

## UNIVERSITIES, GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT COLLOQUIUM PROGRAMME

08:15-08:30	Registration
08h30-08:45	Opening: Prof Melanie Walker, Director CRHED Welcoming: Dr Choice Makheta (UFS Deputy Vice Chancellor for Community Engagement)
08:45-09:15 Session 1: <b>Theorising Gender</b> Chair: Sonja Loots	Dr Christi van der Westhuizen  <i>Intersectionality as conceptual tool for the advancement of gender justice in higher education settings</i>
09:15-09:45 Session 1: <b>Theorising Gender</b>	Prof Rudo Gaidzanwa  <i>African women and higher education: Contemporary opportunities and challenges</i>
09:45-10:15 Session 1: <b>Theorising Gender</b>	Prof Tamara Shefer  <i>Theorising gender, heterosex and power in student life in South African higher education</i>
10:15-10:45	Q & A and discussion
10:45-11:15	Tea break
11:15-12:30 <b>Keynote</b> Chair: <b>Mari-Anne Okkolin</b>	Prof Elaine Unterhalter  <i>'Global inequalities: Higher education and the contested terrain of gender'</i>  <u>Respondent:</u> Mari-Anne Okkolin (CRHED postdoc) and discussion
12h30-13h30	Lunch break
13h30 – 15h00 <b>Gender justice research and social change</b>  Chair: <b>Merridy Wilson- Strydom</b>	<b>Early Career Research Panel:</b>  Emily Henderson <i>Higher Education's Multiple Gender Identities: Global Conversations, Local Manifestations</i>  Talita Calitz <i>Exploring the intersectionality of gender, race and socioeconomic class in two participatory student narratives: a capabilities perspective</i>  Thandi Lewin <i>Gender equity, policy and institutions: a focus on sexual harassment policy in one university</i>  Sonja Loots <i>Drafting a gender equality policy in higher education: which 'human capabilities' matter?</i>  <u>Discussion:</u> Research for change
15:00-15:30 <b>Melanie Walker</b>	Wrap up session followed by tea break
16h30-08:30	Bus departs for Modder river cruise and dinner

## PRESENTERS' BIOGRAPHIES AND ABSTRACTS

### Dr Christi van der Westhuizen

#### **Abstract:**

South Africa finds itself tossed about in the complex flux of transformation – the post-apartheid project of infusing South African social relations with democracy, equality and freedom. In the higher education sector, multiple programmes are in effect to redress apartheid and colonial legacies. This paper posits that the analytical lens of intersectionality, drawn from critical race and feminist theories (Crenshaw 1995), advances transformation and the achievement of gender justice. Intersectionality enables analysis of the co-constructive reciprocities of social markers of difference, such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality and class. Foregrounding the intersectional co-production of social categories mitigates against common sense emphases on some categories which can cause oppressions to be hidden from sight and therefore insufficiently accounted for in programmes of change. Some of the work of change that the concept of intersectionality enables is visible to a greater or lesser extent in existing plans and programmes of higher education institutions, but not necessarily with direct reference to the concept. This paper argues that the complexities of the South African social sphere demand concerted operationalisation of intersectionality as a key action in research, curricula development and in transformation programmes aimed at students, staff and universities overall. As demonstration of the usefulness of the conceptual tool of intersectionality, two examples are discussed: (1) research into normative femininity; and (2) a preliminary analysis of three racist incidents in the higher education sector.

#### **Biography:**

Dr Christi van der Westhuizen is the author of *Working Democracy: Perspectives on South Africa's Parliament at 20 Years* (2013), *White Power & the Rise and Fall of the National Party* (2007) and, as editor, *Gender Instruments in Africa: Critical Perspectives, Future Strategies* (2005). She has contributed to *In the Balance: South Africans Debate Reconciliation* (2010), *Beyond the Apartheid Workplace* (2005) and to various journals, including to *African Studies* as guest editor (2012). She was awarded a Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Cape Town and an M.Phil. in SA Politics and Political Economy (Cum Laude) from the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

Van der Westhuizen has held research associateships with the University of KwaZulu-Natal and the Institute for Reconciliation and Social Justice at the University of the Free State and presently holds a post-doctoral research fellowship with the Institute for Humanities in Africa at the University of Cape Town. She worked as a journalist, starting at the anti-apartheid weekly *Vrye Weekblad*. She writes regular columns in the English and Afrikaans press, including a monthly socio-political column in *Beeld* and a blog for Mail & Guardian's Thoughtleader. Twitter: @ChristivdWest

