
Author biographies

Dr Xena Cupido is the director of the Fundani Centre for Higher Education Development, at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. Her scholarly pursuits centre around the critical domain of student engagement and success, with a specific focus on designing for social justice. Recently, Dr Cupido has also demonstrated a growing interest in the integration of digital technologies as an instrumental pedagogical tool to optimise the process of learning and teaching.

Dr Dalray Gradidge is a research psychologist at Emthonjeni Student Wellness, Nelson Mandela University, Gqeberha, South Africa. Dr Gradidge has worked as a research psychologist in the field of student mental health in higher education for two decades. In recognition of her expertise, she was appointed as the chairperson of the Nelson Mandela University's Research Ethics Committee for Human Research in 2022. Furthermore, she was appointed in 2022 to serve on the inaugural Research Ethics Committee for the Council for Higher Education, showcasing her commitment to promoting ethical research practices at a broader national level.

Reggiswindis Thobile Hlengwa has practised child and youth care in various residential settings from 1991-1998. She is registered as an assessor with the Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA). In 2004 she obtained a B. Tech degree in child and youth development at the then Durban Institute of Technology (DIT). She has an Honours degree in social development from the University of Cape Town (UCT) and a master's degree in education (higher education) from the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Her research interests include child and youth care practice and issues affecting students in institutions of higher learning. Ms. Hlengwa has been a lecturer in the Child and Youth Care Programme at Durban University of Technology from 2007 to date.

Prof. Thierry M. Luescher is Strategic Lead: Equitable Education in the Equitable Education and Economies research division of the Human Sciences Research Council, Cape Town, South Africa. He is also adjunct professor of critical studies in higher education transformation at Nelson Mandela University, Gqeberha, and a research fellow in higher education at the University of the Free State, South Africa. Prof. Luescher has been awarded international excellence awards for his research on student affairs by NASPA (2023) and ACPA (2021). He is an NRF-rated researcher and a founding member of the JSAA Editorial Executive. Thierry's recent books include *#FeesMustFall and its Aftermath: Violence, Wellbeing and the Student Movement in South Africa* (HSRC Press, 2022, with Angelina Wilson-Fadiji, Keamogetse Morwe et al.).

Prof. Matete Madiba is Deputy Vice Chancellor: Student Development and Support at the University of the Western Cape. She also holds the position of associate professor in

the Faculty of Education (Business and Science Education Cluster). She was previously appointed as deputy director of education innovation and thereafter director of student affairs at the University of Pretoria (UP). Her research and development interests are in higher education transformation and innovation, including policy, curriculum development, student success, holistic student development, co-curricular design, student leadership development and the use of technology in higher education. She has led innovative projects on curriculum mapping and analytics, student online elections and e-voting, and the development and implementation of a mental health bot. She was part of the task team that led the writing of the UP Curriculum Transformation Framework, and she chaired the UP Institutional Transformation Committee (ITC) for three years. She previously served as chair of HELTASA (Higher Education Learning and Teaching of Southern Africa). She recently received a leadership award from SAASSAP (South African Association of Senior Student Affairs Professionals) in recognition of her contribution and leadership in the association. She has guest-edited issues for JSAA (*Journal of Student Affairs in Africa*) and the SAJHE (*South African Journal of Higher Education*). She is also a research mentor and supervisor. She was the project leader for the UP Girls for Girls (G4G) project, a mentoring and leadership project for young women, aimed at promoting gender equity. She participated in Tuning Africa, a project of the African Union on the harmonisation of degrees across the continent. She has collaborated with international partners across a number of universities including the University of Maastricht in The Netherlands, DEUSTO University in Spain, The Open University in the UK and New York University where she has also done guest lecturing.

Dr Curwyn Mapaling is a research associate and clinical psychologist in the Department of Industrial Engineering at Nelson Mandela University. His research explores student and staff well-being as well as student success in higher education, particularly in engineering education contexts, and beyond. He is currently investigating the well-being of engineering lecturers and their discourses related to teaching and learning, conducting comparative analyses between the Global South and the Global North.

