



**GLU**  
**10<sup>th</sup>** ANNIVERSARY

**2007 - 2016**



## Message from the Chairperson: Prof Michelle Williams

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The Global Labour University (GLU) programme at Wits celebrates its 10<sup>th</sup> year in 2016! It's quite extra-ordinary that such a trade union-oriented programme exists in the neoliberal times in which we live. Indeed, it was with great foresight that Frank Hoffer (ILO), Christoph Scherrer (Kassel University) and Hansjoerg Herr (Berlin School of Economics and Law) approached Eddie Webster (Wits University) and the late Guy Mhone (Wits University) about launching a GLU programme at Wits. Eddie immediately

put together a team of leading labour scholars at Wits (Devan Pillay, Noor Nieftagodien, Bridget Kenny, Andries Bezuidenhout, Lucien van der Walt, Sakhela Buhlungu and Seeraj Mohammed) to design and implement the programme. It was under Eddie's guidance that GLU became a reality at Wits. Indeed, it was the work and vision of these original initiators (many of whom remain part of GLU) that provided GLU with the strong basis on which it flourished over the next ten years.

It's been an exciting and challenging ten years. On the one hand, running a programme that caters to trade unionists within the university environment is not easy as trade union education is not the primary mandate of any university. This means that we have had to engage the university to adjust and adapt itself to allow space for such a programme. On the other hand, getting trade unions to support GLU has been even more challenging. Unions are famously over-burdened, under-staffed and lack resources. In addition, many union leaders and officials do not see the direct benefit of university-level education for their unions. As GLU we have tried to overcome both of these challenges by insisting on the importance of such programmes for progressive unions and transformative politics in society. If we want to create more egalitarian and just societies, education is central!

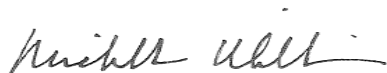
Over the last ten years we have graduated over 60 high calibre postgraduate students at both the Masters (MA) and Honours levels, funded nine PhD students and run a very successful two-month certificate course for unionists and labour activists. Our staff and students have published over 100 articles, three special issue journals and five edited volumes directly related to labour issues. Members of the steering committee are leading labour scholars in our society and bring this expertise into the classroom. Our global network translates into labour solidarity across our region, continent and world. One indication of the strength of our

programme is that approximately 85% of our graduates remain in their unions or labour-friendly jobs. Some have gone on to complete PhDs on labour issues, contributing to knowledge production from the views of workers.

We would also like to give a special thanks to the ILO (and especially Frank Hoffer), the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) and DAAD Germany for their continued financial support of the various GLU programmes. Through their financial support for GLU, over 100 trade unionist-students have successfully completed the postgraduate and certificate programmes. Without the financial support from partner organisations, GLU would not have survived! We would also like to thank Wits University for opening its doors to trade union education and creating a dynamic and hospitable environment for trade unionists.

It is with great pleasure that we celebrate GLU's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary at Wits University. We hope this marks the beginning of another decade of GLU and its many activities. The GLU network is unique in the world!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michelle Williams', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Professor Michelle Williams**  
**Department of Sociology and Chairperson GLU**  
**Wits University**



## Message from Prof Eddie Webster

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Global restructuring is a force that both undermines and provides new opportunities for labour. These opportunities do not arise spontaneously. They require labour, and their partners in Labour Service Organisations (LSOs) and the universities, to identify new sources of power, develop new knowledge, new organisations and strategies, and forge new alliances.

This was the goal of the Global Labour University (GLU) at its launch in 2004 in Germany. And this is why Wits academics responded enthusiastically when Frank Hoffer from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and Christoph Scherrer from the GLU, approached us in January 2006 to become part of this new network of universities, international and national unions and the ILO. The third person in the “GLU founding three”, Hansjorg Herr, was to become an active teacher in our Wits courses.

We were attracted to GLU’s aim of building the capacity among trade unionists to develop policy expertise for the challenges of globalisation. We had seen how the neoliberal deregulation of the global order had shifted the burden of restructuring on to workers. And labour had no institutional voice in these new financial institutions such as the World Trade Organisation. Globalisation had developed in an ethical vacuum where the attitude of ‘winner takes all’ had weakened the very fabric of communities and society.

It had become clear to us that the shift to a neoliberal paradigm required new knowledge that could best be provided outside of traditional trade union education programmes. It also required face-to face exchanges in the classrooms and residences. It was clear that progressive academics had become isolated and a new generation of labour-oriented academics needed to be created. This meant new courses had to be developed and new cross-country research projects established.

What have we achieved in these ten years? We have developed a new Masters degree around the theme of labour and development. We accepted our first students in January 2007. Fifty six have now graduated with masters degrees. In 2012 we introduced an Honours degree and in 2013 a two month certificated programme for non-degreed students. Thirty nine students have now graduated in this programme, ENGAGE. It has become a truly international course with students from Europe, United States, South America, South and East Asia and throughout sub-Saharan Africa.

Most importantly, these ninety five GLU Wits alumni have built a much needed global and African network. They have either gone back to the labour movement with new knowledge and skills some into leading positions, or are working in LSOs or completing PHDs in labour related fields. In 2015 our first GLU PHD, Crispen Chinguno, graduated with a topic on the challenge of strike violence. Another, Janet Munakamwe, is completing her PHD on the challenge of cross –border migration for the labour movement.

An exciting output of GLU Wits is the range of new research collaborations that involve comparing the conditions of workers and the challenges facing labour in the countries where our fellow GLU partners are based in South America, South Asia and other parts of Africa. These research findings are shared annually at GLU conferences. Some of this new research can be accessed on the weekly GLU labour column also based at Wits.

To renew and revitalise the labour movement and challenge the neoliberal form of undemocratic governance requires a two –pronged approach. It requires, firstly, that we contest intellectually neoliberal policies through the creation of a new generation of unionists and academics. Secondly, there is a need to overcome the “representational gap” that has been created through the informalisation of the labour market. To overcome this gap and give precarious workers an institutional voice, requires a bottom up participatory organising strategy.

One of the curricula innovations that has emerged over the past decade is the introduction in ENGAGE of a practical research project conducted in conjunction with unions. The course is designed to provide participants with a practical skill in building union capacity and recruiting new members. The skill is then transferred to their union when they return to their organisations.

In the past labour and academics tended to approach each other in instrumental ways—labour when it needed research and researchers when they needed access and support for funding proposals. A true partnership rests on reciprocity and a willingness to learn from each other. The test for GLU Wits as we celebrate ten years is whether our alumni are revitalising the labour movement and our colleagues successfully challenging, through their teaching and research findings, the disruptive impact of the unregulated market.

Edward Webster

Professor Emeritus and Chair of the GLU Wits Committee

2006- 2008.





## Message from the Alumni

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Today we take pride in celebrating 10 Years of GLU - an historical achievement which allow labour to claim its space within centres of knowledge production. We, as trade union activists, can now take charge of our own organisational destiny through sustainable theoretical and applied research skills acquired through the GLU. Our wish is to see this movement expand against prevalent economic adversities and the crisis of capitalism, as the working class will undoubtedly face more challenges.

