



Student Parliament

Accountability, Transparency and Consultative Governance
UNIVERSITEIT IYUNIVESITHI STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

studpar@sun.ac.za

Minutes: Plenary Sitting Two 2022

Date: 12 May 2022 @18:00

Venue: Microsoft Teams & SRC Boardroom (Neelsie Top Floor)

Attendees: Student Parliament Committee, SRC and Student Body

Agenda:

1. Opening

The second plenary sitting was officially opened by the Speaker of the House, Speaker Petersen.

2. Adoption of Previous Minutes

3. Instructions

Deputy Speaker Koen attended to the matter of instructions, specifically citing the freedom of speech and debate that was subject to the appropriate limitations within the confines of the sitting. Special consideration and due care needed to be taken. The Speaker held discretion to instruct a member to withdraw from the meeting if they are found in contravention of the general rules and instructions of the sitting.

The following points were addressed on the agenda:

1. Maties Gym Membership

- Speaker Petersen briefly discussed the issues of the previous meeting and subsequently provided feedback.
- It was noted that payment would no longer be facilitated through student cards but rather through debit orders of six or twelve months or upfront payments through cash, credit or SnapScan.
- A member of the house raised the question of why student cards were no longer being used to facilitate payments for gym membership, to which the various issues regarding this were addressed. Student cards can no longer facilitate payments due to maties gym no longer being affiliated with maties sport and, importantly, that payment was deducted once off irrespective of the membership term.
- Members of the house were prompted to lodge further queries with Maties Gym as well as the Sports Manager from the Student Representative Council.

2. Safe Drinking Water Points

- Speaker Petersen introduced this item by clarifying that the only information available regarding this issue was the introduction of points or stations wherein people may fill water or drink safely without getting sick.
- Speaker Peterson requested clarity on whether the stations would be situated all over campus, specific faculties or residence spaces—those who will be delegated the responsibility to oversee that will depend on where the stations will be.

Nota Bene: In realising that the member who raised the above agenda point was not in attendance of the sitting, Speaker Petersen, advised that a member who raises an agenda point must be present in person to further address their point. It was noted that it is not fair to themselves and the other members to be absent from elaborating an issue that they have raised.

3. Virtual Student Cards

- Speaker Petersen introduced this item noting the member responsible for it, as well as the point before, was absent from the sitting. It was deduced that the intention would be for student cards to be accessible on various smartwatches and smartphones across campus.
- A member of the floor raised the issue of accessibility. Virtual student cards may not be realistically achievable as not everyone has access to the type of smartphone with the capability of hosting a virtual student card.
- Speaker Petersen noted that similar such technologies such as Apple Pay and Samsung Pay took a lot of time to be rolled out in South Africa and such, student cards may take even longer.
- It was further suggested that the university may look into finding ways to begin the implementation of virtual student cards given how long it takes—the discussion should start with those who are able to host virtual student cards.
- Innovation can work together with sustainability to bring forth the relevant departments in order to discuss the process of bringing in virtual student cards.

4. Post Graduate Leadership

- A member of the house, Secretary General of UNASA Emile Engelbrecht, discussed the issue of Masters and PhD students rarely being found in positions of leadership. These students should be included in leadership given that they are the future specialist in their field, the only obstacle is how to attract and incentivise them.
- A point of clarity was raised regarding whether the agenda point intends on including just postgraduate leadership or just their expertise.
- The above point initiated a discussion into existing structures. It was noted that in creating new structures whenever an issue arises, an overlap is created. There are already many posts which are open to postgraduate students –the solution should thence be encouraging their involvement.
- The issue still remains that it is generally more difficult to reach post graduate students because of the processes that need to be undertaken, thence it is much easier to bring in the participation of undergraduate students.

- It was noted that the Academic Affairs Council Constitution provides for the inclusion in the representation of postgraduate students, more so, postgraduate representation is recognised to be needing more work.
- A concession was made in that a policy amendment would be suggested to the Student Representative Council to amend the postgraduate portfolio.

5. Volunteer Transport

- This agenda point was raised by UNASA Secretary General Engelbrecht who fully expanded on the purpose of its inclusion on the agenda.
- The issue concerns funding required for volunteers needing to go to Khayamandi and other respective townships for volunteer work.
- It was noted that volunteers are currently funding themselves out of pocket and are looking to enquire about availability in regard to requesting funding for transport in general.
- A member of the House from the SRC responded that such enquiries for transport, given the restrictions regarding budget spending, need to be heard on a case-by-case basis wherein individual or group volunteers apply for transport for a particular excursion to be funded.
- Although there was not a consensus regarding apply for transport funding, there was consensus on possibly introducing transportation services that volunteers can utilise without needing to apply for funding with every case.
- It was noted that within the next meeting, there should be a point on the agenda addressing the formalising of a structure of transportation.

6. Funding for Societies

- This agenda point was also raised by UNASA Secretary General Engelbrecht who fully expanded on the purpose of its inclusion on the agenda.
- It was noted that a lot of activities that are put on by societies require extensive funding and as a result, the University should be providing societies with the funds to do so instead of requiring them to pay for necessities out of pocket.
- A member of the House from the SRC responded that there is a willingness to have the various societies provide input but as of yet, only four of over sixty societies responded. This lack of response was a clear indication of a lack of engagement.
- Societies in need should reach out and substantively provide for why the need funding from the University for their various activities.
- A general consensus was reached in that there will be an attempt to arrange a meeting with individual societies to find a general solution to this issue.

7. Electoral Commission

- This point of the agenda was expanded upon and discussed with relative detail by the Chief Electoral Commissioner and Chairperson of the Electoral Commission Yanga Keva.
- Chairperson Keva noted the importance of the democratic—free and equal structures that have been implemented. In 2021, the Council of Stellenbosch University adopted a Student Constitution which provided for new amendments to

the Student Constitution. The Electoral Commission was thus established as the primary electoral regulation structure.

- The responsibility of the Electoral Commission lies within the creation of free and fair electoral environment across all elections on campus. In addition, there is a responsibility to create binding election structures according to which all elections will be required to be in compliance with. Regulations will provide for areas such as how results will need to be announced as well as some of the conditions that must be met by the required bodies across campus.
- It was also noted that there will be the introduction of an elections timetable, essential given that the date and time of SRC elections has a direct impact on every other election on campus.
- The Electoral Commission, under the scope of its duties, will also investigate issues and/or complaints regarding election disputes.

8. Treasurer's Forum

- Executive Treasurer van der Westhuizen introduced this agenda point by mentioning that the mandate and roles of the forums are vague. The role of the forum is to have an engaging platform between treasurers—a place where guidance is offered.
- Speaker Petersen raised a point of clarification in that the role of Student Parliament is confined to that of giving advice and not being an executive body.
- Executive Treasurer van der Westhuizen noted that the underlying objective is to ensure that in conversation, there is ongoing transparency and societies have funding.

9. New Deputy Speaker

- Following the resignation of Former Deputy Speaker William Sezoe, Speaker Petersen noted that elections were held, and interviews were conducted.
- The result of which was the election of Deputy Speaker Risuna Risimati.

10. Quiz Night

- Speaker Petersen noted that due to issues with funding, the Quiz Night was hosted online and not in person.
- There were five tied winners thence a new quiz was drawn in order to determine, from the five, the winner and runners-up.

11. Closing by the Speaker

- There was no further business.
- Speaker Petersen concluded the meeting.