Global Conversations on Postgraduate Education:
Exploring Pan-African Connections

June 29, 2022

Webinar co-led with
Webinar Logistics

➢ Please submit questions at any time through the Q&A feature in your Zoom toolbar.

➢ The recording and presentation slides will be emailed to registrants as well as posted to the CGS website after the live event.

➢ The chat is available to all attendees. Conversation in the chat among attendees is encouraged.
Agenda

• Welcome
  Suzanne Ortega, Council of Graduate Schools
  Shireen Motala, University of Johannesburg
  Stephanie Burton, Community of Practice in Postgraduate Education and Scholarship, Universities South Africa

• Introduction of Speakers
  Janet Rutledge, Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School
  University of Maryland, Baltimore County

• Postgraduate Education in Africa: Challenges and Prospects
  Charles Ambler, University of Texas El Paso

• Roundtable Discussion
  Robert Darko Osei, University of Ghana, Dean, School of Graduate Studies
  Fulufhelo Godfrey Netswera, Executive Dean, Faculty of Management Sciences, Durban University of Technology
  Adham Ramadan, Associate Provost for Research and Dean of Graduate Studies, The American University in Cairo

• Moderated Questions
About CGS

~500 U.S. and Canadian Member Universities
30 International Members

CGS Members by Carnegie Classification

1,849,606 Aggregate Enrollment (master’s & doctoral students)

CGS Members in the U.S. Award

476,616 master’s degrees annually
60,823 doctoral degrees annually

Sources: Council of Graduate Schools and U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS. All CGS statistics, excluding the total numbers of institutional members, are as of August 2018.
Pan African Global Conversations
Council of Graduate Schools (CGS)

SARChI Chair in Teaching & Learning
University of Johannesburg South Africa

Prof Shireen Motala
29 June 2022
The focus of the research programme expands on the priority areas of academic teaching, academic learning and the academic curriculum within the following themes:

Theme 1: Teaching Excellence: Undergraduate Education
Theme 2: Equity, Access and Success: Undergraduate Education

**Theme 3: Access and Success: Supervision for Quality Postgraduate education**

Theme 4: Socially Just Pedagogy and the Decolonisation of the Curriculum

- Conceptual starting points, social justice, cognitive justice, epistemic access, equity, humanizing pedagogies
- Chair expectations – student and research outputs, national and global partnerships, knowledge contribution

**Key Partners:**
- AMCHES, CITE - SARChI Chair ITE, PGS, U21 network, USAF Council of Graduate Schools, local and international partners
- New partners, those present here today, and ongoing consultations with DVCs Research and T&L, CHE, NRF
Key Issues in current Research in PG SoTL and contextual issues

KEY ISSUES
- Does focus on scale compromise quality in postgraduate studies?
- Mismatch between resource allocation and ambition institutionally and nationally (NDP)
- Address disciplinary differences and equitable access in postgraduate pathways
- Modelling researcher capacity development in postgraduate education
- Pedagogical issues and the scholarship of postgraduate T&L
- Critical look at postgraduate ADS, does “deficit” model guide interventions
- The role and purpose of the doctorate and doctorateness
- The pedagogy of supervision, decolonized approaches
- During COVID-19, focus on technology and different modalities to deliver postgraduate teaching and learning and impact on research process
Aim and Impact

On **policy making**, institutional and system-wide regulations and practices in Southern Africa. Contributing to **discourses, debates, and research** on teaching and learning Nationally, the Global South  and Internationally

Sharpen **philosophical and theoretical stances** that inform the curriculum and pedagogical practices Africa-wide/internationally

Strategize around the levels of visible contribution, content, and actions, based on demands/response analysis of audiences of the Chair, and its advisory group through the Chair leadership, and research teams contribution

Measure impact of the contribution to scholarship, **in a Pan African and global south context through enhanced partnerships**
Developing Research Areas

- Supervision models, and its relationship to the postgraduate life cycle, retention and completion
- Decolonization of research and supervision
- Models of support, what works, mentorship, peer support, and the ‘third space’, develop a SA vitae framework (UK model)
- Tracking the postgraduate journey, what contributes to success, dropout, stop in and out
- Academic literacies and the role of writing support
- Transformative and humanizing pedagogies and social justice within doctoral studies
- Best practice and innovation in postgraduate education
- Knowledge construction, a decolonized postgraduate curriculum and assessment
Unresolved problematic in PG Education

Photoagraph: https://alchetron.com/Rhodes-Must-Fall
**Theme 3: SARChI Chair - Postgraduate teaching and learning**

**Summary of Research Activities**

**Activities:** PG T&L workshops from November 2020 led to the establishment of a reference group, national & international partnerships

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**Differentiation in SA HE & Profile of postgraduate studies, size and shape** CHE supported

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**Supervision models** and their relationship to postgraduate completion. Analyse CHE/NRF doctoral review

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**Decolonization of supervision**
Decolonial knowledge building, decolonisation within African universities related to PG T&L, gender

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**Rethinking the doctoral process**
Conceptual, creative learning journeys for resilient academic identities, critical discourses on the ‘knowledge economy’

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**IKS and doctoral education** Joint project with the Prof C Manathunga Australia (ARC funded)
Establishing a pan African graduate network with Prof Suzanne Ortega, president CGS
Book project on postgraduate T&L in the Global South with U21 partners (University of Chile, Hong Kong & India)
Collaboration Themes

Community

Domain

Practice

Educational Research HE

Supervisors, PG Students, Collaborators

Communities of Practice and global networks

Joint seminar programme, Scholarly engagement, Knowledge exchange, bringing in our contacts, north/south and national

M. Keane
One of the key recommendations of the study was for the establishment of a sector-wide community of practice focusing on postgraduate education and supervision, and the development of early career researchers and academics.
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

A national strategy group focusing on postgraduate education -

A national Community of Practice on postgraduate education and training was proposed.

