TLC CONFERENCE 2024

ALL ABOUT CURRICULUM: NEW VISIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This year we turn our attention to curriculum – what it is; what it could or should be; and how it influences a wide spectrum of teaching and learning activities, including what and how we teach and how we assess. The conference title is inspired by bell hooks, who in her book, Teaching to transgress, demands that we remember that:

"The classroom, with all its limitations, remains a location of possibility. In that field of possibility, we have the opportunity to labor for freedom, to demand of ourselves and our comrades, an openness of mind and heart that allows us to face reality even as we collectively imagine ways to move beyond boundaries, to transgress. This is education as the practice of freedom."

Every academic, student and leader of the academic project must confront anew what meaningful and appropriate curricula might look like. Particularly in our current contexts of austerity, digital transformation and pervasive artificial intelligence technologies, the "educational mission of universities" (Shay, 2015) as expressed in curricula must take account of multiple and expanding relationships – to students, to disciplinary communities, to industry and the wider employment market, to society at large. More recently, concepts such as inclusivity (Swart, Meda & Mashiyi, 2020), emergent design (Saito & Fatemi, 2022) and co-creation (Bovill & Woolmer, 2019) have posed fresh and exciting challenges for a deep-seated understanding of how curricula should come to be. At UCT, many projects for curriculum change are underway, providing a rich context for analysis and reflection.

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Given our location in the Global South, emerging from and still reckoning with histories of colonialism and apartheid, I invite presenters to consider contemporary responses to curriculum design and development, including theories of social justice, feminist, decolonial, and indigenous knowledge systems, to ask questions about curricula in our context. That is, it is key to explore the challenge of creating and co-creating curricula that respond to local and global needs and challenges.

THE THREADS OF FOCUS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- **What might a responsive and innovative curriculum look like in our context? What might inform and find expression through these curricula?**

- **How might curricula promote epistemic and social justice?**

- **How might curriculum transformation look like in our context?**

- **What are the roles of languages in shaping curricula for the whole human as student, lecturer and citizen?**

- **How do digital technologies, educational and otherwise, enable or constrain curriculum development and curriculum expression?**

- **What happens to curriculum imagination and design in an era of pervasive Artificial Intelligence technologies?**

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