USIU-Africa has won a bid to host the 3rd African Studies Association of Africa (ASAA) Meeting this Fall semester from October 22-24, 2019.

The Association’s 3rd Biennial Conference 2019 will also be held for the first time in East Africa, under the theme: African and Africana Knowledges: Pasts, Present and Futures, from October 24-26, 2019.

The African Studies Association of Africa (ASAA) was established in 2013 as an interdisciplinary association for African studies to re-center Africa as the global center for African studies, and to provide a forum for learning and unlearning African studies from previous European and American lenses.

A member of the Local Organizing Committee Assistant Professor of International Relations Dr. Njoki Wamai, says that the theme focuses on a particularly exciting on-going conversation about the politics of knowledge on the African continent.

Although Africa has made immense contributions to global intellectual welfare, it is ironic that it continues to be regarded as the poorest continent in knowledge production. The erroneous representation of Africa today is partly as a result of those past representations that still represent Africa in popular media and scholarship as hopeless, poor, dark, and devoid of knowledge.

Vice Chancellor Prof. Paul Zeleza in his book on Manufacturing African Studies has observed that, “...since the institutionalization of African Studies in the 1950s African studies has been in a perpetual state of crisis”.

Prof. Zeleza also locates this crisis in “...the unyielding intellectual, institutional and ideological contestations among the producers and consumers of Africanist knowledge who are divided by the inscriptions and hierarchies of race and nationality, locational and spatial affiliations, epistemological orientations, and ambitions”.

To this end the ASAA is looking at past and existing representations about Africa, current counter narratives in various disciplines, and the imagined futures for Africans in knowledge production.

The conference also hopes to take stock of empirical, methodological and analytical contributions made by Africans and Africans in diaspora, challenge dominant discourses on Africa and the inherited structures of knowledge production which still constrain our African imagination as well as provide new pathways for knowledge production in different disciplines.

The ASAA executive committee and the local organizing committee at USIU-Africa have invited panel and paper submissions interrogating questions of knowledge production on Africa in the past, the present, and the future under variety of subthemes available from the ASAA website at www.as-aa.org.

Faculty are also invited to join the local organizing committee by indicating their interest to the Secretary through email (smuchai@usiu.ac.ke) by April 15, 2019. Students interested in volunteering for the conference should also submit a cover letter and resume by the same date.
USIU-Africa to reinforce relationship with film commission

By Diana Meso

On Wednesday, March 20, Kenya Film Commission (KFC) Chief Executive Officer Mr. Timothy Owase paid a courtesy call on the Vice Chancellor Prof. Paul Zeleza to discuss the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Commission and USIU-Africa signed three years ago.

The Kenya Film Commission is a State Corporation under the Ministry of Sports, Culture and Arts, charged with the development, marketing and promotion of the film industry in Kenya.

It is mandated to engage in the promotion and development of the film industry in Kenya which covers capacity building through workshops, trainings and conferences, talent sourcing and promotion of local content in the film industry.

Since signing the MoU, USIU-Africa students and faculty have been able to actively take part in the Kalasha International TV and Film Market - the largest annual film market in East Africa, that showcases Kenya as a major regional hub for film and TV production.

This renewal of terms between the two organizations will see USIU-Africa and the Commission work together to penetrate international film markets, create a Cinematic Archival and Research Center at USIU-Africa, organize inter-university film festivals/competitions at USIU-Africa and work to explore the space of film in the big four agenda in Kenya.

The agreement also eases the process of obtaining internships for USIU-Africa students.

Also present at the meeting was Mr. Gerald Owino (KFC Board Member), Dr. Racheal Diang’a (Chair, Department of Cinematic Arts) and Ms. Swabra Soud (Partnerships and External Linkages Officer).
By Beatrice Ndinda

The Principal Alumni Relations Officer Mr. Michael Kisilu and Chief Manager Jane Murithi-Thomas undertook a trip to Uganda on March 20-23, as a follow up since the launch of the Alumni Chapter at a Ugandan alumni dinner in March 2018.

While in Uganda, Mr. Kisilu held two meetings with those Ugandan alumni who assisted the Alumni Relations office in organizing the 2018 Uganda Alumni Dinner. Here, the new Principal Alumni Relations Officer Mr. Michael Kisilu was introduced to the Ugandan team which comprised of Herbert Mugisa (Class of 1999), Ian Sekaggya (Class of 1999), Eriki Peter (Class of 2001), Dennis Muganwa (Class of 2007), Denis Kiggundo, Monalisa Aman (Class of 2007), Nancy Akite Opiokello (Class of 1999), Kanziga Leah Musabe (Class of 2016) and Gwokyalya, Agatha Loyce (Class of 2018).

Following the meetings, it was resolved that the Ugandan alumni team would commence planning for an alumni fundraising dinner to be held in July 2019.

To facilitate this, interim officials were chosen: Mr. Mugisa will be the new Chairperson, while his deputy will be Mr. Sekaggya. Ms. Opiokello will be the new Secretary, while Ms. Aman will be the Vice-Secretary. The Treasurer’s position will be filled by Mr. Kiggundo.

Mr. Kisilu also accompanied Chief Manager, Marketing and Communications Ms. Jane Murithi-Thomas, to XFM, where they both explained program recruitment information including Alumni Relations programs and activities.

As part of enhancing engagement with alumni, the Office of Alumni Relations is also planning to launch more chapters in other regions in the near future. This year will see the launch of the Tanzanian chapter in the summer semester.