### **Prof Rudo Gaidzanwa**

#### **Abstract:**

Like their counterparts in other parts of the world, women are relatively recent entrants to the academy. The African academy poses specific challenges to women as they attempt to perform well in academic work and community service, including activities such as research and fundraising for their institutional programs. The academy is affected by the imperatives of extreme rationality that characterise modern societies. Thus engagements with funding organisations with short term perspectives, publishing in journals and teaching, which constitute the core business of universities, create contradictory demands on African women academics. African women academics also juggle their domestic roles and work roles, sometimes resulting in overwork and burnout. The process of nurturing young, particularly female academics is increasingly competing with fund-raising, administration of donations and the normal work of university women. The process of marrying all these activities may entail curtailing or foregoing some of the activities mentioned above. The challenge for African women academics is how to juggle and prioritise these activities at different moments in their academic lives and careers.

#### **Biography**

Rudo Gaidzanwa is currently Professor of Sociology in the Department of Sociology at the University of Zimbabwe. She is the current Dean of the College of Social Sciences in the Zimbabwe Academy of Sciences. She has served as the Dean of the Faculty of Social Studies and is a Founding Fellow, Zimbabwe Academy of Sciences. She is a Co-convenor of the SAPES Public Seminar Series in Harare, Zimbabwe. She is a Member of the Board of Advisors of the Journal of Higher Education in Africa and is a Member of the Editorial Board of the journal, Women's Studies International Forum. She coordinates the Affirmative Action Programme, University Of Zimbabwe and is a mother.

### **Prof Tamara Shefer**

#### **Abstract:**

Recent high profile cases of sexual harassment at South African universities have brought a renewed national focus to the challenges of gender inequalities and gender-based violence in higher education. A range of contemporary empirical studies similarly highlight how normative gendered norms and power inequalities, intersecting with a range of other markers of difference and disadvantage, class, 'race', nationality, sexual orientation, age and others, are reflected and reproduced in tertiary educational campus life in South African contexts. Arguably higher education has the imperative to not only ensure the safety of students on campus, but also to provide a critical and supportive framework for challenging the local university context and larger social framework of gender and other inequalities as they are articulated through relationships between men and women on campus. This paper draws on students' reported experiences of heterosex on campus, based on a number of recent studies, to foreground the importance of understanding contemporary practices of hegemonic masculinities and prescribed feminities, intersecting with other social

identities, and as framed within the localized contexts of diverse campuses, in challenging the violences associated with these practices. The paper argues further that responses to the challenges of sexual violence, HIV and young peoples' practices of intimacy in general and specifically in higher education, has been predominantly shaped by disciplinary and punitive responses within a moralistic, bureaucratic, hierarchical and symptom-driven approach. Such approaches are arguably founded on and serve to reproduce binaristic and gendered stereotypes of masculinities and feminities as well as a rigid and unitary picture of men as inherent perpetrators of violence and women as inevitable and passive victims. The paper calls for the imperative of working with students in higher education in a more nuanced way that accounts for the multiple, intersecting and complex dynamics of gender norms for both men and women in a dialogic negotiation of heterosexual practices, and that foregrounds students' experiences and agency in leading and shaping processes of change.

### **Biography:**

Tamara Shefer is professor of Women's and Gender Studies and currently Deputy Dean of Teaching and Learning in the Faculty of Arts. Her interdisciplinary research and publications are primarily in the areas of heterosexuality, gender-based violence, HIV, gendered and raced subjectivities, masculinities, gender and care, critical and feminist psychology, and the politics of higher education and authorship. She has published five edited books, including *From boys to men* (2007) and *The Gender of Psychology* (2006) and most recently, *Books and/or babies: pregnancy and young parenting in schools* (2012, co-edited with Robert Morrell and Deevia Bhana).

### **Prof Elaine Unterhalter**

#### **Abstract:**

Discussions of global inequalities in education remain a relatively new area. Amartya Sen has identified the significance of attending to equality of what, and Frances Stewart has expanded this by posing the questions regarding inequality amongst whom? I register a further question of significance for looking at inequalities in education concerned with inequality of how. In this talk I draw out how much of the discussion of global inequalities in education has neglected to look at aspects of pedagogy and process, but that these themes are of considerable importance in addressing issues regarding how we understand gender, both in relation to school and higher education. They also have a bearing on discussions of quality and how this is evaluated. While different frameworks allow us to approach gender and higher education either in terms of counting how many women are present or attain at certain levels, engagements with the structural and symbolic forms of inequality, and their consequences for particular forms of agency and pedagogy require investigation. Some of the issues this raises for international policy discussion around the Post 2015 framework and the development of ideas about measurement and indicators regarding global inequalities and their significance for higher education will be explored