As we walked through the doors of knowledge at Wits University for the first time, we possessed a wealth of trade union activism, limited theoretical grounding. Overtime we realized and appreciated the fact that an undeniable link existed between the two and have sharpened our theoretical and research skills accordingly. Today, we are very confident to stand before any platform and talk of what we love most – our beloved labour movement and the experiences of the working class. We are engaged in the battle of ideas and we endeavour to influence the trajectory for our movement.

The battle for knowledge and capacity building of the trade union movement and the working class continues and has been elevated by many of our alumni. The majority of our graduates plough back either through direct or indirect involvement in trade union work and politics. In addition, we have produced excellent PhD candidates with the first graduate, Dr Chinguno, conferred in December 2015. We wish him well in his career and continued engagement with the labour movement! The pursuit to PhD by GLU alumni is critical for the labour movement in this complex battle of ideas. Labour must take charge and have its own organic intellectuals!

Nevertheless there have been some challenges our alumni have faced over the years. The programme has been hard hit by a plethora of challenges; the major problem being integration back into the movement, in particular engineered by indifferent union bureaucrats who fear transformation. Others have been forced to resign and, in extreme cases, denied the opportunity to fully participate in the programme by their employers. Today, we also understand that the GLU programme is experiencing financial challenges since the 2009 global economic recession. And the last, but very important critical point is that, over the years, we have witnessed an acute lack of synergies and integration between the GLU Alumni and incumbent groups on campus. To be precise, there has been a lack of interaction between the GLU office and Alumni which demands urgent attention. All these areas need critical introspection as we strive for continuity and sustainability of our beloved programme. We also encourage our Alumni to continue engaging and supporting the programme by contributing financially or non-financially towards GLU-related activities and to ensure more trade union activists come on board. We can draw lessons from the popular African (Bantu) proverb “never forget where you come from”!

**Long live GLU! Solidarity forever! *Amandla! Matimba! Shinga mushandi shinga!***





## Message from Dr Frank Hoffer

### Ideas do matter...

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Congratulations on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of GLU South Africa. For ten years labour activists from many countries have come to SA to study at the GLU Honours and Masters programme and recently the GLU Engage programme. Colleagues from COSATU and from the University of Witwatersrand have been key partners in shaping the GLU from the very start. Their ideas, initiatives and criticism have contributed immensely to the success of the GLU as a global laboratory for study, research and debates that offers trade unionist from around the world a unique opportunity to study and to network together. In this context the weekly Global Labour Column edited by colleagues from Wits has become a forum for a progressive discourse on global labour issues beyond the GLU itself.

At the heart of the GLU is the conviction that a response to the challenges of globalisation needs to be developed through global networks. Even the wisest people suffer from the limitations of their specific standpoint. There is no Archimedean point of scientific evidence which allows us to explain - let alone to change - the world. Things look different from different perspectives. A unifying labour movement must be based on this recognition of plurality. Many bitter experiences of the labour movement but also in the history of science can be traced back to the demand for subordination under a single truth in the name of unity and strength. Accepting different viewpoints and understanding why what is obvious for oneself is looked at suspiciously by others, helps to build cross border solidarity. This commitment to new and challenging ideas is the hallmark of university education and a strength of the GLU programme.



For example, co-determination and close cooperation between trade unions and management has been at the core of industrial relations in countries like Germany. This might look like unprincipled class collaboration from a South African point of view. The language of class struggle, socialism and Leninism does not resonate with trade unionists from Eastern Europe who experienced the collapse of Soviet socialism as a great liberation. The manifold shades of discrimination women or people of colour experience in most societies will never be fully emotionally understood by those who are male and/or white. Improving mutual understanding starts with listening, analysing, and debating different views, making sure that no argument is just dismissed because someone comes from a different—whether disadvantaged or privileged—background.

Creating global solidarity in a world dominated by extreme inequality, manifold prejudices, competing interests and diverse cultural identities is a complex and never ending task. There is nothing automatic about objective interests or class consciousness. The appeal of right wing, nationalist, fear and hate-based movements in so many countries shows us the masses can also get it wrong. International solidarity does not come naturally, it has to be built.

That is why the International Labour Organisation (ILO) since the very beginning is an active partner of the GLU initiative. The ILO was founded nearly a hundred years ago as an international organisation to adopt and promote minimum labour standards for all workers. This was an inspiring idea then and remains a visionary aspiration today. However, the fairly modest aim of achieving some basic human rights and minimum standards at work for everybody will only become a reality through strong global social movements well equipped with competence, analytical skills and global concepts of social justice.

The GLU is a modest, but innovative and inspiring contribution to the daunting task of creating high level international qualification opportunities for labour activists and of building cross border cooperation and solidarity by bringing academic scholars, trade union experts and activists from different backgrounds together. The enthusiasm of academic scholars and trade unionists made GLU SA happen over the last decade and we wish you the same energy and enthusiasm for the next decades to come, because this programme is not only a South African programme, but also a key southern pillar of a global project.

Frank Hoffer

GLU International Coordinator and ILO research officer.

# What is GLU?

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GLU is a network of five universities — Wits South Africa, University of Campinas Brazil, Jawaharlal Nehru University India, Penn State University USA, and University of Kassel and Berlin School of Economics Germany — and international and national trade unions and union federations, civil society organisations and the International Labour Organization (ILO). The five universities provide postgraduate degree programmes for trade unionists, labour activists and labour experts. The GLU Programme at Wits has a special focus on *Labour, policy and globalisation* and aims to build capacity and competence for trade unions to enable constructive engagement in policy proposals that can make a difference and improve the position of working people and society at large. We have positioned GLU as a counter to MBA programmes that business schools offer to the private sector.

At one level, GLU is about opening up university access to labour movements, workers and labour activists. At another level, it is about enabling unions and other social movements to engage in the issues of policy, dialogue and debate in order to strengthen their bargaining position. To this end, GLU works closely with unions and worker organisations. For example, from its beginning, COSATU has been on the steering committee representing labour. Going forward, GLU plans to develop an advisory board with wide representation from union federations and affiliates.

The ILO and the unions are involved at more than simply the governance level; they also provide a number of scholarships to students every year. Since its inception in 2007, the ILO has provided scholarships and funding assistance to the programme for at least four students a year, while the various unions and SETAs have also provided funding for some of their members. More generally, GLU secures funding from a range of labour-friendly sources, including the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) in Germany, which funds the certificate course programme and conferences.