The chapters are expected to provide forums for alumni to network and reconnect with each other, serve as ambassadors for their alma mater, organize events and activities that meet their shared interests, stay connected with their alma mater.
Ms. President: APT senior trailblazes on all-female reality show

Ms. President - a local reality television show airing on KTN, has attracted a lot of attention due to its all-female contestant lineup. The show which aims to "groom women to be better leaders" airs every Wednesday on KTN Home between 8pm and 9pm.

Ms. Taigu Muchiri interviewed Applied Computer Technology Senior Ms. Umulkheir Harun Mohamed, on her participation in the show and what the future holds for her.

Campus This Week: Give us a brief background of yourself.

UMULKHEIR: I am a Senior studying Applied Computer Technology at USIU-Africa. I also run Kesho Alliance which is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) that has been fighting for quality education, especially for the girl child in Garissa County.

The organization has pioneered student-to-student sponsorships that provide financial aid and mentorship to students in need. The goal is to offer bursaries to girls from low-income families so that they can further the education. I am also involved in youth initiatives that touch on peace and coalition-building in Garissa.

Campus This Week: Why did you choose to apply as a contestant on the show?

UMULKHEIR: I am interested in leadership at the grassroots level and passionate about youth leadership in the community. This is an opportunity to showcase my work and show the impact of my work in the community. Youth look up to young leaders, so we have to be a model for them and show them that we need to take positions of leadership in order to see change in our communities.

Campus This Week: How is your experience so far?

UMULKHEIR: It has been a challenge but I am growing every day. The show received over 1000 applicants and only 70 participants were picked to take part in the weekly activities to determine if they stay on the show or if they are eliminated. The selection team will select the final 16 who will compete for the top three positions left and will finally pick a winner.

Though it has been a rigorous selection process, I am glad to still be in the race and determined to reach the final, which is 26 episodes from now.

Each morning begins with training, where we are assigned several tasks to implement. Our evaluation on those tasks determines who gets to be eliminated.

The experience has allowed me to meet different leaders from different parts of the country and engage them on how to impact the society.

Consequently, I have been pushed to do better for my community - especially the girls who are facing significant challenges. My community is patriarchal and most families do not allow girls to go to school, to the extent of marrying them off even before they become adults.

The outlawed Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is also still widely practised. I want to rescue as many girls from these challenges as I can, and give them hope for the future.

Insecurity is also a very sensitive issue in Garrisa. My work involves equipping the youth to preach peace through information technology, by partnering with several companies to train the youth on IT skills.

I am also challenge my peers to spread peace to combat youth radicalization in the county.

Campus This Week: What do you hope to achieve by participating on the show?

UMULKHEIR: My very participation in the show means so much to the girls I mentor, because I now can demonstrate to them that they can be whatever they want to be and can do so much for their community in order to improve the situation in their families.

Most young people from my community believe that they cannot be able to achieve much because they come from a disadvantaged background. This show is a demonstration that they can open their minds to different opportunities available to them. I also want young people to know that they can work hard and achieve their dreams.

I believe their mentality will change when they see what I have achieved.

Campus This Week: What would you tell a younger Umulkher?

UMULKHEIR: That she can be a change agent and make a difference in our society no matter how small the act.

She should also understand that the focus should be on the impact her actions make, not the recognition that comes with them.

The USIU-Africa community wishes her all the very best.
Airline executives meet Associate Dean

By Cecilia Mweru

On Tuesday March 26, the Chandaria School of Business hosted, through its Internship Coordination Office, Air France – KLM Royal Dutch Airlines Regional General Manager Mr. Arthur Diefentahaller, and their Regional Human Resource Manager Ms. Manisha Metta for a meeting to discuss various partnership possibilities.

While welcoming the team, Chandaria School of Business Associate Dean Dr. Teresia Linge officially urged them to consider USIU-Africa a dedicated partner, with a strong commitment to linking industry with academia.

She noted the numerous opportunities that exist to forge long-term partnerships that will enhance and complement the foundational classroom learning experience offered at USIU-Africa.
Basketball
In the Kenya Basketball Federation Premier League matches played on March 23, the men's team defeated Umoja 65 – 62 and Kenya Methodist University (KEMU) 57 – 42.

A day later they lost 27 – 82 against Equity, while their female counterparts also lost 55 – 58 against World Hope. The matches were played at Upper Hill and Umoja.

Soccer
In Universities and Colleges Football League (UCFL) matches played on March 23, the ladies team held University of Nairobi’s College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences (CAVS) to a barren draw at their Kabete Campus, while their male counterparts lost by one goal to nil against KEMU.

On Sunday March 24, the ladies team thrashed Technical University of Kenya (TUK) 3 – 0 while the men’s team defeated Utalii College by a solitary goal.

Rugby
USIU RFC team beat Mombasa RFC 37 – 15 in the Kenya Rugby Union match played at USIU-Africa on Saturday, March 23.

Karate
The ladies team were first runners-up, while the men placed third in the Kenya Universities Sports Association (NAKUSA) Nairobi Chapter indoor games on Saturday, March 23 at USIU-Africa.

TAE KWON DO
During the very same NAKUSA indoor games, the USIU-Africa ladies’ and men’s Tae Kwon Do teams each placed second, winning 2 gold and 2 bronze medals, and 1 gold, 1 silver and 1 bronze Medal respectively.