Student Parliament Committee

ANNUAL REPORT

by:

Philasande Shongwe

**(Executive Treasurer)**

2019

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**Letter of submittal**

Dear Ms. Selahle

The report entitled, “Annual Report” was prepared as my responsibility report, as the Treasurer of Student Parliament for the academic year, 2019, as mandated by Section 11 of Chapter 2 of the Student Parliament Constitution. The purpose of this report is to reflect on my duties and the activities I have undertaken in my legal capacity since assuming office.

Student Parliament refers to the body established in terms of Chapter four of the Student Constitution. It plays a leading role in creating and facilitating a non-discriminatory Maties community where leaders in the institution engage critically and responsibly with not only the students and their needs, but the challenges facing Stellenbosch University and the world at large. “Student Parliament also commits to inculcating accountable, transparent and consultative governance within our constitutional democratic student leadership.” (Student Parliament Constitution).

Throughout my term as the Treasurer of the Student Parliament Executive, I was working very closely with our Speaker, Mr. Keitumetse Lebesa, Deputy Accountability Chair, Ms. Ntwagae, Former Communications Officer, Mr. Islam, Accountability Chair, Mr. Mkhize, Mr. Thulani Hlatshwayo and Mr. Anele Mdepa (from Student Governance), Ms. Dowries(booking of venues), Ms. Selahle, Secretary General of Student Parliament who assisted immensely with the administration for the Treasurers Forums throughout the year, as well as with all the Treasurers of the student bodies recognised in the Student Parliament Constitution.

This report was written entirely by me. I would like to extend my gratitude to Mr. Keitumetse Lebesa and Mr. Nhlakanipho Mkhize for assisting me with the formation of this document.

Sincerely,

Philasande Shongwe,

Executive Treasurer

21816123

**Summary**

My term as the Executive Treasurer of Student Parliament has been, to say the least, very challenging. I am glad, however, to announce that I was able to complete everything I had set out to achieve, not just concerning my personal visions for the Treasury role within the institution, but also on my coercion with the other members to further the constitutional mandates of Student Parliament.

The year has been very busy. Below is a brief summary of all the events (sittings and meetings) that I have been a part of:

**Executive Meetings**

* We had our first executive meeting in the Amamaties Hub on the **09th of April 2019** at 20h00. We dealt with a variety of issues. Some of the important ones including planning for the training with Student Governance, revising the year plan, the drawing up of code of conducts (Treasurers Forum code of conduct to be drafted by myself), last but certainly not last, the planning and preparations for the election of applicants to fill the vacant Vice Deputy Accountability Chair and Communications Officer positions.
* The second executive meeting of which I was a part was held on the **23rd of April 2019** in the Serruria Passion Palace at 20h00. The meeting went on for over two hours because we had a lot to get through. We discussed where and when we would take our pictures as Student Parliament’s executive committee. The Secretary General also provided clarity about the policy unit that she is spear-heading. The Speaker of Student Parliament then proceeded to engage with us on the Critical Engagement Session, the Second Annual Ordinary Sitting as well as finalising the agenda points for the sitting.
* The third executive meeting of the year was convened on the **02nd of May 2019** in the Serruria Passion Palace at 20h00. This was also, like the second meeting, very long. We discussed a lot of very important issues, especially with the Ordinary Sitting drawing nearer and nearer. Issues touched on included; Picture Taking, Submission of Code of Conducts (which included the submission of the Code of Conduct of the Treasurers Forum drawn up entirely by myself), Critical Engagement Session, Preparations for the Second Sitting, Orientation of the elected members as well as co-curricular feedback by the Secretary General.
* The fourth executive meeting of the year was convened on the **30th of July 2019** in the Dagbreek Prayer Room at 18h00. This particular sitting was very brief. We touched on the following points; Constitutional Amendment process, the operations of the policy unit, the planning of the continuation of the second sitting that was not finished, as well as the planning of the third sitting.
* The fifth executive meeting of the year was convened on the **06th of August 2019** in Seminar room number 2053 at the Stellenbosch University Library. The Speaker announced the formal resignation of Communications Officer, Mr. Suhail Islam. The following points were discussed; the continuation of the second annual sitting, the constitutional amendment process as well as the Extraordinary sitting scheduled to take place in a few weeks.

**Tygerberg Student Parliament Executive Committee (TSPEC) Meeting**

* I attended (along with the SPC) the first annual meeting of the TSPEC on the **13th of March 2019**. The following points were discussed; the TSPEC’s Vision and mission for the year, co-curricular outcomes as well as the logistics for the committee’s first sitting.
* The TSPEC’s second meeting was held on the **26th of March 2019**. The following points were discussed; feedback of the first TSP sitting as well as the vision of the Tygerberg Student Parliament.
* I also attended the Executive Committee meeting in Tygerberg on the **13th of May 2019**. We discussed in length the next and the final Ordinary Sittings, half year reports, the amendment of the Tygerberg Student Parliament Constitution which would, preferably be done simultaneously with our one. We also discussed very briefly, the reasons why the Inter-Party debate that the TSPEC had planned on organising.