## The GLU Postgraduate and Certificate Programmes

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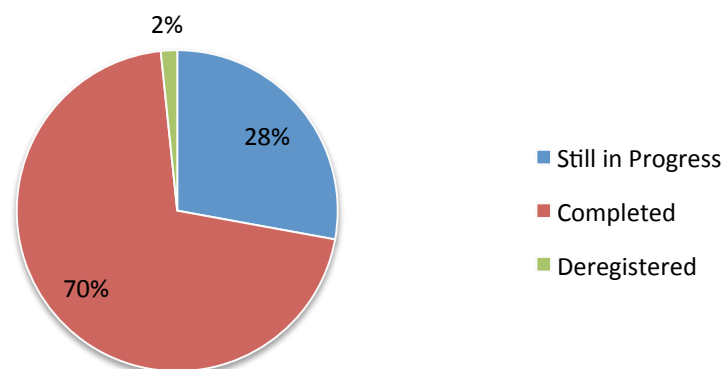
Over the last ten years, GLU has graduated over 60 students (48 MA students, 10 Honours students, 6 Postgraduate diploma students) with another 16 currently working on their degrees. In 2007, a cohort of five students pioneered the way and their success laid the basis for the next ten years. One of the noteworthy aspects of GLU is its international composition with approximately 50% of the students every year coming from beyond South African borders, especially from the African continent. The ENGAGE certificate course (an annual

short course, offered to unionists and labour activists from the Global South, which runs alongside the Honours and MA Programme) has also successfully graduated 38 participants in two years.

The GLU programme is a coursework Honours and MA in 'Labour Policy and Globalisation' with a combination of compulsory courses (e.g. Research Methodology, 'Labour and Development' and 'Economic Sociology') and elective courses (from within the School of Social Sciences or the School of Economics). The MA students also do a research report counting 50% of the degree.

The GLU programme also houses the *International Cooperation on Decent Work and Development* (ICDD) programme, which is a DAAD-funded initiative that supports three to four PhD students at Wits for up to four years. This programme started in 2009 and two ICDD-funded PhD students graduated in 2015 and two more are graduating in 2016. In 2015, we awarded three new scholarships to three students and two associate PhD fellows. In addition, there are research clusters on Social Security (led by Dr. Ben Scully), Happiness Index (led by Professor Devan Pillay) and Decent work and Precarity (led by Professor Eddie Webster).

## Postgraduate Student Throughput



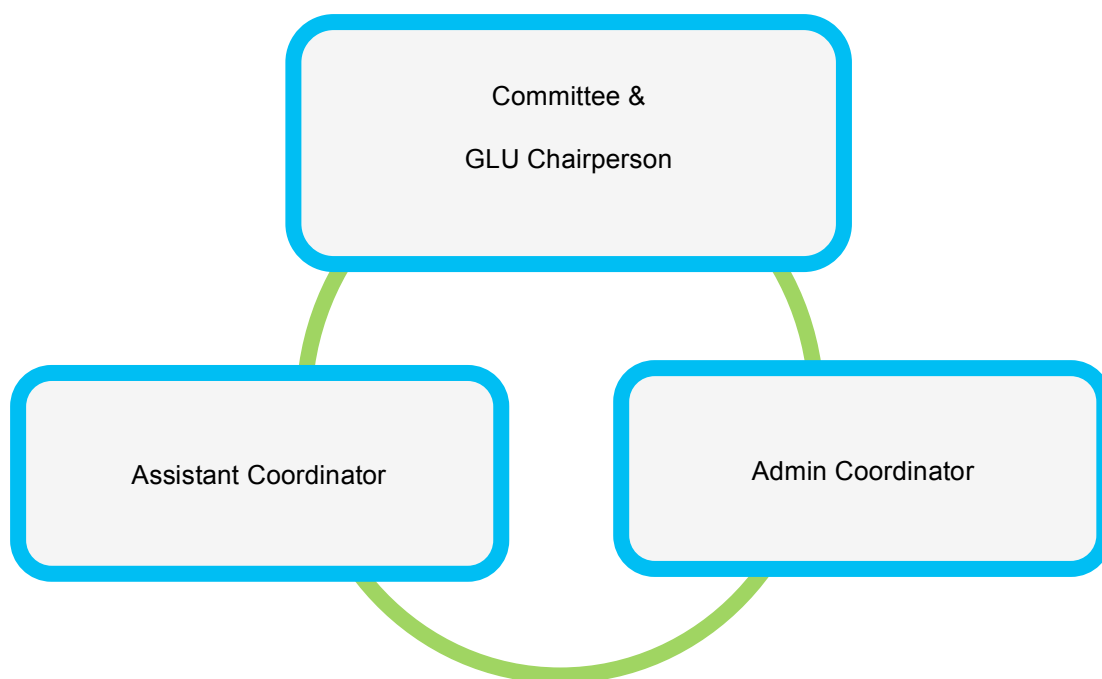
## GLU Governance

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GLU is governed by a Steering Committee comprised of scholars from Sociology (Professors Devan Pillay and Michelle Williams, Dr. Ben Scully), History (Professor Noor Nieftagodien), Economics (Dr. Nicolas Pons-Vignon) and SWOP (Professor Karl von Holdt) and one representative from the labour movement (the COSATU Education Officer, currently, Alfred Mafuleka). One of the strengths of GLU is the coherence and consistency of the steering committee. Devan, Noor and Michelle have all been on the committee for ten years, while Karl has been on it for four years. At the same time, the relatively new members (Nicolas and Ben) bring with them fresh energy and new ideas, which are always good for a

