



Stellenbosch

UNIVERSITY
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SRC

Students' Representative Council
Ibhunga elimele abaFundi
Studenteraad



SRC TERM 2 REPORT

AAC CHAIRPERSON

Students Representative Council

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Risuna Risimati – AAC Chairperson – risimati@sun.ac.za



Foreword

Dear Maties,

The first term is over just as quickly as it had begun. During this term, the bonds of student leadership and the broader student community have been tried. We have faced many challenges in shifting the culture of our community spaces, welcoming students to our campus and battling one crisis after the other. But even with these challenges, the Maties community has shown up for its students. I often find myself reflecting on how far we have come as a community, and I feel proud of my colleagues in leadership and proud of the students who have started their journey at Stellenbosch. Most importantly, I am proud of the passion and the drive that I have seen in our leaders and in our students. Through the many conversations I have had with leaders and students, I have come to realise that we all want and wish for the same things—we want to see each other learn, grow, and prosper in the roles we play in our Maties community. It is important for us to have a yearning to take care of each other, to live up to the values of ubuntu, humanness and Africanism that our beautiful country is founded upon. It is important for us to champion for each other in every space we occupy. For us to follow through with our vision, hopes and dreams for the remainder of our respective leadership terms, we need to continue with your spirit of collaboration and hard work. Halfway through our journey, there are more trials and tribulations to come but also more joy, hope and achievement and I hope we will stay together through it all.

It is my hope that we can take the lessons learned during the first term to build upwards in term two.

I hope that our next term will be even better than the last!

Risuna x

Constitutional Responsibilities

As per the SU statute

Definitions 68. In this Statute, unless the context indicates otherwise —

“**Academic Affairs Council**” means a body established by the SRC to promote academic matters on behalf of students;

As per the SRC constitution

CHAPTER 4: THE STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

Part 4.1: General

25. Composition of the Students' Representative Council

The Students' Representative Council consists of the following members:

- (1) Nine (9) members are elected by the students in terms of the provisions of CHAPTER 3 of this Constitution.
- (2) The Chairperson of the Academic Affairs Council.

As per the AAC Constitution

Chapter 3: Duties and Functioning of the Academic Affairs Council

(8) Duties and Functions

- 1) The Chairperson of the Academic Affairs Council –
 - (a) Facilitating Academic Affairs Council meetings, in consultation with the SecretaryGeneral;
 - i) All official correspondence to and from the Academic Affairs Council;
 - ii) Passing on the minutes to the Students' Representative Council Chairperson;
 - iii) Compiling the annual report of the Academic Affairs Council.

(b) Is responsible for representing the Academic Affairs Council, either in their own capacity or by virtue of a representative if the Chairperson is unavailable, on the following committees:

- iv) Timetable Committee of the Academic Planning Committee;
- v) Academic Planning Committee of Senate;
- vi) Committee of Learning and Teaching;
- vii) Any other institutional committee which stipulates that the Chairperson of the Academic Affairs Council must act as a representative on said committee, and;

In fulfilling the duties in section 8(1)(b)(i)-(iv), the Chairperson is required to obtain input from the Academic Affairs Council and report back to the Academic Affairs Council.

- (c) Must meet with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Learning and Teaching on a monthly basis.
- (d) Must oversee the finances of the Academic Affairs Council, in consultation with the Treasurer.
- (e) Is an *ex-officio* member of the Students' Representative Council and, as such, is responsible for keeping the Students' Representative Council apprised of activities of the Academic Affairs Council.
- (f) Must write and submit a satisfactory term report.
- (g) Is responsible for convening special or emergency meetings where necessary.
- (h) During their term of office, may not be a member of a Faculty Student Committee or of the Tygerberg Academic Affairs Council.
- (i) Facilitates the discussion and addressing of academic and other matters of communal interest that fall within the sphere of academia at Stellenbosch University and empowers the members of the respective Faculty Student Committees, and the members of the Tygerberg Academic Affairs Council, to represent and inform students effectively.

