




## MEMORANDUM

To: Faculty, Staff, and Students, Department of Human Geography  
From: Professor William A. Gough, Vice-Principal Academic & Dean   
Date: 19 April 2023  
Re: **Academic Administrative Appointment - Chair, Department of Human Geography**  
Note: For distribution broadly

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It is with great pleasure that I write to inform you that the Agenda Committee of Academic Board has approved the re-appointment of Professor Thembela Kepe as Chair of the Department of Human Geography from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2029, including a one-year leave at the beginning of the term.

Thembela Kepe is a Professor in the Departments of Human Geography and Global Development Studies. He received his PhD in 2002 from the University of the Western Cape, following an MSc from the University of Guelph. Professor Kepe joined U of T Scarborough as Assistant Professor in 2006, was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure in 2011, and to Professor in 2017. His work focuses on people-environment interactions, land rights, race, justice, and the politics of development. He has fieldwork experience in several African countries, among other places.

Prior to being appointed as Chair, he served as Acting Chair of the Department of Human Geography (2017-18) and Acting Associate Director of the Centre for Critical Development Studies (2016). In all instances, he has demonstrated excellent leadership, with an inclusive and transparent approach, respect for equity and fairness, and the ability to engage and bridge different perspectives. He is a strong advocate of the Department who possesses an in-depth knowledge of its opportunities and challenges. During his term as Chair, he successfully led diverse and inclusive faculty recruitment efforts, methodically mentored new faculty, successfully oversaw a departmental external review, and tirelessly contributed to Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) initiatives across U of T Scarborough and the University of Toronto at large. The advisory committee highlighted his kind, compassionate, trustworthy nature that creates a welcoming and supportive environment for faculty, staff, and students. In addition to being an experienced administrator, he is a highly regarded scholar with a wide reputation in his field. In 2020, Professor Kepe was awarded the Fellowship of the Society of South Africa Geographers (FSSAG), which recognizes outstanding contributions to the field of geography. He has published about 60 peer-reviewed journal articles, and co-edited four books. In addition to serving as an Associate Editor for a high-profile journal, he has regularly served on other journals' editorial boards, as well as given invited lectures in Canada and worldwide.

I am grateful that Professor Kepe will continue to serve as Chair for another term. I am confident that the Department is in very capable hands and I look forward to continuing to work closely with him in this capacity.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the advisory committee for its service in this important process. The participation of members of the committee and the input of faculty, staff, and students is greatly appreciated.