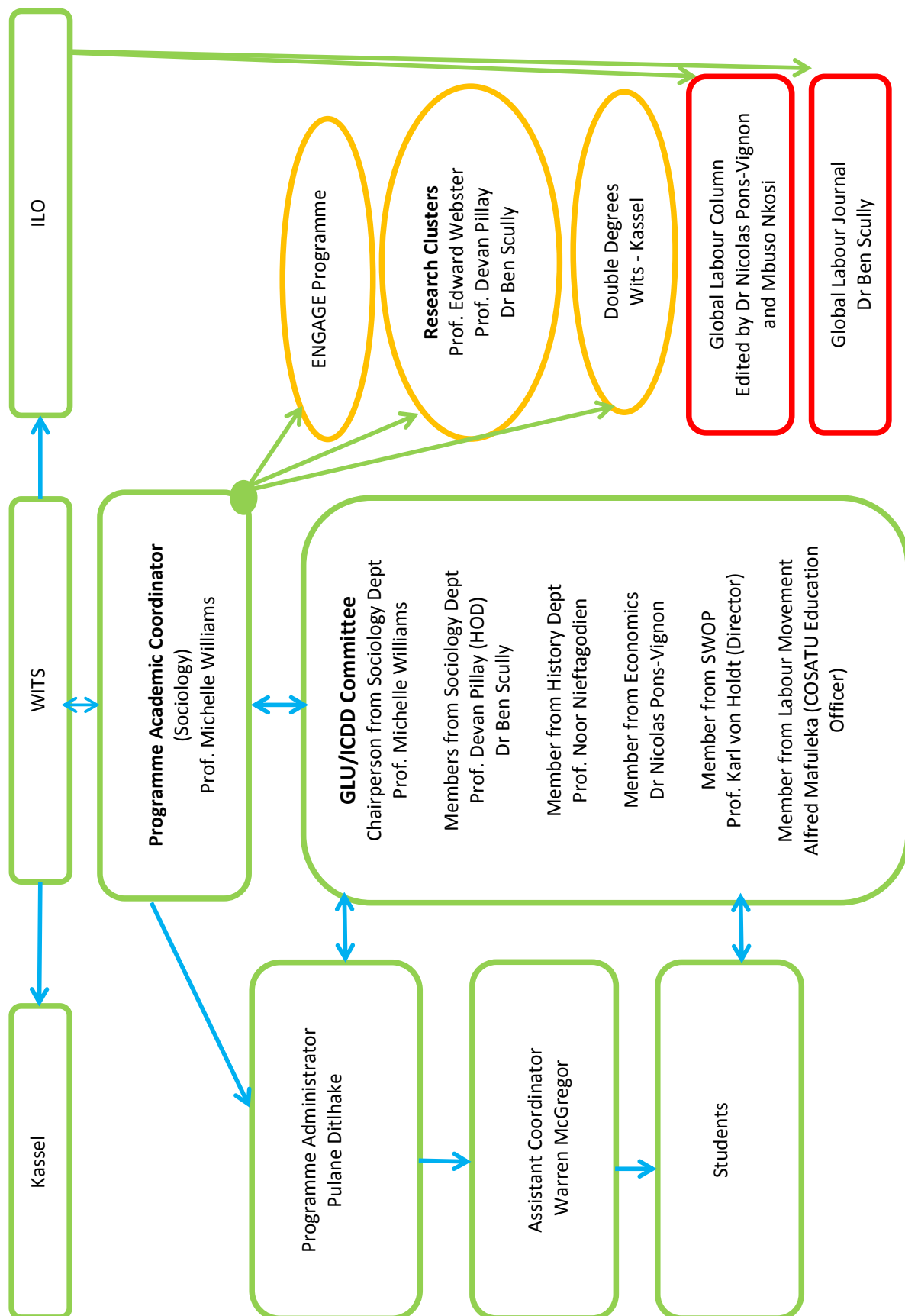
programme. The steering committee meets approximately six times a year and oversees the strategic issues of the programme as well as collectively adjudicating on all admissions, scholarships and applications. The day-to-day running of the programme is overseen by the Chairperson (Professor Michelle Williams) and largely done by the Coordinator (Ms. Pulane Dithlake) and the Assistant Coordinator (Mr. Warren McGregor).

The operations structure involves a Chair of the Committee, an Administrative Coordinator and an Assistant Coordinator. The chair position rotates over a three to five year cycle: Edward Webster (2006-8), Devan Pillay (2009-2010), Sarah Mosoetsa (2014), and Michelle Williams (2011-2014, 2015-17).





**WITS**  
**GLU/ICDD Committee**  
**Governing Structure**



# Activities

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Since its beginning, the GLU programme has grown substantially. The GLU-related activities at Wits include the following: postgraduate programmes and short courses; seminars and conferences; research and publications; and international networks.

## ***Postgraduate Programmes and Certificate Courses***

- *Honours and MA Coursework*: The primary activity of GLU is the Honours and MA coursework programme. GLU has graduated over 60 postgraduate students and currently has 16 working on their degrees.
- *ENGAGE*: This is an eight-week Certificate of Completion short course and Transfer Project for labour activists and trade unionists. The course started in 2013 and has become enormously popular with large numbers of participants from South Africa and beyond applying to the programme. In 2015 and 2016, we had over 100 applicants. The ENGAGE Programme brings 20 labour activists together for an intensive programme that includes six weeks of classroom learning and two weeks of practical research projects. In 2013 there were 15 countries represented in the course, 10 of which were African. In 2015, this grew to 21 countries represented, including Cambodia, India, the Philippines, Bangladesh and Brazil. After the course, a selected number of participants engage in a Transfer Project in which they conduct research with their unions under the guidance of Wits staff members. The Transfer Project culminates in a workshop hosted in Johannesburg. The programme is a certificate programme, registered as NQF level 5 within the South African system.
- *International Cooperation on Decent Work and Development (ICDD)*: In 2015, two ICDD PhD students graduated. There are currently two PhD students near completion and three PhD students in the early stages of their PhD. In addition, there are three associate PhD fellows who do not receive a primary stipend, but have access to research funds, conferences funds and various ICDD activities. The demographic profile of the students is: four white, five black, four women and five men, four international and five South African. The ICDD also has a research component through which it funds academic staff member research projects. Over the past five years, Wits has hosted four such research projects (led by Eddie Webster, Devan Pillay, and Ben Scully). There are two edited volumes coming out of the research projects.

## ***Research and Publications***

- *Publications*: GLU steering committee members and a number of GLU graduates have been active publishers with over 100 publications. After the 2007 and 2011

conferences hosted by GLU, members of the steering committee (Professors Michelle Williams and Devan Pillay and Dr Sarah Mosoetsa) published two special issue journals and one edited volume. In addition, there have been two edited volumes coming out of the *Global Labour Column*. Professor Michelle Williams edited a special issue of the *Global Labour Journal* and Professor Eddie Webster edited a volume published by Routledge. All of these publications were direct outcomes of GLU-related research projects. GLU also hosted two book launches of steering committee members: *Struggle in the Time of Crisis* (2015) and *Labour in the Global South* (2012).

- *Global Labour Journal*: The Journal officially associated with GLU in 2014, and one of the Wits steering committee members (Ben Scully) is on the four-person editorial board.
- *Global Labour Column*: The Column aims at publishing online short analyses by scholars, activists and unionists on current issues. It has been enormously successful enjoying a readership of over 10,000 and having released two edited volumes.

### ***Seminars and Conferences***

- *Seminar Series*: the GLU programme hosts approximately eight guest seminars a year by leading labour scholars and trade unionists. Recent speakers include: Malehoko Tshoaedi, “The Politics of Sexual Harassment in Cosatu: Is the Personal Becoming the Political?”, Jackie Cock, “The Food Crisis in Contemporary South Africa”, Andries Bezuidenhout, “Labour After the Alliance: Insights from the 2014 ‘Taking Democracy Seriously’ Survey of COSATU Members”, Zingiswa Losi, “Gender from a Trade Union Perspective”, Jane Barrett, “The Trade Union “Scope” Debate”.
- *South-South Lectures*: In 2015, the programme co-hosted a South-South lecture series with colleagues in Brazil. Speakers included: Walter Belik, “Food Security Policies and Combating Rural Poverty”, Ana Rosa Ribeiro & Mendonça Sarti, “BRIC's Bank: a New Proposal to Finance Development?”, Hugo Dias, “Brazilian Trade Unionism at the Crossroads? Strengthening Corporate Action vs Broader Social and Political Role”, Devan Pillay “Working Class Politics in South Africa: What Does the Future Hold?”, Karl von Holdt, “Patronage and Protest Politics in South Africa”, and Eddie Webster “Searching for the Elusive Lula Moment: Lessons From South Africa.”
- *Film Screenings*: The GLU runs bi-monthly film screenings where labour-related documentaries are shown to students. This initiative has had the secondary advantage of a social space for students to give feedback about the programme and form comradeship among the group. Some of the films shown include: “Black Gold” (2006) directed by Marc Francis and Nick Francis, “Hlanganani Basebenzi — A Brief History of COSATU” (2005), “Miners Shot Down” (2014) directed by Rehad Desai, “The Take” (2004) directed by Naomi Klein and Avi Lewis, “An Anarchist's Story: The Life of Ethel MacDonald” by Mark Littlewood, “Capitalism is the Crisis” (2011) directed by Michael Truscello.

