

University of the Free State

Constitution of The International Institute for Studies in Race, Reconciliation and Social Justice

(Approved by Council on 4 June 2010.)

1. Name

The International Institute for Studies in Race, Reconciliation and Social Justice

2. Vision

The Institute seeks to be a premier international site for research on race, reconciliation and social justice.

3. Mission and aims

The mission of the Institute entails studying the manifestations of race in higher education, linking such inquiry to the related matters of reconciliation and social justice in the South African context against the backdrop of racial, ethnic and tribal conflicts elsewhere in the world.

The Institute will thus aim to:

- 3.1 conduct studies on race, reconciliation and social justice; in particular, the Institute will regard studies on reconciliation and forgiveness as crucial dimensions of the pursuit of democracy and social justice;
- 3.2 generate comparative and international research on its scholarship and practice, establishing an international presence by entering into dialogue regarding the experiences of racial and ethnic violence in countries such as Rwanda;
- 3.3 pursue scholarship on race studies (in a broader sense than diversity) in university contexts, and (while the work of the Institute will no doubt be distributed widely within communities and on campuses), to establish itself as a premier international site of research on race, reconciliation and social justice;
- 3.4 serve the national and international higher education (HE) environments through a proactive approach, closely and strategically linking academic research with practical application, thus contributing to viable and contextually relevant interventions in these environments; and
- 3.5 serve the institutional needs of the UFS by becoming a forum with research linked to social, institutional and curricular change within the university environment.

4. Operational principles

Pursuant of the vision, mission and aims of the Institute, its operational principles will be concretised in the following areas:

4.1 Research

The Institute will primarily be a scholarly Institute concentrating on high-quality research. The Institute envisages becoming an inter- and transdisciplinary intellectual hub for scholars interested in doing research on issues identified by the Institute.

4.2 Practice

Due to the fact that the Institute was born out of a need identified on the campus of the UFS, it is imperative for the institute to contribute to the discourse on race, reconciliation and social justice within its host institution.

For this reason, the concept of the UFS as a “living laboratory” and the utilisation of evidence-based practice will remain important to the Institute. Through its research, the Institute will endeavour to contribute to a better understanding of the challenges facing the UFS and to addressing the identified challenges.

4.3 Engagement with communities

The Institute will reach out and empower its stakeholder communities through research and ongoing involvement regarding issues of race, reconciliation and social justice.

4.4 Collaboration and networking

Even though the Institute will be tasked with creating a niche for itself, it will endeavour to collaborate with other institutions in the fulfilment of its mission and aims.

4.5 Fostering dialogue

The Institute acknowledges the important role of profound dialogue in exploring the roots of challenges facing the HE (and broader) environment as far as race, reconciliation and social justice are concerned. The exploration, through dialogue, of current individual and collective presuppositions, ideas, beliefs and feelings that control interactions pertaining to race, reconciliation and social justice, will be of utmost importance to the Institute.

5. Expected contributions by the Institute

The Institute expects to:

- 5.1 publish high-level research in books and refereed journals in a productive scholarly environment;
- 5.2 convene national and international conferences, seminars and debates on matters of race, reconciliation and social justice;
- 5.3 create an environment that attracts leading minds, as senior fellows, to the Institute to deliberate on matters of race, reconciliation and social justice;
- 5.4 provide a training and development platform for senior undergraduate and postgraduate students wishing to develop their long-term research agendas and identities regarding the themes of the Institute, i.e. race, reconciliation and social justice studies;
- 5.5 contribute to the creation of national and international networks active in the realms of race, reconciliation and social justice; and
- 5.6 contribute to the creation of national and international dialogue platforms pertaining to race, reconciliation and social justice.

6. Governance

- 6.1 The Institute shall be accountable to the Senate of the UFS via the Executive Committee of the Senate (ECS).
- 6.2 The Institute shall operate under the auspices of the Office of the Vice-Chancellor of the UFS and shall be supported operationally by the Office of the Senior Vice-Rector of the UFS.
- 6.3 The Institute shall fall under a Board which shall consist of 10 leading scholars concerned with issues of race, reconciliation and social justice.
- 6.4 The Board shall be chaired by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Free State.
- 6.5 Five members of the Board (including the Vice-Chancellor) shall be professors from the UFS, drawn from the various faculties based on relevant expertise.

