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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION Senate **DATE** March 16, 2020
FROM Jon Driver, Vice-President, Academic and **PAGES** 1 of 1
Provost *pro tem*, and Chair, SCUP
RE: Establishment of the SFU Africa Research Centre (SCUP 20-11)

At its March 11, 2020 meeting, SCUP reviewed and approved the establishment of the SFU Africa Research Centre as a research centre for a five-year term.

Motion:

That Senate approve the establishment of the SFU Africa Research Centre as a research centre for a five-year term.

c: E. Cooper

MEMO

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT,
RESEARCH

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ATTENTION Senate Committee for University Priorities (SCUP)

FROM Joy Johnson, Vice-President, Research and International



RE Establishment of the SFU Africa Research Centre

DATE February 26, 2020

TIME 10:00am

Attached is a proposal for the establishment of the SFU Africa Research Centre in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. This Centre will bring together an interdisciplinary team of researchers to create a centre that supports and promotes Africa-related research and activities. This proposal is aligned with SFU's Strategic Research Plan and is supported by the Dean of Arts and Social Sciences.

Motion:

That SCUP approve and recommend to Senate the establishment of the SFU Africa Research Centre as a research centre for a five-year term.

Attachments:
Africa Research Centre Proposal
Africa Research Centre FASS Approval



MEMO

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ATTENTION Joy Johnson, Vice-President, Research and International

FROM Maite Taboada, Acting Associate Dean, FASS

RE Proposal for the Africa Research Centre

DATE January 28, 2020

PAGES 1/1

Attached please find a proposal from Dr. Elizabeth Cooper in the School for International Studies for the establishment of the "Africa Research Centre" in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, for consideration through SCUP and Senate under policy R40.01. The proposal includes background and a draft constitution.

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences fully supports this proposal. The Centre has a clear set of objectives and a governance structure. In its current form, as the African Studies Working Group, it has been supported by the Jarislowsky Chair within the School for International Studies. FASS has committed \$10,000 in seed funding to support the Centre in applying for conference funding and towards developing an advancement strategy.

The Centre builds on the outstanding work carried out by the African Studies Working Group over the last couple of years. The ASWG organized an 'Africa-Focused Research and Engagement Day' in October 2018, which convened faculty, students and staff from across the University to explore Africa-related research and engagement. Since then, the ASWG has developed a web and social media presence, sponsored a regular reading group and hosted several guest speakers and SFU researchers on topics related to Africa. The current Steering Committee meets regularly and is developing further programming and community engagement.

The new proposed Centre aligns very well with SFU's commitment to internationalization and engagement.

- c. Dr. Elizabeth Cooper, School for International Studies
Dr. Tamir Moustafa, Director, School for International Studies



Dr. Elizabeth Cooper
School for International Studies
eccooper@sfu.ca

January 17, 2020

Office of the Dean
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Simon Fraser University

Dear Associate Dean Taboada,

It is my pleasure to re-submit a proposal for the establishment of an Africa Research Centre at SFU, under the direct authority of the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

I attach for your consideration a revised constitution for the SFU Africa Research Centre. This has been developed in accordance with the revised SFU Policy R 40.01 and in consultation with the FASS Associate Dean for Research as well as SFU faculty and staff serving on the African Studies Working Group (ASWG) steering committee. That steering committee is composed of: Dr Catherine d'Andrea (Archaeology); Dr. Susan Erikson (Public Health and Anthropology); Ms. Shaheen Nanji (SFU International); Dr. Cecile Vigouroux (French); Dr. Sarah Walshaw (History); and Dr. Aaron Windel (History). Our graduate student liaison is Ms Adjua Akinwumi (Communications). I am also a member and serve as director of the ASWG steering committee.

I also attach for your consideration an outline of progress made by the ASWG. We believe our work to date provides a good foundation for the proposed Centre. We have already secured, and begun to use, \$7,000/year for three years (2019-2021) of seed funding through the Jarislowsky Chair, housed at SFU's School for International Studies.