- *Conferences and Workshops*: In 2011, GLU-Wits hosted the annual GLU conference bringing together 150 labour scholars, activists, unionists and practitioners from over fifty countries (it is hosting the conference again in 2016). Out of this conference, one special journal issue and one edited book volume were published. In addition, GLU has hosted workshops on Decent Work and Development, the Gross Domestic Happiness Index, Social Protection and Labour as a Democratising Force. The GLU programme has also hosted the GLU Alumni Summer School and ICDD PhD workshops. In addition, GLU hosted the following workshops: Peter Waterman (2011), Research Workshop; Jesse Wilderman (2013), Leadership Training: Public Narrative; and Susan van Zyl (2014), Thematic Content Workshop.

### ***International Networks***

- *Visiting Scholars*: GLU has hosted dozens of international scholars from Europe, India, East Asia, Latin America and the United States. Visiting scholars include: Andy Stern, the Ronald O. Perelman Senior Fellow, Richard Paul Richman Centre for Business, Law, and Public Policy, Columbia University; Sue Ledwith, Ruskin College, Oxford; Guy Standing, School of Orientation & African Studies, University of London; Frank Hoffer of the ILO.
- *Academic Exchange Visits*: Wits academics have travelled to Germany, the United States, India, Pakistan, Mexico and Brazil for GLU/ICDD conferences, workshops and guest lectures. Michelle Williams was the Ela Bhatt Visiting Professor at Kassel University in 2014.

## **Diversity**

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The programme has maintained and developed an international flavour since its inception and, in particular, the last six years. The tables below show the geographical spread of students who have participated in the postgraduate programme:

Barbados	1
Botswana	4
Brazil	1
Germany	1
Ghana	4
Italy	1
Lesotho	1

Malawi	5
Namibia	1
Nigeria	2
South Africa	24
USA	1
Zambia	5
Zimbabwe	10



# Funding

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The programme has received funding from the following sources:

- International Labour Organisation (ILO, Geneva)
- International Labour Organisation (ILO, Southern Africa)
- Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES – Germany)
- Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES – Southern Africa)
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
- Services SETA
- CATHSSETA
- DAAD
- Kassel University, Germany
- Wits University

On average, 70-80% of the budget received from donors goes toward scholarships for the postgraduate and certificate programmes with the remaining funds utilized for operational costs. The short course is entirely donor-funded by the FES and ILO.

## Alumni Voices

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**Edwin Anisha - GLU Alumnus 2009:** “...a defining experience”

*“I had few concerns coming into the Global Labour University Programme at Wits: I had applied to the German stream of the programme but was advised to try out the South African programme, mainly because the former was oversubscribed. This had very little to do with my concerns, though. I guess there was this anxiety that stemmed more from the fact that I had a teaching and research background in the field of labour studies already, and needed to be convinced that this was going to be a value-adding experience. What with the usually complicated process of getting an employer’s permission to be away from the job for fully one year. Once in Johannesburg, one was immediately confronted with the challenge of making necessary adjustments with respect to campus life, school work and other logistical and social issues that international students and guests everywhere would normally be faced with - and the survival instinct had to be fully activated. Here, I must commend the excellent effort of the GLU Secretariat in making the adjustment process fairly seamless, particularly by way of excellent logistical arrangement prior to my arrival and sustained advisory services throughout the programme. The class of 2009 was not so diverse, being largely drawn from the African continent, but we still had to learn to deal with individual idiosyncrasies and leverage our strengths. We supported each other most of the time. This was especially helpful in dealing with academic rigours, which were initially a nightmare for quite a number of classmates who had been out of a school situation for a while. We had this regular joke about who among us would be the first to crack up under the sheer weight of academic work. Though we had a few disagreements and arguments around our individual views and preferences - which was not something to be unexpected given our activist backgrounds - it was definitely a pleasant group. I also sensed some level of competition*

*among us arising from colleagues attempting to outdo each other in the form of attaining academic milestones, which was quite healthy. Over all, there was this high level of group solidarity. It would not be possible to go through the GLU-Wits programme and not observe the quality of the faculty. Apart from being knowledgeable in and engaged with labour issues, most faculty members seemed to have links with the broader labour movement. This scholar-practitioner orientation is usually helpful when it comes to relating theory to practice and pointing to concrete examples in society. The programme has been of tremendous benefit to my work. There is no doubt that my knowledge base on labour issues was enhanced by the programme. I remain particularly grateful to the programme for honing my analytical skills. The training in economic policy continues to serve intellectual and practical purposes, especially when it comes to interrogating policy choices of labour organisations and national authorities. It should interest readers to learn that a good number of my published papers and conference presentations were developed from course assignments undertaken and resources acquired during my time at Wits. Currently, I am finalizing my doctoral studies, for which considerable motivation and momentum has come from my involvement in the GLU-Wits programme. A fitting way to capture my engagement with Wits would be to characterise it as a 'defining experience'."*

**Mpho Patience Mwatcha - GLU Alumnus 2014:** *"...brilliant range of courses"*

*"Before enrolling for GLU programme, I had shallow knowledge of trade unions and the role of unionists. I have always had an interest in Labour Rights Activism but didn't have the expertise. I did not know that, when well-equipped with the skills and knowledge of the ever-evolving world, trade unions are a potent weapon to combat the growing ills in labour markets.*

*The GLU Programme, through its brilliant range of courses, has broadened my understanding and comprehension of trade unionism and its role in the agile global labour market. Although I haven't yet landed any job opportunity, the GLU experience will be an opening for me to pursue my long held dream of working with and for a labour movement. The experience will not only contribute to my personal development, but also indirectly and directly to the development of my native country, Botswana and by extension to the African continent. The significance of trade unionism in Botswana seems to be less when compared to that of other countries, such as South Africa. Hence there is a need to attract scholars of Industrial Relations in the labour market in order to develop the quality and significance of trade unionism in Botswana. The knowledge obtained from the GLU Programme will go a long way in bringing about needed change in the Botswana labour movement."*