Portfolio Overview

General-elect

As per the preamble of the Academic Affairs Council constitution, the Academic Affairs Council of Stellenbosch University commits to actively promoting the rights of students as contained in Chapter 2 of the Student Constitution, to quality education, academic support, and transparent and justifiable assessment procedures. Further, the Academic Affairs Council strives to protect and further the academic interests of all students, by promoting a transformative teaching and learning experience, enabling academic success, and developing graduate attributes, with the aim of establishing a thriving academic project which facilitates student retention.

As per section 8 of the Academic Affairs Council Constitution, the Chairperson of the Academic Affairs Council is responsible for the following administrative arrangements, including,

- (i) Facilitating Academic Affairs Council meetings, in consultation with the Secretary-General;
- (ii) All official correspondence to and from the Academic Affairs Council;
- (iii) Passing on the minutes to the Students' Representative Council Chairperson;
- (iv) Compiling the annual report of the Academic Affairs Council.

SRC executive

The AAC Chairperson is an ex officio member of the SRC and thus, as per section 30 of the Student Constitution, an ex officio member of the SRC –

- (1) May, in addition to their ex officio position, only accept one other portfolio whether that portfolio is compulsory or not.

- (2) May not accept any other portfolios if they serve on the Executive Committee of the SRC.

The Executive meets on a weekly basis and has scheduled meetings with DSAF and Rectorate. Accurate detail hereof can be provided by the SRC Secretary-General, Mr Mzwakhe Bolotina.

Committees

During my second term of office, I sat on the Academic Planning Committee, Committee of Learning and Teaching, Welcoming Planning Committee, Quality Committee, Council, and the Social and Business Ethics Committee.

Above the responsibilities that I have in terms of attending the committee meetings of which I am a representative, I have been working, in collaboration with the SRC Policy Officer, Alex Koen, on the amendment of the Student Constitution. In addition to this, I am working on a policy or rather, a governing document, that will seek to introduce regulation of grievance procedures within faculties to ensure that there is standardization and the formalization of the processes that are involved in the resolution of academic grievances. Apart from this, I have been attending and supporting my leadership colleagues in their endeavours whilst my Vice Chairperson, Norshya Sonjani, is responsible for the AAC Cocurricula and training. There are numerous leadership development events to be hosted by the SRC and other structures of which the AAC will actively engage as it is important for leaders to consistently engage with the passion and drive for active leadership.

Academic Planning Committee

This committee is a standing committee of Senate that reports to the Executive Committee of Senate (EC(S)) chaired by Professor Deresh Ramjugernath. Its primary concern is recommending decisions around academic planning to the EC(S) and Senate. It primarily focuses on topics such as new research centres, programme changes, and so forth.

The Academic Planning Committee has not met since 16 February 2024 and the contents of this meeting is highlighted in the AAC Chairperson Term 1 Report.

Committee of Learning and Teaching

The Committee for Learning and Teaching (CLT) is chaired by Professor Deresh Ramjugernath and forms an integral part of the Learning and Teaching responsibility centre. It comprises all the vice-deans: learning and teaching, of each faculty.

Date: **11 April 2024**

- (1) Review of the Teaching and Learning Policy (2018)
- (2) Strategy for Teaching and Learning 2017 – 2021 (Graduate Attributes)
- (3) Revision of Regulation for internal and external moderation
- (4) Review of SU ECP Strategy
- (5) Academic Renewal
- (6) Review of Student Feedback Practice at SU
- (7) Scheduling of Deans Concession Assessments
- (8) Revision of the Regulation for the Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Accumulation and Transfer
- (9) Introduction of a class-free lunch break
- (10) Computer User Areas Divider Screens
- (11) Redesign of Assessment Answer Book
- (12) Student Concessions
- (13) Submission dates for A2 and A3
- (14) Teaching Load Calendar Entry

Welcoming Programme Committee

This committee is chaired by Mr. Pieter Kloppers and meets to unpack the Welcoming Template and the logistics thereof, as well as any reflection post de facto.

This committee met on:

12 February 2024

Quality Committee

The Quality Committee is responsible for reviewing and auditing every department within the

institution towards a superlative degree of quality. Ultimately, the Quality Committee may recommend adjustments to each department, and request feedback on these adjustments by a prescribed date.