Itumeleng Masisi is a lecturer and PhD candidate in the Department of Psychology at the University of South Africa. Her doctoral dissertation focuses on women with a history of adverse childhood experiences and how they navigate motherhood. Her research interests include the experiences of motherhood, adverse childhood experiences, intergenerational/transgenerational trauma, and aspects of education.

Dr Henry D. Mason is a social science researcher at the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) in Pretoria, South Africa. He is registered as a psychologist with the Health Professions Council of South Africa and holds a C2-rating from the National Research Foundation (NRF) in South Africa. Henry has published 62 articles in scientific journals and read over 100 conference papers. Henry's research interests focus on studying the

role and application of positive psychology and student development theory in relation to student success.

Andile Samkele Masuku is a young dynamic and goal-oriented student affairs professional with a Master of Health Sciences and a Bachelor in Child and Youth Care. Currently pursuing a Doctor of Philosophy in Health Sciences, he has extensive experience working with tertiary-level students. Highly proficient in enhancing the quality and participation in student leadership within student governance, he excels in coordinating co-curricular programmes and community service activities for Student Representative Councils (SRCs), as well as facilitating effective induction programmes for student leaders. As a dedicated scholar, he has published research focusing on student mental health, disability, and the child and youth care field. His passion lies in holistic student support and student success, actively contributing to initiatives and committees that play a pivotal role in student development and engagement.

Dr Gregory Mitchell is a senior clinical psychologist at Nelson Mandela University's Emthonjeni Student Wellness unit in Gqeberha, South Africa. He earned his psychology degrees, from undergraduate to doctorate, at Nelson Mandela University and holds a Bachelor in Sacred Theology from the Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas. Practising as a psychologist since 2014, Dr Mitchell is also an ordained minister with two decades of pastoral and non-profit experience in the Eastern Cape.

Dr Irene Patience Mohasoa is a Walter Sisulu University Senior Leadership Committee member, serving as the executive director of student affairs. She previously was executive director of student affairs and residences at Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University and served as the acting dean of students at the University of South Africa. Additionally, she served as the deputy director of student development and the Advocacy and Resource Centre for Students with Disabilities at the same university. She was a part of a project team that integrated HIV and AIDS into the academic curricula of colleges at the University of South Africa. She is the deputy chairperson of the Student Services Council at Walter Sisulu University and the Governance and Policy Committee chairperson within the Institutional Forum. She established and launched the Walter Sisulu University Graduate Employability Programme in collaboration with various faculties. She has also overseen the creation of the Student Women Economic Empowerment Programme (SWEPP) and supported a research project to explore the barriers female entrepreneurs face in higher education institutions in collaboration with Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education (EDHE). She has supported entrepreneurship exchange programmes for female students, giving them a unique opportunity to collaborate with female student entrepreneurs from the London School of Economics and Political Science, Oxford University, and Strathmore University. She has worked with several African universities, including the University of Kampala and the University of Dar es Salaam, on student governance and leadership development

initiatives. In her role as a research mentor and supervisor, her research and development interests in higher education include conflict resolution, disability, gender-based violence, gender diversity, e-voting, policy development, restorative justice, SRC elections, student entrepreneurship, student success, health and wellness, governance, leadership development, and transformation within higher education. She has co-guest-edited an issue of the *Journal of Student Affairs in Africa* (JSAA). She is also the deputy secretary-general of the South African Association of Senior Student Affairs Professionals (SAASSAP). She recently received a special award for her leadership role in the National Executive Committee of SAASSAP.

Prof. Teboho Moja is clinical professor of higher education at New York University in the USA. She is also a visiting research fellow of the Centre for the Advancement of Scholarship at the University of Pretoria, South Africa, and an extraordinary professor at the Institute of Post School Studies, University of the Western Cape, South Africa. Prof. Moja is a recipient of the Lifetime Achiever Award of the National Research Foundation of South Africa. She is JSAA's Editor-in-chief.