**Libanus Quanson – GLU Alumnus 2013:** *"...life changing"*

*"The GLU Programme offered me the best and rare opportunity to transform from an extreme patriarchal perception to a progressive gender-sensitive individual. I feel proud and privileged to be counted among the graduates of the GLU Programme at Wits University, South Africa in celebrating 10 years of existence. I was admitted into the Programme in 2012 for BA Honours and 2013 for MA. I entered Wits University with extreme patriarchal tendencies and perceptions, and came out as a completely transformed gender-sensitive graduate, and adjudged with outstanding performance award in feminist theory from the Department of Sociology. For the first year, it was challenging and exciting for me to study at Wits as I battled with profound internalised patriarchal perceptions and experiences...and the progressive gender and academic environment of Wits. It was very challenging for me to depart from chauvinistic perceptions, much as I tried. For the second year however, I succumbed to counselling and signed up for a feminist theory course and excelled with an outstanding performance award, whilst perusing research in "Gender Transformation at the Workplace and the Role of Trade Unions", with particular focus on women. Most importantly, my research work was supervised by a female scholar, Dr Sarah Mosoetsa. I must confess that I was influenced by her academic energy and resilience which served as the main source of my complete transformation and changed in attitude as far as gender perception is concerned. I have realised that women are, rather, the most effective source of transformation and as such, I have been transformed into a logically balanced graduate, and*

*an advocate of women in societal transformation...to the extent that I have influenced equal representation of women (four women) in the eight-member Regional Executive Committee of the trade union in which I serve currently in Ghana. My profound gratitude goes to GLU Programmes at Wits in South Africa for the life-changing role..."*

**Ruth Ziona Manjawira – GLU Alumnus 2015:** *"I am able to advance workers' interests"*

*"I was first admitted into GLU MA program in 2012, but due to health reasons, I withdrew by May 2012. I am grateful that after 2 years I was able to get my place back and the scholarship funds were also reversed back to my account in 2014. This is when I was able to complete my studies and graduated on 9th December 2015.*

*As a student, I was exposed to not just African experience of labour issues but globally. Technically I got the same learning methodology that any other university student was given without discrimination and compromise to education standards. Apart from labour studies, I was also exposed to political economy, research methods as well as Cambridge English which were well-fitted to my studies. I also had access to all the campus benefits like library, Wellness and Health Care centres, the Counselling, Careers and Development Unit, as well as WCCOO. I had access to housing at the WCV and Medical Insurance too.*

*The staff were supportive as well as the Coordinator. Much appreciation goes to my Supervisor Prof. Devan Pillay who, despite my initial little knowledge on climate change – my research area – he helped to expose me to a lot of people and institutions. These became very important in my research work.*

*After qualification, I am able to advance workers' interest and this is seen in my Government Gazette appointments to the Tripartite Labour Advisory Council (TLAC) and Industrial Relations Court Panel. These are over and above many forums my federation (Malawi Congress of Trade Unions) and affiliate union (CIAWU) requests me to represent them on. At my workplace I received a promotion to the position of Bank Manager. All these are in recognition of my qualification."*

**Lisema Lekhooana – ENGAGE Germany Alumnus 2010:** *"befitting and beneficial for a trade union environment... overwhelmed with the inspiration that I still have up to this day"*

*"I am a male, employed by the South African Commercial Catering and Allied Workers Union (Saccawu) as an International Relations Officer, and as such, I was born and currently reside in South Africa. With the blessing of the union that I work for, I had an opportunity to attend Engage 1 (One) in Germany from the end of March 2010 to October of that year when the programme was under the auspices of InWent at both Berlin and Kassel Universities.*

*To me, the programme was befitting and beneficial for a trade union environment, especially when I consider the background from a perspective of a developing country or countries and the related aspects of lack of resources and international exposure to global challenges and issues. At times trade unions by and large have educational programmes, but they are not that tangible and not widely recognized/recognizable. The Engage programme was indeed a new learning curve and an eye opener that offers/offered a window of opportunities in that it is a stepping stone to other academic heights like a master's programme.*

*It should be continued as a capacity bridge-building course, given the enthusiasm, confidence and the zeal to learn that it instils into a person/individual, in a university environment, as I have said, given the limitations of exposure to tertiary education.*

*I was indeed overwhelmed with the inspiration that I still have up to this day. The exchange of personal, work-related, country-to-country and academic views, experiments and experiences was voluminous and unforgettable, given the challenges of the modern globalised world, where day in and day out, trade unions, as a microcosm of society, are faced with the erosion of their erstwhile influence, coupled with seeping joblessness and the resultant poverty, downscaling or downsizing of governance, escalating poverty and strangulation of our developmental agenda as countries. Given these mentioned attacks and*

*developments, the Engage programme can at least enable trade unions to be resourced to tackle these problems for an equitable and better world, which is possible.*

*What I admired when I was in Germany was the aspect of time management between and about everything that has to be started, worked through and be finished, of which in my experience, managing time (efficiency and effectiveness) as a valuable resource is still a challenge to most of us in our countries. If one had a magic wand, this is one prime aspect that I would wish to import as I did, but imparting it into the minds of so many people is indeed a steep hill.*

*Acknowledging and understanding that the programme is not and could not be a “Be All, End All,” as well as the question or aspect of limited resources versus unlimited needs, my view is that it did not go far enough in terms of its duration and its downside is the compression of modules, which may compromise individual output levels and outcomes. Quality on the learning areas should take centre stage, as opposed to time managed inputs, equalling quantity.*

*At the end of the programme, we were called upon to vent our experience or evaluate the course/programme and among others, I reflected upon the importance of including Project Management, Facilitation Skills and Research Methodology into the programme, given the scope of a trade unionist in daily practical terms.”*

#### **Janet Munakamwe - GLU Alumnus 2007: “I thank you”**

*Before I got the opportunity of undertaking a Master’s Degree in Labour Policies and Globalisation (Wits LPG 1), I thought I was knowledgeable enough until when I enrolled with Wits University through the Sociology of Work Programme (SWOP) for their first intake of the Global Labour Programme (GLU). Until then, I realised that I was a “tabula rasa” (empty-headed) especially when it comes to research Skills. Today, I boast of the research skills that I have acquired; **mentally, economically, socially, psychologically**, etc from the GLU initiative. I have gained very useful and in-depth-understanding of academic/applied research including analytical thinking skills that I can apply to trade unions, civil society and to the broader society.*

*The course not only equipped me mentally but has also groomed me to become a global citizen. I had the opportunity to meet with other students coming from all parts of the world and have been integrated into a very strong global academic family. While I did not go back to my country after completion of my degree programme, as a labour activist and researcher I have had the privilege to work with the National Labour and Economic Development Institute (NALEDI) which is a research institute of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), where I had the opportunity to further develop and apply my research skills in the field of labour (trade unions). Again, I had the opportunity to work with progressive unions here in South Africa and possess almost ten years’ experience working as a researcher in South Africa particularly on studies that are labour-related but not limited to social and economic enquiries. Since 2011 till to date, I have been conducting gender – related research for the COSATU Gender Desk including providing technical advice to other trade unions in the country.*

*In addition, I have also managed to develop my research skills through the Alumni Research Groups on Closing the Representation Gap in MSEs and the global alumni research on Gender & Trade Unions, where I had the privilege of working with South Africa’s three Federations; COSATU, FEDUSA and NACTU and their affiliates including international trade union organisations like the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and Public Service International (PSI).*

*Today, I am proud to send out my CV as it also presents me at a better side in the labour market unlike before I embarked on this course. Please find attached my CV and the research projects and publications that I have undertaken so far. I am also working towards my PhD studies at the African Centre for Migration & Society (ACMS) at the University of the Witwatersrand.*