Date: **13 March 2024**

1. Peer Review Reports
 - 1.1. Stellenbosch University International
 - 1.2. Division for Information Governance
 - 1.3. Africa Centre for HIV/AIDS Management
 - 1.4. Department of Chemistry and Polymer Science
 - 1.5. Department of Biochemistry
 - 1.6. Department of Mathematical Science
 - 1.7. Department of Physiological Sciences
2. Two-year follow up reports
 - 2.1. Department of Geography and Environmental Studies
3. Institutional Audit
 - 3.1. For notice

Council and Social and Business Ethics Committee

The Council of Stellenbosch University governs this higher education institution and the institutional statute. The full function and composition of the Council is contained in the Statute of Stellenbosch University. The latter committee looks after the ethical interests of the University to ensure that it does not incur unnecessary ethical liability.

Due to the sensitive and confidential nature of the matters discussed in Council and Social and Business Ethics Committee meetings, I am unable to disclose any further details in this report.

Term 2 Overview

AAC Executive

Meetings

Dates: **21 February 2024**
 6 March 2024
 10 April 2024

It must be noted that as per section 10(2)(a)(i), I exercised the permissible chairperson discretion to wave a meeting on the condition of the academic wellbeing of members. Furthermore, it must be noted that while student leadership is fundamental to the campus at large, the wellbeing of any AAC member is of paramount importance and therefore will always be prioritised.

Finances

The AAC's biggest expenditure for this term was a training session hosted by Dr Heidi October from the Frederik van Zyl Slabbert Institute for Student Leadership Development. In the coming term we plan on expanding on the training sessions to be offered to our AAC members as well as merchandise to increase our campus visibility for events.

AAC

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Members

As per section 7(1)-(2) of the Academic Affairs Council constitution, the AAC comprises of 25 members. These members are either Executive members and/or the Chairperson and Vice- Chairperson of the relevant Faculty Student Committee or Tygerberg Academic Affairs Council, unless the structure in question provides otherwise.

The members are as follows:

1. Risuna Risimati
2. Norshya Sonjani
3. Vanessa Baloyi
4. Carina Wen
5. Carolyn Laker
6. Daniel Lennox
7. Leila Engelbrecht
8. Nina Hugo



9. Odin Mostert
10. Sam Morricks
11. Tauriq Willemse
12. Thabo Moepi
13. Thandoluhle Mhlongo
14. Zöe-Grace Bennett
15. Mishka Naidu
16. Aimeé Vanwollegem
17. Amory Smith
18. Ntseliseng Makoala
19. Nosiviwe Mpukane
20. Nozizwe Nyanda
21. Dimakatso Mofokeng
22. Xavier Benyani
23. Meagan Classen
24. Michail September
25. Aidan Fletcher

Herein, the resignation of Enrico Binneman, the Secretary General of the AAC must be noted. Election procedures were conducted in terms of the AAC Constitution and a new Secretary General, Vanessa Baloyi, was duly appointed.

AAC Training

Co-curricula

The AAC's co-curricula recognition allowed for AAC members to receive transcript recognition for their leadership term, on the basis that their learning is set into curricula and is substantive. This year the AAC will be using a SUNLearn platform to complete competencies as well as training exercises to get such transcript recognition.

The Vice Chairperson, together with the Executive and general AAC, will be drafting the framework for the competencies to be completed and will be in consultation with external partners where collaboration is needed. This is to allow for AAC members to have an active voice in the type of training they will receive and the competencies they will engage with to ensure that it is beneficial to them in their leadership development.

Plans for Next Term

While the second academic term of 2023 is a short, academically heavy one, the AAC aims to ensure that the academic needs of the study body are still being serviced to the fullest extent of the AAC's capabilities.

In terms of the council members, my hope is to ensure that they receive the adequate portfolio and committee support whilst keeping true to the values of the University and to our Code of Conduct.

We aim to resolve issues regarding grievance procedures in faculties and to ensure that the process is consolidated, regulated, smooth and enhances the relationship between students and their faculty staff.

We aim to ensure that resources regarding study venues and helpful resources are readily available to students and are distributed as widely as possible to ensure that as many students on our campuses are equipped with the resources they need to succeed.

Lastly, as an AAC, we strive to increase our visibility on campus to ensure that students are aware of us and that we are accessible to them should there be any issues.