## **Biography:**

Elaine Unterhalter is Professor of Education and International Development at the Institute of Education, University of London. She has coordinated a number of research projects on issues of gender and international education across a number of African countries, with multi-lateral organisations and international NGOs. Recent books include *Global inequalities and higher education: whose interests are we serving?* (2010, Palgrave Macmillan), co-edited with Vincent Carpentier, and *Amartya Sen's Capability Approach and Social Justice in Education* (2007, Palgrave Macmillan), co-edited with Vincent Carpentier. With Tristan McCowan, she has a forthcoming textbook, *Education and International Development: An Introduction* (Bloomsbury Academic). She recently co-edited, with Joan DeJaeghere and Jenny Parkes, a special issue of the *International Journal of Education and Development (IJED 33:6)* on 'Gender Justice, Education and International Development'. Other recent work includes a report for the British Council on the Post-2015 Framework in relation to Higher Education (see *Compare 'Forum'* 43:6), a literature review on girls' schooling and gender equality (funded by DfID, the UK Department for International Development). Current work includes collaboration with Nigerian education specialists on teacher education and gender in five Nigerian states.

## **Early Career Research Panel**

### **Emily Henderson**

#### **Abstract:**

The dominant understanding of gender in relation to higher education is the gender (in fact the anatomical sex) of the people who are associated with higher education institutions (HEIs); at times this stretches to considerations of masculine and feminine traits, for example in leadership studies. Gender in fact operates as a signifier of a number of different aspects of higher education, and so has a much more varied conceptual life within HEIs than is often taken into account. This paper, which draws on my doctoral study (funded by ESRC, UK) on international understandings and manifestations of gender in higher education, aims to broaden the theoretical scope of gender in higher education research. As such, gender is viewed in this paper as denoting (i) the anatomical sex, gender identity and gender performance of those within HEIs, (ii) the departments, centres, courses where gender research and teaching is located and organised, (iii) the concept that is used, along with other grouped concepts, to demarcate an area of research. Gender's conceptual life within HEIs is further complicated by its increasing presence in global conversations about higher education as a universally-understood concept, despite its highly situated and contextual nature. The paper will draw on two accounts of gender in HEIs from the doctoral study, which involved auto-ethnographic and ethnographic attendance of three national women's studies conferences (UK, US, India), and qualitative interviews with around ten participants from each conference. The study, by being situated in conferences, sought to capture some of the global conversations on gender, as well as singular accounts of HEIs and research areas. In this paper, by analysing the way different

understandings of gender in higher education are grouped in an individual, the aim is to show how these interlinked understandings shape the possibilities for gender research within HEIs.

### **Implications: Research for change**

- There is a need to contextualise the key terms of social justice, such as gender, race and class.
- Gender research into HE needs to draw more on gender theory from Gender Studies in order to conduct research that applies a nuanced gender lens.
- Gender research in HE Studies should not be limited to the study of gendered bodies in HEIs: the funding and shaping of gender research, courses and departments also impacts on the way that HEIs are gendered.

### **Biography:**

Emily F. Henderson (Institute of Education, University of London) is a doctoral candidate at the Institute of Education, University of London, on a studentship funded by the UK Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). She is researching international understandings of gender in Higher Education, with a specific focus on conferences and dissemination events. She has published a number of articles on feminism and gender in higher education, and has a forthcoming book with Palgrave, entitled *Gender Pedagogy*. Her other research interests include poststructuralism, feminist pedagogy, postcolonialism, and Queer Studies.

### **Talita Calitz**

#### **Abstract:**

Undergraduate female students face a number of complex obstacles to participating equally in higher education. Gendered expectations around access to and participation in higher education are further complicated by socioeconomic status and race. This paper explores the intersectionality of these social and identity realities in the narrated experiences of two female undergraduate students from different socioeconomic backgrounds, using a human development lens. By allowing these two women to share their educational experiences, this paper presents a nuanced view of the experiences of female students from diverse backgrounds, and the enabling and constraining pedagogical and institutional arrangements which influence their participation at university. The two student narratives illustrate how women from diverse socioeconomic structures participate and engage with learning, belonging and identifying in often hostile and unwelcoming higher education environments.

### **Implications: Research for change**

- In order to create environments which nurture and enable equal participation and success for diverse female students, universities have to re-examine the pedagogical and

institutional practices which marginalize, exclude and alienate female students in particular, whose marginalization is complicated by working-class status and historical racial exclusion.

- For this reason, pedagogical spaces should be reshaped as transformative spaces where capabilities are enhanced for diverse students. This requires engaged pedagogy which is sensitive to the subtle arrangements which continue to alienate and exclude black, working-class female students.
- Pedagogical and curricular arrangements must reflect the diverse voices and identities of these students, while ensuring that all students have an equal chance to access powerful knowledge which will enhance their real opportunities for future employment, transformative development of their own potential, access to resources and an engagement with lifelong learning.

