

## TRANSCRIPT OF LECTURE DELIVERED ON APRIL 24, 2019

### FOCUS:

#### **Master Card Scholarship, University of Cape Town**

### SPEAKER:

Scholar Ehujuo Nkem Nora, *currently running a professional masters in Geotechnical Engineering at the University of Cape Town and a 2019 Mastercard Scholars Program Awardee.*

### INTRODUCTION:

The Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program at UCT provides full-cost scholarships to young Africans who are first-time postgraduate (honours and master's) degree-seeking applicants. Previously, undergraduates were given scholarship but due to the low budget and the scholarship coming to an end soon (2021), they are left with just honours and masters.

For the year 2020, 85 spaces are open - 72 masters and 13 honours. We would come to the difference between honours and masters later.

### THE SCHOLARSHIP PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- ✓ Comprehensive financial assistance with visa applications, travel, tuition, living expenses, medical aid and accommodation.
- ✓ A relevant and recognised education through academic curricula aimed at producing graduates whose qualifications are internationally recognised and locally applicable.
- ✓ Academic and peer mentor support – to ensure that each Scholar successfully progresses academically.
- ✓ An array of cultural and transition support and training aimed at academic and professional enrichment and assisting in the challenges facing university going students.
- ✓ Career and internship opportunities in Africa, service learning, experiential learning – career guidance and support for transition to further study or the workforce. (I attended an internship expo today).
- ✓ Leadership development and training.

Alumni networks for further support <http://www.mcfsp.uct.ac.za/guidelines-postgraduate-applicants>

## YOU NEED THE FOLLOWING TO MAKE A GOOD APPLICATION:

- ✓ Secondary school certificate.
- ✓ Two reference letters.
- ✓ Statement of result or Certificate.
- ✓ publications (if any).
- ✓ CV (academic)

## HOW TO APPLY TO MASTERCARD:

Application link: <https://applyonline.uct.ac.za/>

When asked to pay application fee, email [info\\_mcfsp@uct.ac.za](mailto:info_mcfsp@uct.ac.za) asking for fee waiver. They would send you a document which you should upload to the site as evidence of application fee payment. Also, indicate on the application form that you wish to be considered for student housing and student funding.

**UCT Student number:** After applying to UCT, you would be given a student number within 48 hours which you must write out on your MCF application form.

In addition to the other documents, you need an international passport, and a verification of physical address. Get any official letter that shows you stay at a certain place, it could be NEPA bill or work appointment letter.

Your CV must be showing participation in:

- Extra-curricular Activities
- Skills and Interests
- Academic and/or Professional Experience

## NOTE:

Mastercard is for poor people.

On the application form, you would be asked to declare your assets; Do you have a property, health insurance, etc? What kind of house do you stay? Who is the head of the household? Your annual income? etc

And you would be asked to show how you spend your monthly income.

After filling the form, take it to a court for affidavit. You need to place their stamp and signature there. I did mine for 500 naira but I was very reluctant in going.

Also, you cannot be given admission to UCT without official transcript (not student copy). You can use the student copy in applying but for you to be given admission letter, they must see your Official transcript

## ESSAY

You are required to submit an essay of no more than 2000 words, using the following points as context:

- ✓ In which ways do you envisage contributing to the economic growth and social development of your country and Africa on completion of your studies, using your education as leverage?
- ✓ Explain any community service activities you have been involved in.
- ✓ List the qualities that, for you, define leadership and elaborate on leadership initiatives that you have undertaken

I have shared out the essay I used in applying to different people. Please, I am begging do not do copy and paste, instead it should serve as a guide. There is plagiarism check in UCT and the team that reviews the application consists of professors not just MCF staff.

I understand that the website is very confusing, you can chat me privately if you have any issues with it.

## HOW TO UPLOAD YOUR FORM TO THE APPLY TO BE A MCF SCHOLAR SITE ON VULA:

Click on dropbox that appears on the site, then upload all your files and put all supporting documents (application form, CV, transcript, recommendation letter) there in a single folder or better still, a compressed folder.

For the referee letters, I was able to use letterhead papers but there's a reference form available now.

## Selection criteria

- Financial need

- Leadership activities
- Transcript

Faculty sends their rankings first and check if your transcript is suitable for a study at UCT, thereafter MCF gives awards to the highest rankings.

I was able to have a chitchat with the Head of the selection committee for my faculty who gave me an insight to how scholars are being selected.

Firstly, financial need.

Secondly, leadership activities and community service.

Then the faculty you are applying to has to check if your transcript is suitable for the course you seek.

And lastly, MCF gives their award based on highest ranks.

Thereafter sit, pray and await your success mail.

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

- During the application process, are we going to need document like police clearance and medical certificate?

*Not at all. Those documents are needed for Visa application*

- Is there application fee in applying to UCT?

*There is application fee for studying in UCT. Since you are applying for Mastercard scholarship, it would be waived when you request for it.*

- Is anything like SAQA needed here?

*UCT does not need SAQA. Your transcript is enough for you to be given assessed for admission. But other schools request for SAQA*

- What format of CV is recommended?

*Any format of Academic CV is needed so long as it shows what they need*

- After the scholarship is it mandatory to leave SA?

*No of course. Although you have to indicate your commitment to your home country in your essay to be given the scholarship.*

- What is the difference between honours and masters?

*Honours is a lesser degree compared to masters but higher than BSc. I would say it's like a postgraduate diploma we have in Nigeria needed for top up. Some faculties in UCT require honours degree before you can do a masters program. So if your transcript and certificate is evaluated and judged to be too low for a masters, you would be showed the route to a honors program. Masters is 2 years while honours is 1 year*

- Please is IELTS required?

*C6 in WAEC serves.*

#### ADDITIONAL TIP

I applied for just masters and wasn't burdened with research proposal.

If you are applying for a masters by research, you need to upload a research proposal and indicate your research interests. The moment you choose an area of specialisation, the supervisors in that area will be the one to determine your admission (based on your application and its content). You do not need to look for a supervisor.

I would advise you apply for a masters by coursework. After been granted admission and Have resumed your studies, you can always upgrade to a MASTERS by research if you submit and pitch a good research proposal.

UCT website: [www.uct.ac.za](http://www.uct.ac.za)