**Ordinary Sitting**

* We had our first sitting on the **19th of March** at the Wilcocks building where the agenda points regarding housing for students on campus and the language policy were thoroughly debated and examined. It was a very well attended sitting and was carried out very professionally, also considering that it was the Speaker’s first sitting.
* The sitting was held on the **7th of May 2019** in the RW Wilcocks Building, lecture hall number 1001 (as booked by myself) at 18h00.

Where do I even begin! This sitting definitely has to go down as the most controversial in a very long time! The points in the agenda included Mental Health, Food Security on Campus, the #NotAllMen Critical Engagement Issue hosted by the SRC in Dabreek Men’s Residence, the role and powers of Student Governance, Register All Policy and the lack of Halaal meals in campus residences. It indeed was a very lengthy agenda.

What transpired during the sitting was foreseen by nobody! Only two of the above-mentioned agenda points were discussed before time ran out (at 21h00).

A lot of time was spent looking for the remote so that the projector could be used, more time was spend deliberating why the Speaker of the House rearranged the order of the agenda without the consent of the members of the House. The most time was spent debating why the members of the House felt that Dagbreek, the men’s residence in which the controversial #NotAllMen Critical Engagement Issue was held. Attacks on the Prim of the residence then came in thick and fast, with the members of the House not afraid to give their opinions about why they think that Dagbreek is racist.

Not very long after that, after the Speaker had sent out many members of the House for misconduct, we were told that time had lapsed and that we would have to adjourn the sitting which the Speaker said would resume during the next sitting.

* The third sitting for the year took place at the Library auditorium on the **5th of September 2019**. The following points were discussed; the constitutional review committee, LLL village feedback, feedback from the Accountability Chair, Policy Officer and myself, the Treasurer. I basically had to give a report on my undertakings for the year.

**Tygerberg Student Parliament Sitting**

I also attended the first ordinary sitting at the Tygerberg Campus on the **04th of April 2019.** The following issues were discussed;

* Tygerberg Student Representative Reports and Budgets
* Lack of Tygerberg NSFAS liaison
* Shuttles from Tygerberg to the main campus in Stellenbosch
* Student safety on Campus
* The state of the Student Centre (SS) at the Tygerberg Campus relative to the one on main campus
* Fedics: Variety of food sold
* Price increases on campus
* Parking on campus
* Taps around the Tygerberg Campus (for drinking water)
* Campus Engagement and Integration i.e. Clusters

I (along with the other committee members attended a very brief sitting on the **7th of August 2019**.

**Treasurers Forum**

I am also, according to the Student Parliament Constitution mandated to chair the Treasurers Forum in conjunction with the Speaker and Deputy Speakers of Student Parliament as well as Student Affairs. I chaired three Treasurers Forums during the term. The plan was to have four (which turned out to be a bit too optimistic on my side). The fourth forum was scheduled to be a handover session. This, however, did not come into fruition because of the different turnover times of the different bodies.

The first Forum was convened on the **18th of April 2019** at the SRC boardroom at 16h00 and was adjourned at 17h04. The proceedings were no different from the previous Forum. Where the treasurers of the recognised constitutional student bodies gave feedback on their quarterly cash flow. It was also discussed and agreed that we should have more Forums in the year.

The second Treasurers Forum of the year was held at the SRC boardroom on the **16th of May 2019** at 16h00 and was adjourned at 17h00. Proceedings were as usual, with the Treasurers being given a chance to break down their budgets and elaborate on the term’s cash flow from their various departments.

The third Treasurers Forum of the year was held at the SRC boardroom on the **31st of July 2019** at 16h00 and was adjourned at 16h47. Proceedings were as usual. All the present treasurers were given a chance to present on their budgeted and actual amounts for the term.

I think that this lays quite a solid foundation for the years ahead. A space where finances are shared and probed into is absolutely necessary to further accountability and transparency.

**National Parliament Tour**

I (along with the other committee members) visited the National Parliament in Cape Town on the **20th of August 2019**. We were shown around and told stories about the place and its British-inspired inception as well as the Apartheid split of the main chamber, which I certainly found very interesting. This has got to be my favourite moment of the year. I learnt so much in such a short space of time!

**Conclusion**

The report above is an annual requirement according to the Student Parliament Constitution which I am committed to withholding. It explains what I did in my capacity as Treasurer in the year.