We are very pleased that FASS has favourably considered our request for core seed funding. The amount of \$10,000 in core seed funding will help to ensure the successful development of the Africa Research Centre. Specifically, we would like to use these funds to hire a professional with grant-writing expertise to assist our steering committee in preparing a SSHRC Connections grant as well as materials with which to engage prospective external donors in pursuit of a funding endowment for ARC or specific ARC activities. Our steering committee focused on these goals during our December 2019 meeting and identified that we require some additional staff support now to advance our proposal documents.

We are delighted you agree with us that the time is ripe for SFU to establish an Africa Research Centre and through this Centre continue to advance Africa-focused research and engagement.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to discuss this proposal further.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth Cooper". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Elizabeth Cooper
Director, SFU African Studies Working Group
Assistant Professor, SFU School for International Studies



Background to the proposed SFU Africa Research Centre

There is significant interest among SFU faculty and students, as well as SFU alumni and the broader community, to establish a SFU Africa Research Centre (ARC) that will promote research and organize related activities with a focus on issues and perspectives that are of particular relevance to Africa and for people of African identities. This interest has been demonstrated through the active participation of a core group of SFU faculty in coordinating our efforts to such effect and the enthusiastic responses these efforts have received from other SFU faculty and students, as well as members of the public. We believe that the establishment of the Africa Research Centre is critical to sustaining this momentum, building further capacity and support for Africa-focused research at and through SFU, and distinguishing SFU as a leader in Canada for Africa-engaged research.

Over the past two years, a core group of faculty at SFU have worked together to plan and implement a continuing initiative to engage Africa-focused researchers at SFU. In March 2018, I convened a meeting that included 11 faculty from across SFU to discuss our visions for this, and we then established ourselves as the SFU African Studies Working Group (ASWG), with a volunteer steering committee. This steering committee includes: Cecile Vigouroux (French, faculty); Sarah Walshaw (History, faculty); Cathy D'Andrea (Archaeology, faculty); Susan Erikson (Anthropology and Public Health, faculty); Aaron Windel (History, faculty); Shaheen Nanji (SFU International, director of Global Engagement); and me (International Studies, faculty) as the director. The steering committee's student liaisons are Adjua Akinwumi (Communications, PhD student) and Benedicta Bawo (International Studies, MA student). Since 2018, the ASWG steering committee has met twice each fall and spring term and once each summer term to plan our initiatives.

The proposed SFU Africa Research Centre has already secured a commitment of \$7,000/year for 3 years of seed funding through the Jarislowsky Chair, housed at SFU's School for International Studies. The ASWG began using these funds in 2019 to finance special events and part-time support staff. The ASWG has also been successful in securing additional funds from individual departments, the FASS Rapid Response Fund, SFU International, and the Office of the Vice-President, Research and International, to co-sponsor special events. The proposed Centre will benefit from the recent hiring of a Coordinator, Communications and Events, who divides her time between SIS, the David Lam Centre, and the Centre for Comparative Muslim Studies. The proposed Centre will also benefit from ongoing administrative support provided through the School for International Studies. We hope to secure additional seed funding from FASS. That support would allow us to develop a stronger foundation from which to work with FASS Advancement toward our ultimate goal of securing external financial support for the Centre.

The proposed Africa Research Centre will build on the ASWG's successful track record of SFU and public engagement. Key ASWG initiatives to date have included: the establishment and active maintenance of a website (www.sfu.ca/african-studies-group) that serves as a hub for African-related research at SFU (including faculty bios, news, and promotion of upcoming



AFRICAN STUDIES WORKING GROUP

events); the creation of a listserv of individuals and organizations that are interested in staying informed of Africa-focused research activities at SFU and the regular e-newsletters to this listserv; a Facebook page for ASWG to advertise news and events; the organization of a 'SFU Africa-focused Research and Engagement Day' in October 2018, funded by the Office of the Vice-President, Research and International, that brought together 17 faculty and graduate student researchers across seven SFU departments to learn about each other's research (see attached final report); organization and financial support for special public events profiling Africa-focused research (e.g. Youthful Africa, November 2018; Remembering Rwanda, June 2019; Afrocentrism Conference, September 2019; Evening with Ngugi wa Thiong'o, September 2019; Politics of Informal Settlements in Southern Africa, November 2019); and a monthly African Studies reading group comprising SFU faculty, students, alumni and members of the public. Through these activities, we have been successfully building the profile and capacity of Africa-focused research at SFU.

