

Department	Economics
Discipline	Economics
Research Focus Area	Development Economics
Total Capacity for 2025	9 (6 Master's and 3 PhDs)

The purpose of this document is to provide prospective Master's and Doctoral applicants in the field of Development Economics with an overview of staff members' current research agendas, as well as broader research topics in these fields. Applicants should consult our [institutional repository](#) and [list of current and recent topics](#) in order to ensure that their proposed topics do not overlap with other topics that we have supervised or are currently supervising within the department. The onus is on the applicant to ensure that the proposed study makes a significant and original contribution to the scholarly body of knowledge.

Prospective students are encouraged to match their research interests to potential supervisors' research profiles. Applicants can also contact specific staff members to discuss their research ideas before applying. We advise against reusing Unisa Honours (HRECS83) research topics for new Master's applications. Applicants wishing to extend their research in these fields are required to discuss such extensions with potential supervisors. Please note, however, that research discussions with individual staff members do not guarantee acceptance into the programme as the final decision rests with the Departmental Higher Degrees Committee (HDC) and is based on a range of institutional requirements.

Supervision Team details:	Academic Profile	Capacity
<p>Prof S Nhamo Office: Anton Lembede, 4-21 Email: nhamos@unisa.ac.za</p> <p>Google Scholar: https://scholar.google.co.za/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C5&q=Senia+Nhamo.+Unisa&btnG=</p> <p>Institutional repository: http://uir.unisa.ac.za/browse?value=Nhamo%2C+Senia&type=author</p>	<p>Prof Nhamo is an associate professor in the Department of Economics. Her research focuses on topics relating to environmental economics and development economics. The specific focus areas are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewable Energy Consumption and the impact on the economy • Renewable energy and job vulnerabilities • Elimination of energy subsidies and the impact on the economy • Competition and regulation in the electricity industry • Energy pricing issues • Energy risk assessment and modelling • Green finance and investments • Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)- Tracking progress <p>Supervision type: Quantitative and qualitative research</p> <p>Econometrics: Advanced</p>	<p>2 Master's 2 PhDs</p>
<p>Prof Lalthapersad-Pillay¹ Office: Anton Lembede, 4-34 Email: lalthp@unisa.ac.za ORCID : Institutional repository link: http://uir.unisa.ac.za/browse?value=Lalthapersad-</p>	<p>Prof Lalthapersad-Pillay is a professor in the department of Economics. She holds a PHD (Economics). Her research focus is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gender issues <p>Supervisor type: Descriptive studies</p>	<p>None</p>

¹ Please note that consulting the research focus area leader is no assurance that your application will be approved. If, however, your application is approved, it is also not a guarantee that he/she will be allocated as your supervisor.

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<p>Prof NM Odhiambo Office: Anton Lembede 4-50 Email: odhianm@unisa.ac.za</p> <p>Ideas/RePEc: https://ideas.repec.org/e/pod33.html#research</p> <p>Google Scholar: https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=BjtB0b8AAAAJ&hl=en</p> <p>ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4988-0259</p>	<p>Prof Odhiambo is a full professor in the Department of Economics and the founder and head of the Macroeconomic Policy Analysis (MPA) research flagship programme. He holds a PhD (Economics) degree from Stellenbosch University. He is also an elected Fellow of the African Academy of Sciences (AAS) and a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.</p> <p>His areas of specialisation in development economics include, among others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty dynamics in developing countries • Income inequality in sub-Saharan African countries • Energy and environmental issues • Institutions and Economic Development • Human Capital • Sustainable economic growth and development <p>Supervisor type: Quantitative</p> <p>Econometrics: Advanced</p>	<p>1 Master's (co-supervision) 1 PhD (co-supervision)</p>
<p>Ms K Mdingi Office: Anton Lembede, 4-48 Email: mdingk@unisa.ac.za</p>	<p>Ms Mdingi is a lecturer in the Department of Economics. She holds MCom (Economics) degree from the University of South Africa (UNISA). Her research interests are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • human capital, and economic growth • Poverty • Financial inclusion, economic growth, and income inequality i.e. trickle down hypothesis • Income inequality on economic growth <p>Supervision type: Qualitative research</p> <p>Econometrics: Basic</p>	<p>1 Master's (co-supervision)</p>
<p>Mr MT Malatji Office: Anton Lembede, 4-36 Email: malatmt@unisa.ac.za</p>	<p>Mr Malatji is a lecturer in the Department of Economics. He holds Mcom (Economics) degree from the University of South Africa (UNISA). Mr Malatji's research interests are in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spatial Disparities in Economic Development • Agricultural transformation and Rural Development • Rural Poverty and Inequality • Metrics for Measuring Development <p>Supervision type: Qualitative research</p> <p>Econometrics: Basic</p>	<p>1 Master's (co-supervision)</p>

