

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION

Minutes of the annual meeting of the Convocation on Thursday 8 November 2012 19:00 in the HB Thom theatre, Victoria street, Stellenbosch.

1. Constitution

The President, Prof Christo Viljoen, declares the meeting properly constituted, according to the requirements and procedures outlined in the Statute.

There are 211 members and 29 visitors present.

2. Opening

Prop Nadia Marais opens the meeting from Philippians 1:3 – 11.

3. Welcome

The President welcomes the Rector, members of Council and Senate and in particular the Convocation's representatives on Council.

He also welcomes the special guests, Dr. Ivan Meyer and Mrs Cecile Kotzé.

The President, Prof Christo Viljoen, welcomes all members of the Convocation and their companions to the meeting, and thanks them for their contribution.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting of 10 November 2011

The minutes of the previous meeting is approved.

5. Convocation award for community service to Mrs Cecile Kotzé.

The Convocation Executive Committee honours a member of the Convocation, Mrs Cecile Kotzé, with the annual charter for community service. The charter is awarded with congratulations by the President to Mrs Kotzé.

In his commendatio the President describes her work with the establishment and management of the Bergzicht training centre in Stellenbosch. She created this centre in 1992 because she had a dream to break the cycle of poverty through empowerment, not only through training, but also through enabling unemployed people to find work.

Mrs Kotzé receives the award with a word of thanks to the Convocation. Mrs Kotzé thanks the Convocation for the honour and says that her work at Bergzicht was the most enjoyable work of her life, and that she finds pleasure in helping people. She says that those who were trained at Bergzicht came to the training centre despondent and left for work opportunities with renewed self-confidence. She says that she finds pleasure in her work when she hears that Bergzicht has changed the lives of people and their families.

6. Guest speaker: **Dr Ivan Meyer**. The title of his address is **“Cultural warmth: a strategic road map for the creation of social cohesion.”**

Dr Meyer encourages SU in his address to stay the course of cultural warmth. He mentions that cultural warmth is encouraged when we step back and allow others to carry their culture into our space. Ethnocentrism, argues Dr Meyer, places our language, culture and religion first, but warning signs should be clear when people are fanatic about language, culture and religion. He also mentions that government cannot be the driving force behind this, because civil society is better positioned to promote social cohesion. He points out that cultural warmth is an instrument of social cohesion.

Dr Meyer concludes by saying that he, like his alma mater (Stellenbosch University), is concerned with promoting excellence, relevance and in using cultural warmth as roadmap.

The President thanks Dr Meyer and adds an overview of a recent Convocation brainstorm. During this brainstorm, it was also emphasised that SU is a world class university which aims to be inclusive of Afrikaans, which means that the university will be the first choice for Afrikaans speaking students, and yet also a university that will employ multilingualism to maximise access.

The President adds that the university's goal should not be to save Afrikaans, even if it is to promote Afrikaans.

7. Short address: Prof Arnold Schoonwinkel (Vice Rector: Teaching and Learning)

Prof Arnold Schoonwinkel delivers a short address from his portfolio as Vice Rector: Teaching and Learning. Prof Schoonwinkel points out that SU currently has the 2nd highest module success rate in the country (students that successfully complete their modules) and says that his dream is not only for the university to achieve the highest success rate, but also to ensure that all students achieve this same success rate.

He shows some graphs which illustrates that coloured, black and Indian students are not performing as well as white students at present. This has nothing to do with intellectual capabilities, he argues.

He adds that the strengthening of excellence through diversity is one of the university's goals, which is a point that Dr Meyer also makes in his address.

8. Short address: Prof Eugene Cloete (Vice Rector: Research and Innovation)

Prof. Eugene Cloete delivers a short address from his portfolio as Vice Rector: Research and Innovation. Prof. Cloete mentions that SU is the foremost research university in South Africa, which is measured by the amount of research output delivered per capita. He says that SU is known for its exceptional research output.

According to him SU wants to retain (and perhaps even improve on) this position, ensure the sustainability of third stream income from contract research, and establish a postdoctoral fellowship culture.

Research output is currently generated by only 25% of staff, and therefore a core priority is the encouragement of the other 75% of staff to publish their research.

9. Reporting by the Rector, Prof Russel Botman

Prof. Russel Botman, Rector en Vice Chancellor, refers in his reporting to the Convocation what SU is doing to position itself as a 21st century university. He refers to the university's Vision 2013 and gives an overview of the university's Campus Master Plan, which includes facilities and mobility.

10. Reporting by the President, Prof Christo Viljoen

11. Election of members of the Convocation Executive Committee

The President explains that some vacant positions on the EC(C) need to be filled at the annual meeting, according to the Statute. He explains the voting process.

Ds Roelof Nel's term as Secretary comes to an end. Prop Nadia Marais resigns as Additional Member of the Executive Committee in order to avail herself for this position. She is nominated by Adv. Jan Heunis and seconded. There are no further nominations and she is consequently unanimously elected as Secretary for a term of four years (2013 – 2016).

Prop Nadia Marais' position as Additional Member on the EC(C) becomes vacant due to her resignation as Additional Member and election as Secretary, which leads to an election of an Additional Member on the EC(C). Ds Roelof Nel is nominated by Dr Ernst Marais and seconded. There are no further nominations and he is consequently unanimously elected as Additional Member for a term of four years (2013 – 2016).

12. Closing

The President, Prof Christo Viljoen, closes the meeting and thanks all parties involved in the

organisation and execution of the annual meeting.

All members of the Convocation and their companions that are present are cordially invited for refreshments in the foyer of the theatre after the meeting.

The meeting ends at 21:00.

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Nadia Marais

SECRETARY : CONVOCATION