room.

It was not just about reciting the information but allowing myself to truly engage in the conversation I was bringing. Taking time to listen to the questions I was asked and the constructive comments I received. This would not only allow me to engage the whole experience with more depth but was incredibly useful for further refining my thinking in my own research, which made it an extremely valuable exercise.



Overall, my SASA presentation was a great experience, as was the conference itself. I'm especially grateful for how friendly and welcoming the space was. It left me feeling refreshed and motivated to approach my work with a new mindset. Next time, though, I'll remember to slow down, not speak so fast, and bring myself back into the room.



Students' Involvement - Slangetjebos Nature Reserve fieldwork experience

by Tafadzwa Dzینگwe

My research journey has been personally transformative and intellectually stimulating, from conceptualising the project problem, to developing the research proposal, and completing my fieldwork. I have observed and witnessed how marginalized communities navigate access to both material and non-material basic resources amidst historical and contemporary exclusions.

My PhD study focuses on locals and migrants living in Slangetjebos Nature Reserve in Vrygrond/Capricorn. The study seeks to explore struggles, adaptations, and agency as they occupy this space in claiming their rights to the commons.

Fieldwork was a very eventful phase of my journey. It was filled with challenging experiences yet meaningful conversations that gave meaning to this research through interviews, storytelling, and participant observation. The complexities of social boundaries, spatial distribution, socio-political and economic struggles are some of the narratives emerging from the communities in the Slangetjebos Nature Reserve. Walking through the reserve's boundaries, I witnessed how, despite the deep land contestation and lack of basic services, locals and migrants continue to rely on these spaces. The conversations I had with the locals from the Peninsula and



-migrants from Malawi and Zimbabwe highlight the fluid and often-invisible ways in which people challenge exclusionary conservation measures.

“The complexities of social boundaries, spatial distribution, socio-political and economic struggles are some of the narratives emerging from the communities in the Slangetjebos Nature Reserve.”

Further, they show that the commons are not static but are continuously shaped by power, resistance, and adaptation. My own observations and conversations with the participants have deepened my understanding of both marginalisation and the historical underpinnings of Apartheid, which created borders that lead to people’s marginality. From an ethics standpoint, it is worth highlighting that conducting fieldwork with such a diverse group of both locals

-and migrants in the Slangetjebos Nature Reserve came with its own challenges.

As a researcher, one has to navigate the complex relationships and gain trust. That process itself requires patience and great ethical sensitivity.



As I transition into the writing phase, I carry with me a rich collection of experiences and insights from the voices of people I met. Conducting this fieldwork has sharpened my arguments and has reinforced my commitment to people’s rights. I see myself making great contributions to issues on human nature relations, environmental justice, and urban political ecology, while working to produce knowledge that is meaningful for both the communities involved and academic discourse.



The Postgrad's Guide to a Winning CV: Your Ticket to the Dream Job

by Sifiso Mtshali

The world of work is both scary and exciting. Leaving the comfort of academic routine to pursue the dream of being an adult in all its chaos. The dream is alluring at the end of the day. Making your own money and being able to buy what you want and when you want it. Feels like bliss. But before you take the leap into the working world *qoqa izikhali zakho zempi* and prepare for war.

"Every Battle is Won Before Its Fought"
-Sun Tzu

Creating A Great CV

Success, when it comes to starting a career, simply comes down to preparation.

Your preparation for success ideally starts from your first year in university. Being a mentor, tutor, or any other kind of volunteer work, plus paid work that you have done until now, is the first step of preparation that you need to attain the success that you want. All these roles demonstrate skills that you have acquired that align with your career aspirations.

Once you have the skills and have obtained your degree(s) (Inshallah), the next step is your CV!

Your CV is what essentially makes the difference in you getting the job you want. An Applicant Tracking System (ATS) friendly CV is what you should aim for.

The company you are applying to will most likely use ATS software to scan through the top applicants.

The system, simply put, scans for keywords that align with the role requirements of the role. The more keywords you have, the higher your score and the higher the likelihood of you moving onto the next stage.

For assistance on how to write an ATS friendly CV click the [link](#) and remember to schedule a consultation with UCT's Careers Service to ensure your CV not only beats the system but also confidently positions you as the top candidate for your dream job.





The Smartest Person in the Room or the Biggest Fraud? A Postgrad's Guide to Imposter Syndrome

by Bimpe Ojetimi

So, you've just climbed, clawed, and canoodled (figuratively speaking) your way into a postgraduate degree at UCT. But what now? It is crazy how quickly the degree you worked so hard to get into becomes the very thing that makes you question whether you belong at all. Although university programmes try to help postgraduates adjust to the demands of academia, imposter syndrome can make it difficult to see yourself as the capable and deserving candidate you are.