We have many more initiatives in the works for the 2020-2021 academic year, including many high profile public events featuring combinations of guest speakers and SFU researchers focusing on Africa-focused content. We will also maintain our active online presence, regular email newsletter service, and ongoing consultations and cooperation with other SFU groups including the Centre for Comparative Muslim Studies, the David Lam Centre, the Institute for Diaspora Research and Engagement, and the SFU African Students' Association as well as many community groups.

SFU Africa Research Centre (ARC) Constitution

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The mandate of the SFU Africa Research Centre (ARC, or the Centre) is to promote research and organize related activities with a focus on issues and perspectives that are of particular relevance to Africa and for people of African identities. These activities are intended to extend across a broad spectrum of social, cultural, political, and economic issues from both contemporary and historical perspectives. ARC supports and facilitates research collaboration, networking, and building the community of Africa-related scholars across SFU and internationally. This includes supporting students in learning, research, and other forms of engagement concerning Africa. ARC also mobilizes and transfers knowledge from the academic research community to Canadian society.
- 1.2. ARC is affiliated with Simon Fraser University and conducts its activities in such a way as to serve as a resource and hub for SFU's engagement with Africa and its internationalization efforts, and to enhance the reputation of the research and academic programs of the University. ARC is obliged to conduct its activities in accordance with University policies.
- 1.3. ARC aims to: (1) support and facilitate collaborative research and networking among SFU Africa-related faculty members through developing research projects, hosting research workshops and symposia, organizing Africa-focused lecture and seminar series, and supporting major research publications (e.g. book launches); 2) develop and deepen the connection between SFU and academic institutions in Africa through strategic partnerships by cohosting international conferences and workshops, co-developing collaborative research projects as well as accommodating visiting scholars, doctoral, and postdoctoral students; 3) engage and involve SFU students interested in Africa by sponsoring student conferences, offering graduate research and African language training fellowships, and encouraging international experience through student exchanges and co-operative programs; and 4) advance the dissemination of knowledge and research about Africa to the public and local communities through public education programs and community events. These objectives do not significantly overlap with other SFU Research Centres or Research Institutes.

2. Governance

- 2.1. ARC is constituted as a Research Centre at Simon Fraser University under the terms of SFU Policy R 40.01, comes under the direct authority of the Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, and conducts its affairs in accordance with all other University policies.
- 2.2. The Centre is institutionally housed and administratively managed at SFU's School for International Studies (SIS). SIS will provide access to support facilities like SIS meeting rooms and photocopy machine, and a mailing address for the Centre. SIS staff will provide

some administrative assistance to the Centre for budgeting, human resources management, and some communications.