### **Biography:**

Talita is currently a PhD student at the Centre for Research on Higher Education and Development [CRHED], at the University of the Free State. Her research explores the complex intersectionality between gender, race and class in the narratives of undergraduate university students, using a capabilities approach. Her research is focused on participatory methods which encourage the agentic development of student voice, critical literacy and individual well-being. Before joining CRHED, she was a research assistant at the Institute for Reconciliation and Social Justice.

### **Thandi Lewin**

#### **Abstract:**

Higher Education policy in the first period of post-1994 policy change included gender equity explicitly, and it is widely acknowledged that South Africa has a progressive policy framework for gender equity. Over the years “gender” has faded from policy documents, due in part to the fact that if gender equity is reduced to an issue of mere numbers, as it mostly is in policy documents, the numbers look acceptable, with 58% of university students overall being women. As the National Plan for Higher Education (2001) claimed “gender equity has been achieved.” The most resistant area of change, that of academic staffing, has actually shown progress, and compares favourably with other parts of the world, given that universities worldwide struggle to achieve equity at the highest levels of the academy. There is still, however, considerable evidence that the gendered cultures of South African universities may have changed little in the last 20 years (DOE, 2008; Shackleton, 2007; CHE, 2009; Pillay, 2012). What therefore has been the impact of progressive policy frameworks? This presentation will explore issues of policy impact and engagement by academics, through examining a recent case study of sexual harassment incidents and institutional policy change in one South African university. The processes have been widely reported in the media, and sexual harassment in universities has therefore had a very public return to the policy table. My PhD study examines how academic professional careers and identities are formed amongst early career academics, in particular how a group of academics at one university experience, mediate and respond to policy. Policy is expressed and experienced in many different ways, particularly as it manifests within institutional environments. The study also includes a

focus on how gender impacts on career formation. The focus on sexual harassment is part of an attempt to understand issues of policy, as set out in institutional structures and cultures, and how they are understood and responded to by academics.

### **Biography:**

Thandi Lewin is currently Executive Manager for Monitoring and Evaluation at JET Education Services, an independent, non-profit organisation that has been working in the education sector in South Africa for over 20 years. She is also a part-time PhD student at the Centre for Research in Higher Education and Development (CRHED) at the UFS, researching the formation of academic careers of early career academics in the humanities. She has worked in the university sector and in government, where she was Chief Director for Equity in Education in the national Department of Education and later Chief Director for University Policy in the Department of Higher Education and Training. She most recently co-authored “Student Access and Success: Issues and interventions in South African Universities”, published by Inyathelo in early 2014.

### **Sonja Loots**

#### **Abstract:**

This paper argues for an approach to policy development in higher education based on opportunities for valuable functionings as the informational basis for gender equality and rich human development. Taking South Africa as the site of investigation, the paper notes that higher education still confronts gender inequalities, irrespective of transformative national policies. Drawing from the capabilities approach, which views education as significant for addressing inequalities, gender equality extends beyond numerical parity and is subject to equal opportunities as well as the agency freedom to act on available opportunities as a matter of gender justice. The paper analyses empirical data from 20 in-depth interviews with diverse female students, which forms part of the first phase of a longitudinal study on Gender, Empowerment, Agency and Higher Education at one South African university. The data reveal which opportunities these women find important for their personal development and wider gender equality. The identification of these is the first step in stimulating public dialogue to formulate an interactive, capabilities-based gender equality policy.

#### **Implications for change:**

- Mobilising the capabilities approach in higher education
- Comprehensive policy development focusing on human development
- Pragmatic approach to policy implementation

#### **Biography:**

Sonja Loots obtained her PhD in Psychology from the University of the Free State, South Africa in 2011. She was awarded a Postdoctoral Research Fellowship from the National Research Foundation and an additional Fellowship by the Centre for Research on Higher Education and Development (CRHED). In



2013 she was awarded a CICOPS fellowship from the University of Pavia, Italy. She has been involved in several international research, academic and leadership related programmes. Her current research primarily revolves around two projects. The first project: *Gender, Empowerment, Agency and Higher Education (GEAHE)* is aimed to focus on the contributions and barriers to the development of empowerment and agency in women, primarily highlighting on the role of higher education. The project will also offer narrative accounts, informed by a feminist epistemology, of the intersectionalities between gender, race and social class in the South African context. The second project is focusing on implementing the capability approach to different facets of doctoral education in order to adjust to changing environments and social needs.