Prof. Janice K. Moodley-Marie, PhD, is a psychological practitioner and associate professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of South Africa. She is presently seconded to the College of Human Sciences as the college's research ethics and integrity advisor. She serves as the deputy chair for the College of Human Sciences Academic Integrity Committee. She has also served as a member of the University of South Africa's Institutional Student Disciplinary Committee and is a member of the Institutional Academic Integrity module development team. She obtained her PhD from the University of the Witwatersrand. Her research is multidisciplinary and critically oriented and challenges the discursive interactions between psychology, health, gender, racial inequalities and politics within the Global South. She is, therefore, well positioned to serve as an international representative on the Executive Committee for the International Society of Critical Health Psychology.

Dr Clement Moreku is the dean of students at the Durban University of Technology (DUT) where he oversees the design, development and implementation of a comprehensive set of student services and development (SSD) policies, plans, procedures and systems in the following student areas: counselling and health; student governance and development; student housing; sports administration; and financial aid. Dr Moreku has significant experience in dealing with students as well as an in-depth understanding of student affairs. His research interest is in co-operative governance in higher education institutions and holistic student support and student success. He has supervised Honours students and co-supervised a master's and a PhD student.

Kitso Morgan is an intern at the UFS Health and Wellness Centre. Being a recent master's graduate, her work focused on student leadership development; this centred around

gaining more knowledge about student leadership as well as contributing to existing student leadership knowledge.

Dr Sindi Msimango is currently a postdoctoral research fellow in the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa. She completed her PhD in higher education leadership and management at the University of Johannesburg in 2020. Dr Msimango has taught several courses, been a panellist on master's and PhD proposal defence panels and has two master's students under her supervision. She has spent her entire formal career in research and management consulting roles in the corporate sector.

Prof. Alfred Mvunyelwa Msomi is a head of department in mathematical sciences (substantive) and currently an acting dean in the Faculty of Applied and Health Sciences at the Mangosuthu University of Technology. His research delves into pure mathematics and mathematics education, focusing on educational technology, particularly in STEM. His focus in educational technology is intended to bridge gaps by addressing resistance on its uptake, contradictions and fostering intercultural understanding. Prof. Msomi enhances student and staff engagement and educational outcomes.

Nomalungelo Ntlokwana is a counselling psychologist and the director of Emthonjeni Student Wellness, Nelson Mandela University, Gqeberha, South Africa. Her work involves the promotion of student mental health initiatives, and she previously served on the Southern African Association for Counselling and Development in Higher Education's National Executive Committee and is a certified international peer educator trainer. She has published in peer-reviewed journals, including a study on peer helping programmes in the *Journal for Higher Education*.

Dr Bianca Rochelle Parry is the programme director for research at the Centre for Mediation in Africa (CMA) at the University of Pretoria in South Africa. As a National Research Foundation (NRF) Y2 rated researcher, she has published widely on the lived experiences of marginalised and vulnerable communities in South African society, with a specific concentration on women and gender. Her research has been recognised with a Special Commendation from the British Psychological Society's Psychology of Women and Equalities Section. In addition, her research findings have been broadcast by the local media via radio, television, podcast, and news articles, garnering much public interest. Her research project on the development of academic resources and accessible online platforms to democratise educational opportunities for women in conflict with the law, was awarded a research grant by the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS).

Dr Neo Pule is a senior lecturer in psychology at the University of Johannesburg and visiting research fellow at the University of Central Lancashire (UK), while also registered

as a counselling psychologist with the Health Professions Council of South Africa. She is an experienced higher education and student development practitioner and researcher. Her areas of interest include decolonising research methodology, social justice, student leadership and scholarship of integration. Her social dreaming work includes projects in South Africa and the UK. Dr Pule is currently one of the directors of the Centre for Social Dreaming.

