

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

2022

Open Distance and eLearning Conference

3-5 August 2022

All things
RESEARCH
in ODeL

Define tomorrow.

UNISA 
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Workshop 1

College of Education, Unisa, South Africa

Title: Degrees in Whiteness: Higher Education, Open Distance and e-Learning, and the Silencing of Oppression

Facilitator

Professor Veli Gasa, College of Education, Unisa South Africa

Keynote

Professor Chris Knaus, University of Washington Tacoma, USA

This presentation begins as a challenge to traditionalised academic research, with a challenge to move beyond the whiteness of higher education, towards an embrace of multilingual storytelling, artistry, and decoloniality that centers Black realities. As whiteness and western approaches to knowledge, teaching, and assessment have infused themselves violently into the heart and soul of global higher education (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013; Teferra & Altback 2003; Zeleza, 2016), the growth of Open Distance and e-Learning has encouraged access for generations excluded by traditionalised structures of higher education. Yet this access has not been accompanied by transformed structures, as funding models, teaching methods, and approaches to students who survive within the infrastructures of racism, poverty, and coloniality have remained the same. This interactive presentation thus engages participants in reflective reminders of the need for healing, liberatory approaches to ODeL, towards a radical transformation of the purpose of higher education and related research agendas.

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Programme

10:00-10:20	Opening and Introduction of Keynote speaker: Professor Velisiwe Gasa
10:20-11:00	Presenter: Professor Chris Knaus, University of Washington Tacoma, USA Topic: "Degrees in Whiteness: Higher Education, Open Distance and e-Learning, and the Silencing of Oppression"
11:00-11:15	Comfort Break
11:15-11:45	Interactive Session with Professor Knaus
	Closure



Dr Christopher B. Knaus currently serves as Professor of Education at the University of Washington Tacoma. A race scholar, critical race theory practitioner, and educator, Dr Knaus examines how systems of oppression (racism, and intersectional sexism, heterosexism, classism, islamophobia, and other oppressions) shape schools, districts, colleges, and ideas of learning that intentionally silence communities of colour and those who differ from presumed white middle class hetero norms.

Dr Knaus additionally works to foster urban educational leadership pathways, including conceptualizing educator of colour preparation and support programs to transform from colonizing education towards a radically humanistic, critically conscious, liberatory education. At the core of community and systems transformation, Dr Knaus centers urban youth voice as a way to help educators create inclusive, challenging classrooms and schools that arm children to transform the immediate world they live into a world where addressing social inequalities becomes the purpose of education. A

global scholar, Dr Knaus works in South Africa, across the United States, and regionally on the West Coast.

Source: African Studies Programme, University of Washington