



SRC 2020/2021 Term 3 Report

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Constitutional Responsibilities

“Chapter 3, section 21(1), (2), (3), (5) and (7) of the student constitution is where the portfolio to be and to draw its responsibilities from. Namely to (1) to act in the best interest of students and to actively promote students’ rights under (11), to represent students at – (a) the University Council; (b) the Senate; (c) the Institutional Forum; (d) other committees, bodies and functionaries of the University; and (e) national and international student bodies; (3) to evaluate the University policy and give input in the formulation thereof (5) facilitate projects and initiatives to the benefit of students and to (7) formulate and maintain policy in order to ensure that the Student Representative Council performs its functions and duties effectively.” – Chloe Krieger (Student wellness 2019/20)

2021 is the year in which the student constitution will be reviewed, and with the cancellation of the Student Success portfolio and the creation of the Student Financial Access portfolio, the duties of the Student Wellness portfolio may also change constitutionally.

Portfolio Overview

The portfolio has gone through many evolutions over the past few years, the most notable occurring in the 2018/19 term when a committee was created to draft the Mental Health Policy. The policy draft was both influenced by, and influenced, discussions around mental health at Stellenbosch University (SU). My predecessor’s term was unfortunately heavily impacted by the global coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic. It is however evident through her plans, and her speeches during the caucuses, that she had a great motivation to broaden and destigmatize the conversation around mental health.

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I am of the strong opinion that there are many factors that affect one's mental wellness, besides obvious mental illness, and it is for this reason that the 2020/21 plan for this portfolio is to spend at least a month specifically focusing on the different aspects of the Wellness Wheel in an effort to improve overall well-being.

Committees / Task Teams

- **SRC Executive** - The SRC Executive meets once a week to discuss ongoing developments within the SRC and student body. The Committee also meets with RMT (Rectorate Management Team) and the Student Governance team to discuss the work that the SRC has planned for the term. The committee also decides on the allocation of portfolios within the SRC.
- **Senate** - The senate of a public higher education institution is accountable to the council for the academic and research functions of the public higher education institution and must perform such other functions as may be delegated or assigned to it by the council.
- **Bursaries and Loans Committee** - This committee engages on policy and discussion around existing university-offered bursary programs and new programs that will be implemented.

Term Overview

Original Term 3 goals

1. Mental wellness month
2. Have 2 wellness Wednesdays talks
3. Host inter-cluster quiz
4. Grow our social media following
5. Host financial wellness talk

Feedback on these goals

1. **Mental wellness month** – Mental Wellness Month(s) was undoubtedly the most successful virtual wellness period that we have had this year. We utilised June and July to put out the necessary information and infographics, however much of May was used to plan for this month and ensure that it all ran smoothly. In May I sat with my committee (virtually) and we created an online posting schedule that would both allow our comm members to focus on their academics but also allow them enough time to create good quality infographics. Our primary focus was to release necessary information in the online space because the university's events policy would not allow us to host any sort of event, even those hosted with appropriate COVID-19 prevention protocols.

Some of the infographics we released on our Instagram page include topics such as:

- "Join a group session" - An infographic containing all of the sessions the CSCD was hosting for the rest of the year. This was important as the CSCD often hosts all kinds of amazing sessions on common student issues however not many students know about them.
- "What is the CSCD and how do you contact them?" – this was very well received as it also included a template email for students who were not sure what they should say in the emails they send to the CSCD.
- "Breathing techniques"
- "Effective study break ideas"

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These are just a few of the types of graphics we released. We also received great interaction with these post with most infographics being shared by residences and our posts this month receiving and average of over 30 likes.