Dr Ekaterina Rzyankina is a lecturer and research associate at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. Her research delves into how cultural and historical factors shape learning, particularly in STEM, and how digital technology can bridge gaps by addressing contradictions and fostering intercultural understanding. Dr Rzyankina enhances student engagement and educational outcomes.

Prof. Birgit Schreiber, PhD, is a consulting expert for the international higher education sector, has served in senior leadership positions, with expertise in Sub-Saharan Africa and Europe higher education with a focus on student success, leadership, digitalisation, DEI and gender. Birgit has worked with a range of national and trans-national bodies, notably USAf South Africa, DAAD and ERASMUS, teaches, does research and supervision, programme design and policy development. She is extraordinary professor at her alma mater, UWC, in Cape Town. Her PhD is in psychology, and she is registered as a psychotherapist with the HPCSA. Birgit has published over 90 articles, chapters and books, on various themes around social justice, student affairs, student engagement and higher education leadership, gender and SDGs. She is the founding editor and member of the editorial executive of the *Journal for Student Affairs in Africa* (JSAA); she is on the board of the *Journal of College Student Development* (JCSJ) and a column editor for the *Journal of College and Character* (JCC). After being the Africa chair, she serves as the vice-president of the International Association of Student Affairs and Services. She has received numerous awards, most recently the Noam Chomsky Award for international research and the NASPA Award for International Practice. She is a member of the Africa Centre at the Albert Ludwig University Freiburg, Germany, research associate at Pretoria University, Germany director for the STAR Scholars Network and sits on the board of the South African National Research Centre at the University of Johannesburg and the CASHEF at the University of Pretoria.

Dr Thobeka Shoji-Nxumalo is an accomplished individual, holding a PhD in higher education studies from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, focusing on student leadership, gender and student development. She also holds a master's degree in educational psychology from the same institution. Her expertise lies in student services, with a particular focus on student governance and leadership, which she has been actively involved in since 2017. Notably, Shoji-Nxumalo held a permanent position at DUT as a student life officer under the Department of Student Governance and Development. In this role, she effectively oversaw the operations of governance student leadership

structures, contributing to the student community at the institution. She has also worked on community engagement projects. She has a strong passion for research and has also worked as a researcher. Shoji-Nxumalo is also known for her involvement in university committees, actively contributing to the growth and development of student leaders. She has participated in many policy developments and implementations. Her hard work and excellence were recognised when she was awarded the prestigious DUT's Vice Chancellor's Hlomisa Leadership Scholarship in 2020.

Prof. Maureen Nokuthula Sibiya is the vice-chancellor and principal at Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT). She is a rated scientist by the National Research Foundation (NRF). Her research area is primary healthcare with a specific focus on maternal and child health. She has published over 120 journal articles, conference proceedings, books, and book chapters. She has successfully supervised 62 master's and 34 PhD students.

Dr Kolisa Siquko is an executive operations manager for the School of Dentistry at Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University. She is interested and will continue to publish in education humanities and on the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Dr Riashna Sithaldeen holds a PhD in archaeology and began her career with 10 years teaching in the science extended degree programme. Through integrating her disciplinary skills with her educational practice, her work now largely focuses on academic advising and academic analytics for student success. In her role as deputy director in the Academic Development Programme she has responsibility for several strategic projects for student success, including academic advising and also serves as institutional lead to the national Siyaphumelela network for student success.

Nokukhanya Thembane is a senior lecturer at Mangosuthu University of Technology, where she engages in initiatives in the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) to foster reform in higher education. A certified clinical pathology medical laboratory scientist, her research aims to address disparities in medical education and public health issues particularly for disenfranchised communities. She believes in the philosophy of higher education as a tool for social reform, aiming to integrate education, science, and community-based solutions to promote health equity.

Prof. Saloshna Vandeyar, a National Research Foundation rated scientist, is Deputy Dean: Research and Post Graduate Education at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. Her research focus is on social, cultural and cognitive justice education with a focus on (race) inequalities.