Abstract for Humanities Higher Seminar
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Brief Biography
Arlene Archer is a Professor in Applied Linguistics and the director of the Writing Centre at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. Her research employs a multimodal social semiotic perspective to interrogate issues around social justice, academic writing and academic literacies in Higher Education. She has over 80 publications, including four edited books, and has served as the PI on six internationally funded projects. She is a co-founding editor of the SAGE journal *Multimodality and Society,* serves on five editorial boards and is a fellow at the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Studies.

Title
Multimodal and embodied approaches to writing in contexts of diversity

Abstract
Based on the notion that learning is multimodal and embodied, this presentation investigates ways of using a range of modes and embodied approaches to develop writing with multilingual and diverse students. Specifically, it looks at how embodied practice manifests in different forms of engagement and representational modes in a Writing Centre context. Here, the materiality and visual nature of writing needs to be considered alongside its cognitive dimensions. Focusing on the messy process of writing is advocated as well as experimenting with multimodal pedagogies. Also, introducing more fluid genres in less regulated spaces is seen as important, allowing students to draw on heteroglossic meaning-making practices such as 'register meshing' (Guzula, McKinney and Tyler, 2016) and 'translanguaging' (Creese and Blackledge, 2010) when single forms of communication fall short. I look at examples of this discursive play and the ways in which we can encourage students to draw on their diverse language repertoires, multimodal practices and the knowledges they bring with them to the university. Dissolving boundaries in academic writing spaces in this way can enable a questioning and reevaluating of dominant narratives and practices. To this end, the presentation identifies the ways in which a range of resources can be harnessed to engage with dominant practices, including monolingual, monomodal and hegemonic structures that often marginalize particular groups. This can go some way towards the broader goal of decolonization of knowledge-making systems in academia, allowing diverse meaning-making practices to be recognized and valued.

References
Creese, A. & Blackledge, A. (eds) 2018. *The Routledge handbook of language and superdiversity.* London: Routledge.
Guzula, X., McKinney, C. and Tyler, R., 2016. Languaging-for-learning: Legitimising translanguaging and enabling multimodal practices in third spaces. *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies*, 34(3), pp.211-226.