DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

NEWSLETTER 02 June 2020

Responding to corona virus – In solidarity with all SA residents

A message from the HoD, Prof Lilly Nortje-Meyer: The Dean has submitted the faculty plan for certain levels of contact/training on campus, and only a limited return to campus in Lockdown 3 is allowed. About 33% of students will be able to access campus (mainly final year students needing to complete practical work, and selected categories of students unable to fulfil the requirements of their degrees in the online mode).

Please note that no Religion Studies staff or students are for now allowed to return to campus because we have no practical courses. Staff and students will work from home until further notice. I would like to use this opportunity to encourage all students to utilise the time to advance with their studies and I wish everybody a fruitful and safe stay at home.

Congratulations on your graduation!

Lerato Cleopatra, **Theolaan Thomas** and **Grace Lesibe** graduated with an Honours degree in Religion Studies.

Ali Masawudu graduated with a Masters degree in Semitic Languages and Cultures.
His research topic is: "The Use of the Term Mustaḍʿafūn (Marginalized) in the Qur'ān: Critical Readingsofʿ Alī ibn Ibrāhīm al-Qummī (d. 919) and Muḥammad ibn al-Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (d. 923) from an Islamic Liberation Theology Perspective".
Supervisor: Prof **Esack, Farid**

Norman Shoko graduated with Masters in Biblical Studies.
His research topic is: "The Resurrection Debate among New Testament Scholars in South Africa: Insights from Social-Scientific Historiography".
Supervisor: Prof **SJ Nortje-Meyer**

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An experience of virtual graduation at UJ

The Graduation took place on Wednesday the 13th of May, and I didn't really know what to expect. As usual, one gets to be excited on reaching such a milestone. The fanfare was not there, though, due to the Coronavirus induced lockdown. So, after I received the link from the University I went online. I basically read through all the information they had posted and proceeded to get access to my Academic record. Once I got to that stage, I managed to download the electronic version of my Academic Record which was confirmation that I had acquired the qualification.

----------By Ali Masawudu, MA graduate----------

Postgrad seminar and other news

Clementine Nishimwe is running a reading group for Masters and doctoral students in our department. We have been gathering together for the reading group sessions on Collaborate Ultra but we hope to try WhatsApp for our next meeting. We meet once every two weeks to discuss readings that focus on research ethics and politics.
For more information and if you want to attend these sessions, please contact Clementine at: cnishstaug@gmail.com

Professor Farid Esack completed two of a six weekly lecture webinar series on "Apartheid Israel Through the Eyes of a South African Liberation Theologian" every Wednesday at 7 pm (Central African time) live on FaceBook at "Africa For Palestine". The webinar is hosted by Alex Abbasi, a PhD student in our department, and has attracted thousands of viewers. On the 14th of May Esack was one of three International panellists hosted on a University of Chicago webinar dealing with religion and International struggles for justice.

Professor Esack has also conducted three radio interviews: two with Radio Sonder Grense, the national Afrikaans radio station, and one with Radio 786. These discussions dealt with celebrating the end of the Muslim month of fasting under lockdown and the President's announcement that places of religion will be allowed to open during level 3 of the lockdown.

We wish all the best to undergraduate and Honours students for the exam period

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