- 6.6 Four other members of the Board shall be drawn from universities, foundations or non-governmental organisations elsewhere in South Africa and abroad.
- 6.7 At least one member shall be a leading international scholar working in an associated field such as reconciliation studies.
- 6.8 The Board may co-opt additional members if necessary and will be tasked with the creation of an advisory panel of eminent academics and practitioners to advise the Institute regarding its mission and aims.
- 6.9 The Board shall meet as often as is deemed necessary, but at least twice a year.
- 6.10 The terms of office for all Board members, with the exception of the Vice-Chancellor and the Director, shall be three years. Members may be reappointed for more than one term.
- 6.11 Fifty per cent of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum.
- 6.12 The chairperson of the meeting shall have a deciding vote.
- 6.13 The Director or his/her appointee shall act as secretariat to the Board (also refer to par. 8 of the Constitution).
- 6.14 The Board shall be tasked with the supervision of the Institute and shall, amongst others:
- advise the Director of the Institute on the attainment of the Institute's mission;
 - exercise control over the Director regarding the proper fulfilment of the duties of the Institute and the financial management of the Institute;
 - through the Director, submit an annual report to the Senate of the UFS regarding the activities and management of the Institute;
 - advise the Director of the Institute regarding permanent and project appointments to the Institute; and
 - assist the Director in the efficient management of internal and external matters affecting the Institute.

7. Management

- 7.1 The Director shall be the executive manager of the Institute.
- 7.2 Subject to the control, supervision and discipline of the Vice-Chancellor and/or the Senior Vice-Rector of the UFS, the Director will be responsible for:
- the establishment of the organisational and staff structure of the Institute;
 - the effective management of the activities of the Institute;
 - the realisation of the mission of the Institute;
 - the management, coordination and innovation of the research, practical, community engagement and publication activities of the Institute;
 - the coordination of research and the publication thereof;
 - the coordination of fundraising and fund administration for the Institute;
 - the promotion of contact, collaboration and networking with relevant institutions;
 - efficient record-keeping and the financial management of the Institute; and
 - the compilation of the annual report of the Institute.
- 7.3 The Director will be supported by relevant staff members who will be appointed according to the approved policies and procedures of the UFS.
- 7.4 The UFS will, as a sign of its institutional commitment, cover the costs of the Director of the Institute on a permanent basis. The Director shall report to the Vice-Chancellor and be appointed as one of the senior professors of the institution (a new category of UFS appointments).

8. Staffing

- 8.1 A programme administrator will organise all meetings, conferences, seminars and other critical events of the Institute and serve as the general secretary and administrator of the work of the Institute.
- 8.2 Research assistants will be appointed from among senior postgraduate students with a working interest in the research themes of the Institute. In rare cases, a senior undergraduate student might qualify for such appointment.
- 8.3 Both the programme administrator and the research assistants will hold temporary contract positions, unless (in the case of the programme administrator) funding allows otherwise.
- 8.4 The Institute will at any time host senior research fellows, being distinguished scholars working in this field on one-year residential appointments. During these appointments, the senior research fellows would be able to conduct research and write within the themes of the Institute. The Institute will cover the costs of the senior research fellows and provide a modest honorarium over 12 months.
- 8.5 The Institute will further host senior associates, being distinguished public figures with good reputations who are not necessarily academics, but who enjoy significant public respect within communities. The senior associates will bring the research work of the Institute into broader public forums for dialogue, debate and general writing on the research themes of the Institute. The Institute will cover the costs of the senior associates and provide a modest honorarium over 12 months.
- 8.6 The research, administrative, programming and additional personnel costs will be raised through external funding drives.

9. Finances

- 9.1 Funds will be raised by the Director and staff of the Institute in consultation with the fundraising initiatives of the UFS.
- 9.2 The funding of the Institute from the institutional funds of the UFS will be in accordance with the funding principle negotiated with the management of the UFS.
- 9.3 Funds raised from outside the UFS will be administered according to the wishes of the funders and in accordance with the procedures of the Directorate Finance at the UFS.
- 9.4 Finances will be managed and administered in accordance with the financial procedures of the UFS.

10. Housing

The Institute will be housed in the refurbished DF Malherbe House, being the ideal site for attracting world-class scholars for association with the UFS and this premier research institute.

11. Agreements with outside institutions

- 11.1 All agreements entered into by the Institute with outside individuals or organisations shall be effected in accordance with UFS procedures.

12. Amendment of the Constitution

- 12.1 Amendments to the constitution shall be recommended by the Board of the Institute to the Senate of the UFS, and ultimately to the Council of the UFS.

13. Dissolution of the Institute

- 13.1 The Institute may be dissolved by the Council of the UFS on recommendation of the Senate of the UFS.
- 13.2 In the event of dissolution, the liabilities of the Institute must first be redeemed.

- 13.3 The Council of the UFS, on recommendation of the Senate of the UFS, will decide how the assets of the Institute, if any, shall be disposed of. Such assets shall thereafter be utilised for initiatives aimed at furthering reconciliation at the UFS.