- A forum for sharing of best practice
- A strategic think tank
- A lobby to advocate for matters relating to postgraduate education
- Coordination of national activities focussing on postgraduate training and capacity development
- A national platform for discussion, interaction and recommendations
- Collation of information from participating universities
- Facilitation of cooperation and collaboration.
COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

A community of practice (CoP)

• is a “group of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis.” (Wenger, 2002)
• facilitates/enhances learning around a particular topic and can help/enable people in their work
• is an acknowledged part of organisational development

Key components

• A core group | Coordinator(s) and managers of the COP, probably from partner institutions
• Inner circle | Steering group - engaged experts – academics, agency representatives, ...
• Outer circle | Any interested members ranging from:
  • Novices wanting to learn
  • Practitioners wanting to share/learn
  • Collaborating sector-specific focus groups
• Knowledge repository
GAPS AND NEEDS IDENTIFIED

Areas of concern:  Training and supervision | Networking | Monitoring and evaluation

Supervision
Identified needs included improved supervisor training and mentorship for young academics.

Several universities noted that they had insufficient capacity for training of supervisors, and limited internal capacity to supervise postgraduate research-based programmes.

Concerns were expressed about the quality of the supervision, and about stress experienced by supervisors and postgraduate students.

Mentorship
It has been noted widely that ECAs tend to be lacking in supervisory skills, and there is need for mentors to advise them, in addition to training programmes.

There is a need for experienced mentors (who can be from outside of the institution) with expertise in specific fields as well as for general guidance. It has been noted that there may be issues regarding institutional culture and power dynamics, in internal mentorship programmes. A shortage of black South African mentors was also noted.
PROPOSED PROGRAMME FOR CoP IN 2022

Further consultation and information gathering

- Compilation of more detailed information on current capacity and programmes at universities – discussions with representatives of all universities.
- The identified gaps and needs will form the first focus areas for the CoP.

Activities of the CoP

- Support for training of supervisors
  - quality, dynamics,
- Development of postgraduate supervision models and (online) modules
  Structure and collaboration, Transformative models
- Focus on teaching and learning at higher degree levels
  Doctorateness, Theoretical approaches, Social justice and equity
- Advocacy in matters relating to postgraduate education
  Funding / resourcing, accountability and responsibility
- Coordination of national activities such as conferences, colloquia, workshops, and seminars.
  including student colloquia, SARChI seminars, DD Review
THANK YOU
Council of Graduate School Webinar
June 29, 2022

Postgraduate Education in Africa: Challenges and Prospects

Charles Ambler
Formerly Dean-in-Residence
Council of Graduate Schools
Professor Emeritus of History and former Dean of the Graduate School
University of Texas at El Paso
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Background: Higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa

- The CGS Africa/Global South Project
- Independence in West, East and Central Africa: colonial heritage vs universities for national development
  - S.O. Biobaku, later Vice Chancellor of Univ of Nigeria, Lagos: universities “really are the most urgent need in Africa…. African universities must enter the lists in the adventure of nation building.” (1963)
- 1970s oil crisis and economic recession and political upheaval
- 1980s IMF/World Bank neo-liberal structural adjustment program
- 1990s change: higher education and the “knowledge economy”
Postgraduate Education Trends

• Historical legacy
  • AFGRAD/ATLAS and similar international programs
  • Growth in higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa:
    1970s: approximately 200,000 univ students
    2015: 6 million+
    Large increase in the numbers of institutions
    1990s shift—World Bank
    Knowledge economy and global competitiveness

• Higher education in South Africa
Building Postgraduate Education
“Africa Rising”

Carnegie Foundation 2013:
“Broad agreement that Africa needs tens of thousands more PhDs in order to renew an aging professoriate, staff the rapidly expanding higher education field, boost research and generate the high-level skills growing economies need”

How will that need be met? Nigeria: 250,000 postgrad students at more than 75 institutions

What roles do global partnerships have to play?
What do we Know?


Issues in the Development of Postgraduate Education

• Should postgraduate education be a priority for African universities? Where will the resources come from?
• Should PhD and other postgrad programs be concentrated in relatively elite universities (AARUs) or dispersed?
• How to align PhD programming, research investment and economic development? What place is there for social science and humanities?
• How to resolve the tension between equity and “quality”?
• Are traditional models of PhD training sustainable?
• What about master’s education, and in particular professional master’s programs?
Key Initiatives

• World Bank African Centers of Excellence (ACE), 2014-
• Pan Africa University (PAU) [https://pau-au.Africa/], 2010-
• African Economic Research Consortium (AERC), 1988-
• RUFORUM (Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture) [https://www.ruforum.org/about-us], 2004
• Carnegie Corporation/American Council of Learned Societies, Fellowships for Africa-based PhD students and post docs in the humanities [https://www.acls.org/Competitions-and-Dealines/African-Humanities-Program]