*All these could not have happened without the commitment of the ILO through their financial support. A special mention goes to Frank Hoffer for his seminal work and pivotal role in ensuring that the*



*programme is cascaded to every part of this global village especially amongst developing countries like mine, Zimbabwe. May his vision be cherished! On that note, I would like to appeal to any philanthropic organisations to come on board and support this worthwhile cause for the continuation of GLU's good work. Certainly, trade unions are benefitting from this programme as it empowers trade union activists through accredited university qualifications which in turn they would need to customise in line with the needs of unions. Empowering union activists is very essential as it minimises the external consultations which might result in prescription of 'wrong drugs' to resolve the challenges facing trade unions today.*

*I would like to express my utmost gratitude to Professor Eddie Webster and his academic team for their dedication and commitment towards the achievement of the goals of this course. Academic work is not very easy as it needs dedication from both the academic staff and the students themselves. I am glad to say, we constantly had academic counselling (from academic staff) which to a greater extent contributed to our success at the end of the course. Other GLU partners from Germany, Brazil and India need to be applauded for ensuring global academic integration, with a special mention of the Germany Government for providing financial resources in particular through their contribution towards hosting and participation of GLU Alumni at annual Summer Schools.*

*However, I must say that in as far as we have achieved our academic goal; it is unfortunate that there are no synergies between the current GLU programme and its Alumni. This area still needs to be improved. I thank you!*

**James Musonda – GLU Alumnus 2015:** *“my way of thinking and view of life had completely changed for the better”*

*“I completed my MA in 2015 and just recently submitted two articles awaiting feedback from the Southern African Labour Journal. On a personal level, I have registered with James Park College of Education and Labour studies with the Zambian government. The school is scheduled to start offering lessons, initially, on distance learning basis and hopefully fulltime by 2019. The idea behind this project is to support trade unions through capacity building, training and consultancy. While I do not have finances at the moment, this project will definitely come to pass.*

*But how did this come about? It started with the question 'what the hell is wrong with GLU?' As soon as I got registered in the GLU programme at Wits University, I realised that there was a lot I needed to learn. I thought that the lecturers were just being unfair in the way in which they critiqued my writing, referencing and my arguments in the assignments they gave us. For white lecturers I thought it was racism, yet for my fellow African lecturers I was sure they didn't like me. But anyway I followed their corrections and by the time I went into exams for my honours, apart from improving on writing, referencing and avoiding plagiarism, my way of thinking and view of life had completely changed for the better. I could now think like a sociologist and more confident about my arguments. When I was the only one who managed to go through to the Master's program from a class of four students, I then realised that in fact, 'nothing was wrong with GLU' but everything was wrong with me. I must confess that I had never thought of doing a PhD, opening a training institution or anything like that. Today I am confident of writing a comprehensive book of trade unions in Zambia, doing a PhD, opening a university or doing the unimaginable. On top of that I am connected to a number of friends across the globe and feel that I am now part of the global village. When I made a presentation on 'Trade Union Responses to Informalisation of Work' at one of the workshops of trade union leaders, the reactions from the participants to my presentation made me realise why GLU has been a very important part of my life. Overall, I would like to thank the GLU team and teaching staff for the good job that you are doing. Though not yet employed I feel more confident about the world than I ever felt, thanks to GLU. Today a union President can pick a call for consultation and this is really humbling. Finally I would like to suggest that a course on labour laws be included in the program because trade unionism operates in a legal environment on a daily basis. Thank you (All is well with GLU)”*

**Silvia Chimpampwe Mwansa – GLU Alumnus 2012:** *“an opportunity to meet and interact with other students from different countries, many of whom have become valuable network”*

*“Being a student under the GLU program was both a challenging and exciting phase for me as it not only broadened my knowledge but also gave me an opportunity to meet and interact with other students from different countries, many of whom have become valuable networks. I especially benefited greatly from the workshops and seminars organized for post graduate students, the well-stocked libraries and above all the hands-on dedicated guidance from the lecturers and support staff with GLU who were always at hand to assist both academically and personally. As a foreign student this kind of committed assistance towards my studies and general well-being was invaluable. Post-GLU, I have become a go-to person in the area of my research (domestic service) which has seen me contribute towards various studies for local students and organizations in Zambia & regionally, including the Research Network for Domestic Workers, the International Domestic Workers Network as well as the development of the first ever training guide for domestic workers in Zambia for the ILO. The research skills honed during my GLU days have inadvertently turned out to be my passion and source of income given the growing challenge of unemployment my country is facing. **Thank you GLU & Happy 10th Anniversary!**”*

**Crispen Chinguno (PhD) – GLU Alumnus 2008:** *“...enhanced my critical thinking and sharpened and broadened my interpretation”*

*“The interest to pursue a higher research degree emerged from my engagement with the trade unions in Zimbabwe where I was in the national executive of the Railway Association of Enginemen (RAE) affiliated to the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU). In my experience as a union executive and negotiator there was a glaring gap in capacity in the representation and articulation of the position and experience(s) of organised labour. This posed broader socio-economic and political questions which stretched beyond my capacity at the time. This partly influenced my decision to apply for the Global Labour University Master’s programme at the University of the Witwatersrand in 2008.*

*The experience in the programme kindled and further enhanced my critical thinking and sharpened and broadened my interpretation of the socio-economic and political world in which organised labour exist. This offered me critical lenses to analyse the complex socio-economic and political context and to challenge dominant societal discourses, and deconstruct ‘taken for granted’ knowledge. This exposure provoked me to study further and sharpen my analytical skills.*

*Overarching this motivation has been the compulsion to articulate the position of labour in the broader socio-economic and political context. In pursuit of this goal I enrolled for a PhD programme at the University of the Witwatersrand, focused on understanding workers’ struggles in the neoliberal dispensation. I graduated with a PhD in December 2015 and am currently working as a post-doctoral researcher at SWOP and Lecturer (social science) in the school of Mechanical, Industrial and Aeronautical Engineering at the University of the Witwatersrand. One of my current and sustained interests is to close the gap between the university as a space of knowledge production and trade unions as drivers of social change. In pursuit of this goal, I joined hands with fellow Global Labour University alumni in Zimbabwe in the setting up of the Zimbabwe Institute of Socio-Economic and Labour Research (ZISELaR) [www.ziselar.co.zw/about-ziselar/](http://www.ziselar.co.zw/about-ziselar/) which is centred on trade union and social movement capacity building and collaboration with universities. The thrust is to enable these organisations to effectively deal with change.”*

**Taurai Mereki – GLU Alumnus 2009:** *“this cross-pollination of experiences added flavour to the experiences I had from my own country”*

*“Being at Wits University for the first time as a Global Labour University (GLU) student changed the way I view trade unionism and the world of work. The perception from the country I come from (Zimbabwe) was that trade unionism is for those that failed to make it to college or university hence the degraded should be in management positions serving the interests of capital not workers; but now my mind-set has shifted. It was also my first time to*