- 2.3. An annual report on ARC's activities and financial status from April 1 to March 31, including the current membership of the Centre and Steering Committee and Advisory Board, will be submitted to the Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, by the Director before June 30th of each year and to the Vice-President Research by August 31st of each year.
- 2.4. ARC is headed by a Director and governed by a Steering Committee. ARC also has members that participate in the activities of the Centre. ARC also has an Advisory Board.
- 2.5. The Director of ARC shall be a SFU continuing faculty member appointed by the Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences under advisement from the Centre's Steering Committee upon nomination by the Steering Committee. The Director serves a three-year term, which is renewable.
- 2.6. The Director's tasks include the following responsibilities, which he or she may delegate but not abrogate.
- Chairing the Steering Committee;
 - Developing ARC's policies in consultation with the Steering Committee;
 - Ensuring that governance documents and constitutions exist, are adhered to, and are amended as necessary;
 - Preparing in consultation with the Steering Committee an annual budget detailing the projects to be carried out in the coming year funded by the Centre's endowments;
 - Overseeing the Centre's finances;
 - Ensuring that all agreements involving the Research Centre have secured the necessary approvals in accordance with SFU Policy R 40.01;
 - Maintaining a record of Research Centre meetings and relevant decisions; and ensuring the timely and accurate submission of annual reports and, when applicable, renewal requests.
 - Recruiting members;
 - Promoting and publicizing ARC's activities;
 - Maintaining an up-to-date web/social media presence that includes a list of members and research activities;
 - Hiring ARC personnel, including support staff and research assistants;
 - Preparing the annual report for review by the Steering Committee and the Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and Vice-President, Research.
- 2.7. The Steering Committee consists of at least 5 and no more than 7 members including the Director, who will serve as Chair. Members of the Steering Committee may be faculty and research personnel of SFU.
- 2.7.1. Members of the Committee serve for a three-year term, which is renewable.
- 2.7.2. The composition of the Steering Committee will represent as much as possible the range of disciplinary perspectives of the Centre's members with Africa-related research interests at SFU.

2.7.3. The task of the Steering Committee is to determine the overall direction of ARC and to oversee the management of its operations. While it normally operates by consensus, when necessary it can make decisions by majority vote, including the appointment of new members of the Steering Committee.

2.7.4. Decisions are normally taken at Steering Committee meetings. Proxy votes may be submitted. Alternative decision-making procedures (such as electronic votes) may be invoked by the Director where circumstances warrant, provided a majority of Steering Committee members agree.

2.8. Membership in the Centre is by application to the Director and the Steering Committee, who may also recruit members to apply. University faculty members, postdoctoral fellows, graduate students, and research personnel are eligible to apply for membership.

2.8.1. Affiliate membership may also be established by application to the Director and the Steering Committee who may also recruit affiliate members to apply. University alumni and other members of the general public are eligible to apply for affiliate membership.

2.9. The Advisory Board of ARC consists of leading members of the cultural, professional and business communities with interest in ARC's purpose. Membership in the Board will be at the invitation of the Steering Committee subject to the approval of the Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. Advisory Board members will serve a two-year term, that is renewable. The Chair of the Advisory Board will be elected annually by and from the Advisory Board members. While the Advisory Board will have no decision-making authority regarding the activities of ARC, it will serve to facilitate connections between the larger community and ARC.

3. Revision of this Constitution

Amendments to the Constitution may be proposed by any Steering Committee member. A proposed amendment shall be checked for conformity with other articles of this Constitution, by a committee appointed by the Director, including at least one of the proposers, and in consultation with the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. If that committee deems the proposed amendment valid, it shall be circulated to members at least two weeks before it is put to a vote. Votes will be made by secret electronic ballot. A proposed amendment requires a majority vote to be passed.

SFU Africa Research Centre (ARC) Communications Plan

ARC will maintain an active communications strategy to deliver on its objectives.

Components of the communications plan will include:

- Website and Facebook pages: ARC will actively maintain its own website (via the SFU platform) and Facebook page. These will take over from the SFU website and Facebook page established and actively maintained by the SFU African Studies Working Group in 2019. Content will include: ARC's purpose; ARC's membership (with professional biographies and contact info for members); news and upcoming events relevant to ARC's objectives; contact information and sign-up mechanism for email newsletter.
- Email newsletter: ARC will maintain an email listserv of people and organizations that are interested to stay informed of news and events relevant to ARC's purpose. Regular newsletters will be emailed to this listserv. This newsletter service will continue from that initiated in 2019 by the SFU African Studies Working Group. Individuals can sign up to receive ARC's email newsletter at ARC events and through ARC's website.
- ARC will use consistent logo branding in its communications materials, including event posters, website, Facebook, and emails. Where ARC provides funding support to other activities (e.g. student or faculty research presentations), ARC's logo should be used in promotional materials.
- The Director and members of the Steering Committee will actively seek to raise awareness of ARC and its purpose and activities among different audiences at SFU and community events.