

Media Advisory

Unisa marks 12 years of Decolonial scholarship with 2026 Decoloniality Summer School

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The University of South Africa (Unisa) will host the 12th Anniversary Edition of the Decoloniality Summer School from 12–16 January 2026 at the Function Hall, Kgorong Building, Unisa Muckleneuk Campus. This landmark academic gathering will take place under the theme: ***“Decolonizing the Classroom: From Epistemic Critique to Transformative Practice.”***

Now firmly established as a leading intellectual platform in the Global South, the Unisa Decoloniality Summer School has, over the past decade, evolved into a critical space for rigorous debate, reflexive scholarship, and issues-driven praxis. The 2026 edition marks a significant milestone in the university’s sustained commitment to epistemic justice, transformative pedagogy, and the centering of African and Indigenous knowledge systems.

This year’s theme turns critical attention to the classroom as a persistent site of colonial continuity, where Eurocentric curricula, colonial languages, and exclusionary pedagogical practices continue to shape learning environments. Moving decisively beyond critique, the Summer School calls on educators, students, researchers, and cultural practitioners to reimagine pedagogy in practice, interrogate the politics of knowledge validation, and advance African and Indigenous epistemologies across all disciplines.

A central focus of the 2026 programme is the urgent integration of African and Indigenous languages in higher education, recognising language as both a carrier of knowledge and a site of power. By foregrounding multilingualism, the Summer School seeks to disrupt entrenched epistemic hierarchies and open space for philosophies, methodologies, and worldviews historically marginalised within the academy.

The programme features an exceptional line-up of internationally acclaimed scholars and thought leaders, including Professor Linda Tuhiwai Smith (keynote speaker), Professor Bagele Chilisa, Professor Reiland Rabaka, Professor Graham Hingangaroa Smith, and leading Unisa academics such as Professor Nampombe Saurombe.

Through keynote lectures, public lectures, working group discussions, and cultural engagements, participants will engage deeply with questions of curriculum transformation, indigenous research methodologies, archives, intergenerational trauma, and community-engaged learning.

Opening addresses will be delivered by Unisa Vice-Principal: Research, Postgraduate Studies, Innovation and Commercialisation, Professor Mpho Ngoepe and Executive Dean of the College



of Human Sciences, Professor Zethu Nkosi, underscoring the university's institutional commitment to decolonial transformation.

Speaking ahead of the event, Kelebamang Mokgupi, Committee Head of the Unisa Decoloniality Summer School 2026, said: "The classroom is never neutral. It is a political space where power is exercised daily. This Summer School invites us to exercise that power differently – in service of justice, dignity, and epistemic freedom."

The Unisa Decoloniality Summer School 2026 invites participants to bring their full selves into this collective journey of reflection, courage, and re-imagination, as the university continues to shape a decolonial future grounded in African and Indigenous intellectual traditions.

Members of the media are invited to attend and cover the 12th Anniversary Edition of the Decoloniality Summer School as follows:

Date: 12 – 16 January 2026 (See attached programme)

Time: 08:00 – 16:30 (Daily)

Venue: Function Hall, Kgorong Building, UNISA Muckleneuk Campus, Pretoria

/Ends.

For enquiries and interview requests, please contact: Mr Edgar Rathelele or Mr Tommy Huma (Unisa Senior Media Officers) on 0637315456/ratheme@unisa.ac.za 072 218 6197/humatm@unisa.ac.za

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