*mix with other trade union scholars from other countries and this cross-pollination of experiences added flavour to the experiences I had from my own country. Studying and graduating from GLU-WITS was a life-changing experience for a simple trade unionist like me and it was also an achievement for all my comrades in the trade union movement back home in Zimbabwe. It was a rare opportunity which I could not have achieved on my own.*

*I would say the GLU programme was a game-changer in terms of my capacity as a worker representative. It gave me the opportunity to graduate from being an activist to being a scholar-activist and this was helpful in terms of my capacity to appreciate policy at company, industry as well as national level the sum being capacity to represent my constituency with confidence. Before then, my appreciation of global trends was deficient and only limited to my industry and country. Going into the GLU Masters programme helped me widen my scope of thinking as I now understood the need for the working class to come together as global labour federations and social movements is to counter capitalism at a global scale as capital has also gone global. As a scholar-activist the GLU-WITS programme has connected me with other activists throughout the world to share experiences and this has helped me at my union and beyond. I am now able to carry out research and package messages in a way that helps in spreading the working class message of countering capitalism. As GLU alumni from Zimbabwe, we have gone a step further to form the Zimbabwe Institute for Socio Economic and Labour Research (ZISELaR) as a way of thanking the GLU for changing our lives."*

**Muttaqa Yshua'u Abdularuf – GLU Alumnus 2012:** *"Through GLU-WITS, we appreciate how labour could be both a mobilising and counter-hegemonic force to the global onslaught of capitalism...the nature of scholarship bequeathed to us in South Africa...is quite innovative, and attractive"*

*"Receiving the offer to read an M.A Labour and Development, Economic Policy and Globalisation, at the Global Labour University (GLU)-University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, was one of the historic moments in my career in the labour movement. The academic life at GLU-Wits ranged from formally structured coursework on Labour & Development, Advance Research Methods, Economic Policy & Globalisation, the Research Report and other informal avenues of sharing experiences such as the monthly SWOP seminars, seminars with labour activists from local unions in South Africa and COSATU Education programmes. All these made the GLU-Wits experience all-encompassing in me appreciating the relationship between theory and practice in industrial relations in South Africa and beyond.*

*The obvious euphoria of going to the other GLU campuses especially those in the first world has made several students dodge studying in the South. Alas! For us, it was never a regret, but a nourishing experience that traversed various phases of labour vis-à-vis capital's contradiction which in academic circle is defined as a 'labour regime'. We understood how labour and trade union movement grappled with the Fordist regime of accumulation, the post-Fordist regime and its flexible labour market under the guise of neoliberalism. Most importantly, is the extent to which labour responded to the various waves of crisis unleashed by capitalism and its destructive competition to use Schumpeter's' neologism.*

*Through GLU-WITS, we appreciate how labour could be both a mobilising and counter-hegemonic force to the global onslaught of capitalism, both nationally and internationally. Some of the labour strategies involved transnational solidarities through inter-movement linkages, developmental states and the way they were shaped by labour through Peter Evans' notion of Counter-Hegemonic Globalisation, as well as building counter-movement through labour organising in the work places and alliance building with civil societies. What scholars such as Webster & Adler, von Holdt, and Seidman later referred to as Social Movement Unionism (SMU).*

*It is significant to also shed light on the nature of scholarship bequeathed to us in South Africa, which is quite innovative, and attractive to labour scholars globally. Here I wanted to share the idea of 'Public Sociology' which has been the hallmark of labour activists and scholarship in South Africa. We read literature produced by the sociologist in conversation with the activist in the communities. This form of scholarship has challenged the conventional*

*metropolitan industrial relations that treat labour as only a collective bargaining enterprise rather than a political force, or source of knowledge. We see a conversation developing between Labour scholars and community activist on university campuses such as GLU-Wits, street protest and publications such as South African Labour Bulletin. This is where labour scholars and activist relate on the principle of intellectual symmetry, where each partner is respected in the production of knowledge. This form of scholarship is an important counter-hegemonic current in the sociology of knowledge.*

*I arrived back home after the one year intensive course on labour administrations and economic policies. One of my success stories was being involved in several labour strategic programmes and research initiatives by the Nigeria Labour congress. This includes (1) The Pension Committee inaugurated by the Nigeria's Federal Government to address the non-payment of pensioners pension, (2) National Labour Advisory Council NLAC (an equivalent of NEDLAC in South Africa), (3) Research on Pricing of Petroleum Product in Nigeria in conjunction with the Open Society Initiative West Africa (OSIWA).*

*Finally, I need to share on the nature and structural prowess of the GLU-WITS, based on its steering committee which deserves commendation. The GLU steering committee comprises all the GLU-WITS lecturers and admin officers. It inspired and guided the students throughout their candidature in South Africa. Despite the paucity of funds at their disposal, it is worth mentioning that we were given befitting accommodation, programme materials and tuition waivers.*

*The GLU-Chair Prof. Michelle Williams, GLU lecturers such as Prof. Devan Pillay, Prof. Lucien van der Walt, Dr Sarah Mosoetsa, Dr Seeraj Mohammed, Prof. Karl von Holdt, Prof. Jacklyn Cock, Prof. Bridget Kenny, Prof. David Dickinson, Prof. Roger Southall, all other GLU lecturers not mentioned and our contact person Pulane Dithlake deserved commendation and an outstanding ovation. So also the ILO, the Global Labour University project at Kassel-Germany (special mention to Frank Hoffer and Dr. Christoph Scherrer), local trade unions and other organisations such as COSATU, NUMSA, SWOP (for their interesting programme), Chris Hani Institute, the emeritus Professor Eddie Webster (who made himself available to all of us, and being the pioneer of the GLU-Wits projects), and all those that contributed to the success of the GLU programme. Amandla!!! Amandla!!! Amandla!!!”*

**Sophie Chitenje – GLU Alumnus 2015:** *“Global Labour University qualification has enhanced my knowledge, confidence and status academically, professionally and socially”*

*“As every aspect of life is changing every day, labour is unexceptional. To deal with change needs special expertise. Labour is also economically, politically, environmentally, technologically and socially affected; therefore labour also needs to move with time and that means to move from traditional ways of doing things to modern ways in order to deal with current situations.*

*With the view above, Global Labour University in collaboration with other developing partners offer advanced capacity building academic programmes for labour activists, trade unions and other labour specialists, in order to deal with change in labour. Being one of the beneficiaries, I have benefited in different ways, not only academically, professionally but also socially. Academically, I have improved my understanding of academic issues; professionally, it has raised my status. For instance, I have been appointed as one of Malawi's Industrial Relations Court Employee Panelists. My union (T&GWU) has also entrusted me with different union responsibilities. for example, negotiating with employers on workers' issue, handling disciplinary and grievance issues, while socially, the qualification enables me to make critical judgments/decisions in different social issues.*

*In a nutshell, Global Labour University qualification has enhanced my knowledge, confidence and status academically, professionally and socially more than ever before.*



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The GLU Programme would like to thank Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) for funding the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event.





**The Global Labour University Programme wishes to thank all participants.**

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