

**COUNCIL ON TEACHING**  
Follow Up Report for  
**Teaching in Higher Education Conference Award**

Name: **Beatrice Mkenda**

Department/Unit: **French and Italian**

Conference Attended: **Global Association for the Promotion of Swahili Conference (CHAUKIDU)**

Date of Conference: **September 29<sup>th</sup> to October 1<sup>st</sup> 2022**

Award Amount: **1270.00**

**Briefly summarize how your attendance at the conference enhanced your professional development and allowed you to gain a better understanding of teaching in your discipline or trends in higher education in general.**

The conference was attended by over 300 hundred scholars, students and stakeholders from different parts of the world. Several countries such as German, Poland, Tanzania, Congo, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, China, and the USA were represented. There were numerous presentations that range from foreign language teaching, the role of Kiswahili in social services, promoting culture and diversity, entrepreneurship, and diaspora, the promotion of Kiswahili and culture and among others.

I presented in a round-table discussion on the role of local languages and their culture in East Africa and the continent in general. African continent is a home of many languages that are being forgotten either because they are not written or not used by many people. These languages are on the verge of death with their rich cultures. I also presented on my individual paper about using project-based approach as one of strategies to implement the standards for foreign language.

I attended a very interesting presentation on *Post-COVID and Foreign language Teaching and Learning* by, a Professor from Northwestern University. The presenter highlighted the high interest of foreign language learners and the new vocabulary that emerged as a result of the pandemic. He provided data of individuals who opened online Swahili teaching and learning websites. He also gave an example of Swahili language adopting words from other languages and creating its own vocabulary. For example, “*Nina zumu*” I have a zoom meeting or “*Nitakuzumu*” I will meet you on zoom. I attended several presentations that focused on technology in foreign language teaching and learning, strategies for foreign language teaching, Using *emoji* in a foreign language classroom, and the quest of formalizing Kiswahili as a foreign language. I attended a presentation on the role of music in foreign language teaching and learning. This was my favorite presentation because I also use Swahili music in teaching as a way of presenting Swahili culture and its history. Another presentation is the Chinese-Swahili that was presented by Professor Qiyu Chen from Pennsylvania State University. Using Chinese graphic books that are translated in

Swahili, Professor Chen showed how the use of narratives and visual techniques connect Swahili and Chinese culture.

All these presentations were inspirational to my career because I gained network and resourceful ideas from other Swahili teachers and their strategies they use in their programs and classrooms to motivate their students and develop their programs. I gained constructive and practical ideas on my presentations and I am working on my paper to be published.

This was a very rewarding conference that I attended and I am so grateful to be part of it. I thank the Council on Teaching and the department of French and Italian at the University of Iowa for making it possible for me to attend this wonderful event.

### **How have you been able to share what you learned about teaching with the campus?**

Our Swahili program has two other instructors who, for various reasons, were unable to attend the conference. Upon my return, I shared with them what I learned at the conference including various opportunities for Swahili in East Africa and abroad, especially after the huge step taken by the 41<sup>st</sup> UNESCO conference that declared the July 7<sup>th</sup> the World Swahili Day. I also shared with my students about the opportunities they have as Swahili students. There were Swahili students from other Universities such as Columbia University, Princeton University, University of Northwestern and Howard University who presented at the conference. I will encourage my students to seek funding that can support them to attend CHAUKIDU conference in the future. I promised to guide them prepare their abstract and presentations. The conference has special session for Swahili students.