As we try to balance all the newness that comes with postgrad — whether that's new lecturers, new friends, new schedules, or new processes — the sink-or-swim feeling that somehow manages to never really go away can lead to feelings of inadequacy. With all this change, it's easy to feel like you're barely keeping up — cue imposter syndrome. Although the phrase has become increasingly popular, academics are particularly vulnerable to feelings of impostorism. Why, you ask? Because one of the inherent characteristics of universities is having an isolating and aggressively competitive culture, therefore becoming environments that can cultivate feelings of impostorism among both students and staff. This becomes even more compounded for women and members of marginalised ethnic and racial groups.

I think another large part of feeling like an impostor in postgrad comes from the anxiety of not feeling like you're good enough.

It's almost like you're one bad mark away from everyone finding out you were never supposed to get in to start with, despite you displaying every requirement of knowledge and expertise to put you in the position to excel in these programmes. But sometimes, even a million red flags can't talk you out of negative self-beliefs.

So, all of that being said, how does one actually make the mindset change to fix it? Well, the bad news? You probably won't overcome it alone. The good news? You don't have to. A major stronghold that imposter syndrome has on academics is its isolating nature.

“...how does one actually make the mindset change to fix it? Well, the bad news? You probably won't overcome it alone.

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It's easy to fall into a downward spiral of negative self-talk and despair but communicating your insecurities with those in similar positions as you are, is just one of many ways to keep yourself standing on two feet. Your classmates have jumped all the same hurdles as you to reach this point. The supervisor you look up to as if they hold the world's knowledge in their hands was once a student navigating the same uncertainties. Throughout my master's research, I quickly learned that while my supervisor was incredibly knowledgeable, she also approached the process as a learning journey for both of us. She guided me through the project with clarity and insight, helping me refine my ideas while also being clear when I was going astray. Her support reminded me that expertise isn't about knowing everything from the start but about being open to growth and learning along the way.

So, the next time you hear that little voice whispering that you don't belong, remember, growth comes from discomfort, and feeling like an impostor just means you're pushing yourself beyond what you once thought possible. Keep going! You'll make it to exactly where you're meant to be.



Masters

Juhi Kasan

Akhona Mxatule

Solomon Ndondo

Zethu Albanie.

PhD graduates

Tunde Adeyemo Alabi: *Experiences and integration of Nigerian migrants in the United States and United Kingdom*

Emma Daitz: *"Speaking as One African to Another": Friendship as politics in the letters of Robert Sobukwe and Benjamin Pogrund, 1960-1969*

Fazilla Farouk: *At the intersection of automation, unemployment in inequality in South Africa*

Aisha Lorgat: *The right to work and rights in the workplace: securing the socio-economic rights of foreign migrant workers in the construction sector in Cape Town*

Teboho Moleko: *The exploration of the experiences of alienation in education for rural high school learners in the Eastern Cape province, South Africa*

Sophia Sanan: *The African art collection in the Iziko South African National Gallery: past, present and possible futures*

Bianca Tame: *Comfortable others: the process of identity niching among private employment agencies, employers and migrant domestic workers*



List of Contributors



- Jeremy Seekings is a Professor in the Sociology department.
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- Teboho Moleko is an Adjunct Lecturer in the Sociology department.
- Celine Masheleni is a PhD candidate in Sociology.

- Tafadzwa Dzingwe is a PhD candidate in Sociology and Research Assistant for the Repair Project.
- Vayda Megannon is a PhD candidate in Sociology and Programme Manager for the Family Caregiving Programme.
- Yonela Toshé-Mlambo is a PhD candidate in the Centre for African Studies and a Teacher Assistant in the Sociology department.
- Thelma Nyarhi is a PhD candidate in Anthropology and the Tutor Coordinator in the Sociology department.
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- Sandile Dube is a MA candidate in the Sociology department.
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SCAN ME

NOTICE BOARD

1 APPLICATION'S

Student Essay Competition for the South African Sociological Association (SASA) - see [Student Essay Competition](#). Deadline for the competition is 15th May 2025. All Sociology Honours, Master's and PhD students are encouraged to enter the competition.

Postgraduate funding opportunity: The Mandela Rhodes Scholarship - Hons & Master's students - see [Explore & Apply | The Mandela Rhodes Foundation](#). Important: Applications close 21 April 2025.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

Sociology



Postgraduate Proposal Writing Workshop with A/Professor Elona Toska, 7th April, 10am-12pm. Venue TBC

The annual UCT Open Day 12 April 2025 - see: [UCT Open Day 2025](#) | [University of Cape Town](#)

Seminar Series:

The experiences of high school learners attending schools in rural areas in the Eastern Cape: Reflections from PhD study." Dr. Teboho Moleko (Sociology, UCT) on Apr 14, 1 pm. Sociology Seminar Room.

Black Consciousness and "poetics of Death" in BC thinking. Dr. Gregory Maxaulane (Political Studies, UCT) on May 19, 1 pm. Sociology Seminar Room.