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Laurier graduate student conference focuses on Africa

WATERLOO – Wilfrid Laurier University’s Tshepo Institute for the Study of Contemporary Africa will host a full-day graduate student conference on Friday, Feb. 10, at the Balsillie School of International Affairs. The multidisciplinary conference will feature presentations by graduate students from Laurier, the University of Waterloo, and the University of Guelph.

Chris Huggins, an assistant professor at the University of Ottawa’s School of International Development and Global Studies, will deliver the lunch keynote address, aimed at helping PhD students and postdoctoral fellows manage their academic careers. The talk will focus on how to manage research when moving universities, from a postdoctoral to a faculty position, or in response to broader academic and political concerns.

Two Laurier PhD students will present their research. Charles Gyan of the Faculty of Social Work will discuss how popular sayings and proverbs reinforce gender inequality in Ghana, while Frances Fortune of the Balsillie School of International Affairs will talk about how young people looking for work in post-conflict Liberia are dealing with the shifts brought about by technology and globalization.

“This conference will showcase the exciting and varied research on Africa in different disciplines, departments, and institutions in which our graduate students are involved,” said Andrea Brown, associate director of the Tshepo Institute and an associate professor at Laurier’s Department of Political Science. “The conference also provides a networking opportunity for these students, who might not otherwise have the opportunity to meet.”

The Tshepo Institute focuses on contemporary development and social justice issues in Africa from an interdisciplinary perspective. Its areas of expertise include health and education, governance, human rights, and economic and technological development.

Members of the public are welcome to attend the full-day conference or just the lunch and keynote address. Free registration is available at: <https://www.balsillieschool.ca/event/on-africa-graduate-student-research-from-waterloo-region>.