2. **Wellness Wednesdays** – I hosted 2 Wellness Wednesday sessions with Dr Thembelihle Dube within this term. The sessions were held on the 4th of June and the 14th of July. The first session Dr Dube and I discussed the topic of self-care and how to practically implement it in one's life. In the second session if the term we discussed the topic of the topic of apologies and forgiveness. The sessions are still not being so well attended by students at the time of their occurrence, however the videos do receive some good engagement in the few weeks after the posting of the recordings.
3. **Inter-Cluster quiz** – this event was unfortunately not able to proceed due the changes made by the President to the national lockdown levels. These changes, coupled with the move to online assessments and the already peaking COVID-19 numbers in Stellenbosch meant that any form of face-to-face engagement would not only be against the rules, it would also place many students in danger of contracting COVID-19.
4. **Grow our social media following** - this term, through our consistent engagement within mental Wellness month our Instagram page saw a steep increase in followers and interactions. Within this term we gained over 30 new followers and bringing our total to 300 plus followers at the time of writing this report our goal for the fourth term is to surpass 350 followers. Having such a following would not just be of benefit to the portfolio but would also benefit my successor.
5. **Host financial wellness talk** - as stated in the previous report we began discussions with various residences as well as the FSCA to host a financial management talk within the third term. Due to the organization wanting the talk to be monitored and evaluated by an external organization we had to postpone the talk to the third term. The talk will now be taking place on the 18th of August at 6:00 PM.

Other activities completed this term

- A. **Anti-cyberbullying campaign** - the anti-cyberbullying campaign was organized and spearheaded by the Equality Unit, as a response to complaints of cyberbullying through confessions pages on social media. I was tasked with being the cohost of an Instagram live session with a qualified psychologist from the CSCD. In the discussion the psychologist and I discussed what cyberbullying looked like, the various consequences of cyberbullying, as well as the mental health impacts of such activities. This conversation was a lead-up to a much larger talk that would be hosted by a qualified legal professional who specializes in cyber-crime. This talk will take place in the third term. The IG live was relatively well attended with good student engagement, especially considering that it was hosted at lunchtime.
- B. **Internal SRC wellness** – within this term I also worked our Chair and Vice Chairperson to host a wellness event for the internal SRC group. The event was hosted as a means to rebuild team morale and provide peer support during a difficult time for our committee. The event was well received by those SRC members that were able to participate.

Budget

Budget & Reasoning

Original budget

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Project	Note	Amount
Discretionary Fund		R 1 000,00
Indigenous Games Day	1	R 17 100,00
Mental Health Month	2	R 5 460,00
Physical Wellness talk Series	3	R 2 300,00
Financial Wellness talk Series	4	R 2 300,00
Pop-up Coffee Shop (Social Wellness)	5	R 1 500,00
Student Wellness End-of-year Function	6	R 4 000,00
Intellectual Wellness (with AAC)	9	R 16 700,00
Member Expenses	10	R 19 800,00
		R 70 160,00

Expenditure so far

- Total expenditure at the time of writing this report is: **R 10940, 02**. This breakdown includes the following items:
- 5 x R250 Takealot vouchers for Physical Wellness giveaway = R1250
- 6 x financial education books from Takealot for giveaway = R1376,00
- Member expenses (vehicle bookings) = R6828,31
- Discretionary funds used to pay for a first year student's residence registration fee (extraordinary emergency) – R500,00.
- Wellness committee mid-year picnic – R985,71

Plans for next term

The 3rd term of the year, the fourth term of our SRC term, will be undoubtedly filled with similar challenges to those that we faced throughout the year. It is therefore imperative that our social media profile remains up-to-date and active in order to allow our students the experience of some degree of normalcy, or, at the very least, a “new normal”.

I will be collaborating with the Transformation portfolio during August, which is Women's Month to really brighten up the month.

I will also be rounding up my discussions within my portfolio with the relevant stakeholders, and preparing the necessary documentation for my successor to have a smooth transition to their role.

Recommendations to improve portfolio

No recommendations at this stage.

Important Contacts

- Dr Munita Dunn-Coetzee (Head of the CSCD)– mdunn@sun.ac.za
- Mev Elmarie Kruger – elmarievdw@sun.ac.za
- Lizzie Witboor (social worker) – lgwitbooi@sun.ac.za
- Lyndwill Clarke – Financial Sector Conduct Authority's Consumer Education division chairperson – Lyndwill.Clarke@fsca.co.za
- Grace Phoshoko – Financial Sector Conduct Authority – Grace.phoshoko@fsca.co.za
- Dr Thembelihle Dube – Clinical Psychologist for Wellness Wednesdays – td@thembelihledube.com

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