CEMS Research Focus Areas 2026

<p>Dr R Bezuidenhout Email: bezuir@unisa.ac.za</p>	<p>R Bezuidenhout is a lecturer in the Department of Economics and holds a PHD (Economics) from the University of SA. Her research interests are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embeddedness • Resilient networks • Supplier induced demand. • Health economics • Institutional economics • Development economics <p>Supervision type: Mixed method research</p>	<p>1 Master's (co-supervision)</p>
<p>Dr I Maloma Office: Anton Lembede 4-06 Email: malomi@unisa.ac.za</p>	<p>Dr Maloma is a senior lecturer in the Department of Economics. He holds a PhD (Economics) degree from the North West University. His research focus is mainly on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty studies: poverty alleviation, measurement of poverty (different indices) etc. • Local and regional economic development • Informal sector activities e.g. Employment and unemployment in the informal sector • Environmental issues e.g. Valuation of environmental goods • Sustainable development and energy issues <p>Supervision type: Quantitative and Qualitative research</p> <p>Econometrics: Basic</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Dr G Maluleke Office: 4-15 Email: malulg@unisa.ac.za</p> <p>Orcid ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5234-3115</p> <p>Google Scholar: https://scholar.google.co.za/citations?user=dQ_GK3UAAAJ&hl=en</p>	<p>Dr Maluleke holds a PhD (Economics) degree from the University of South Africa. Her research interests include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macroeconomic policy analysis. • Public Investment in Energy Infrastructure • How renewable energy sources influence job creation and poverty reduction • Financial development and entrepreneurship <p>Supervisor type: Quantitative</p> <p>Econometrics: Intermediate</p>	<p>2 Master's 1 PhD (co-supervision)</p>
<p>Dr NW Gamede Office no: 4-09 Email: gamednw@unisa.ac.za Orcid ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1446-8638</p>	<p>Dr Gamede is a lecturer in the Department of Economics and holds a PhD (Economic and Management Sciences) from NorthWest University in South Africa. Her research interests are primarily on: Human capital, skills development, informal economy, informal employment, poverty studies: poverty measurements, poverty alleviation, gender studies, rural development, and labour studies.</p> <p>Supervisor type: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed method</p>	<p>1 Master's (co-supervision)</p>
<p>Model of supervision</p>	<p>Candidates will be allocated to a supervisor but will be required to work independently within the requirements of higher degree studies. Additionally, the candidate will have to present his/her work to a panel of academic at</p>	

	<p>colloquia. Additionally, the candidate should submit his/her work to be reviewed by a blind peer review process.</p> <p>As part of the process of obtaining the Master’s, the Department of Economics, requires that all Master’s degree candidates present the proposal to the departmental higher degrees committee. The presentation must be within one (1) year of successful registration of the programme. Therefore, all registered students are required to make allowance for the presentations in their year plan. The presentations will take place in the department. Accommodation and travel arrangements should be made by the student. Under extenuating circumstances, provision will be made for presentations via skype for students who are not able to physically attend.</p> <p>The following should be noted regarding the presentation of the proposals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A complete draft of the proposal must be submitted to the candidate’s supervisor by the end of August of the relevant year. 2. The proposal presentations will take place in the last week of October. Students will be informed of the respective dates in due course. 3. Each candidate has to prepare a 15-minute presentation. 4. All feedback must be incorporated and final proposal submitted to the supervisor by the third week of November of the respective year.
Selection criteria: Master’s/Doctorate	Refer to the qualification website for selection criteria.
Selection Procedure	Refer to the qualification website for selection procedure.
Research scope	A broad selection of most topics in the area of Development Economics
Reading: Subject Field	<p>This is a selection of some relevant books in this research focus area. Further reading over and above these is essential:</p> <p>Clunies-Ross, A., Forsyth, D. & Huq, M. 2009. <i>Development Economics</i>. UK: McGraw-Hill.</p> <p>Meier, G. M. & Rauch, J.E. 2008. <i>Leading Issues in Economic Development</i>. New York: Oxford University Press</p> <p>Szirmai, A. 2015. <i>Socio-economic Development</i>. UK: Cambridge University Press.</p>
Reading: Research Methodology	Books dealing with social science methodologies and econometric analysis would be helpful.
Resources: Scholar community	<p>The following journals highlight many pertinent issues in the field of Development Economics:</p> <p>African Development Review</p> <p>The South African Journal of Economics</p> <p>New Agenda</p> <p>Development and Change</p>
Potential M&D research focus areas or research projects	
Unit of Analysis	Research Focus
Economic growth, financial development, inequality, education	<p>Education, human capital and endogenous growth</p> <p>Financial development and poverty reduction</p> <p>Financial development, economic growth and poverty reduction i.e. trickle down hypothesis</p> <p>Identifying the determinants of economic growth in South Africa</p> <p>Identifying the constraints on economic growth in South Africa</p> <p>Describing and analysing structural change in the South African economy</p> <p>Income inequality on economic growth</p>
Contemporary Issues in Development Economics	Poverty

CEMS Research Focus Areas 2026

	<p>Poverty studies: poverty alleviation, measurement of poverty (different indices) etc.</p> <p>Gender issues</p> <p>Rural development</p> <p>The informal sector</p> <p>Informal sector activities e.g. Employment and unemployment in the informal sector</p> <p>Migration and urbanisation</p> <p>Geo-political development challenges</p>
Local and regional economic development	Local and regional economic development regional planning
Development finance	Foreign Aid and the sustainable development goals (SDGs) The role of foreign aid in achieving the sustainable development goals (with specific focus on goals 1, 4 , 5 and 10)
The energy sector	<p>Renewable Energy Consumption and the impact on the economy</p> <p>Renewable energy and job vulnerabilities</p> <p>Elimination of energy subsidies and the impact on the economy</p> <p>Competition and regulation in the electricity industry</p> <p>Energy pricing issues</p> <p>Energy risk assessment and modelling</p>
Environmental issues	Environmental issues e.g. Valuation of environmental goods, sustainable development and energy issues
The SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)- Tracking progress