



STUDENTERAAD

**STUDENTS'
REPRESENTATIVE
COUNCIL**

Report for the Second Quarter

Societies Council

Vera Leven

May 2014

Contents

I.	General	1
A.	Quarter Reflection	1
B.	Why did you stand?	Error! Bookmark not defined.
II.	Other Information:	1
A.	Guardian House.....	1
III.	Societies Council Chair.....	2
A.	Description/Aim of Portfolio	2
B.	Articles of the Student Constitution Relevant to the Portfolio	2
C.	Term Planning	2
D.	Daily Responsibilities and Tasks	3
E.	Projects Completed	3
1.	Fourth Term 2013	3
2.	First term 2014	Error! Bookmark not defined.
F.	Projects in process/incomplete	5
IV.	Plans for the next two terms	8
A.	The Third Term.....	8
B.	The Fourth Term.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
V.	Conclusion.....	9
A.	Closing Remarks.....	9
VI.	List of Addenda	10

I. General

A. Quarter Reflection

The second quarter for the Societies Council is a much quieter term than the first one. This quarter involves more administrative/behind-the-scenes work and less actual events, compared to the first quarter.

II. Other Information:

A. Guardian House

My guardian houses are the senior houses:

- Huis MacDonald
- Huis de Villiers
- Concordia

I contacted the responsible persons for these houses at the beginning of my term to introduce myself and offer my support where it is needed. The responses I received indicated that these senior houses operate independently from all other campus activities, do not elect a HK and will not be requiring my assistance. I did however reassure them that I am available should they ever require my assistance in any matter.

III. Societies Council Chair

A. Description/Aim of Portfolio

The Societies Council Chair is primarily responsible for the administration of societies and for ensuring that societies have a platform upon which they can successfully operate. This includes the overseeing of registration of societies; re-registration of societies; memberships for societies; general awareness of societies through welcoming fairs, general societies fairs, open day stalls, social media, marketing, etc.; and any other problems and circumstances arising in the day-to-day operating of societies.

Further, the Societies Council Chair serves as the chairperson at meetings, of both the Societies Council and the Societies Council Executive Committee.

As Societies Chair I have gained a better general overview of societies, making it possible for me to identify patterns, trends and general problems, which are not always apparent to individual societies. This has enabled me to find solutions to these problems and to help societies function more effectively now, and in the future.

B. Articles of the Student Constitution Relevant to the Portfolio

Article 24 applies as far as it stipulates the portfolios and positions an ex officio member may hold apart from the ex officio position.

Chapter 8 concerns the Societies Council specifically and is therefore relevant in its entirety. This chapter covers:

- Composition of the Societies Council
- Duties and powers of the Societies Council:
 - Represent interests of all recognised student societies and that of the members of such societies, at the SRC and University Management.
 - The Societies Council has the powers necessary for the performance of its duties.
- Constitutional Mandate:
 - To actively promote the rights of students, and specifically the right to freedom of religion, belief and opinion and right to freedom of association.
- Constitutions, Rules and Regulations

C. Term Planning

Portfolio Planning

The Societies Council term planning (in the first quarter) entailed the assignment of the general portfolios of the general executive committee members and ensuring that each member of the Societies Council Executive Committee clearly understands his/her responsibilities.

In the second quarter I requested that each Executive Committee member take ownership of their portfolio, while still informing the rest of the committee of their actions and acquiring the necessary permission/authorisations.

Project Planning

The Societies Council Executive Committee further discussed the upcoming projects (see details in points E. and F. below) and the relevant portfolio responsibilities.

D. Daily Responsibilities and Tasks

Email correspondence

A bulk of the day-to-day work of the Societies Council Executive Committee is responding to email queries. This includes members enquiring about specific societies, societies making enquiries regarding sign-ups and procedures and general hurdles that arise for individual societies that they require assistance with.

Further, I aim to keep societies informed about events and activities being hosted or organised by other societies, by sending out a weekly newsletter, in order for societies to support each other and lean on each other's resources where their projects potentially overlap.

Maintaining the society database

The society contact database has to be kept up to date to ensure that societies receive all correspondence and that society committee members can be contacted where need be.

This list is not available to the general public and any person requiring a society's contact details will be given only that society's details. This is to avoid societies being spammed with unwanted correspondence.

Meeting chairs who are experiencing problems

Where chairs are experiencing difficulties with their committees, members or general society activities or have a query regarding policy or procedure, I meet with them to help and support them to the best of my abilities.

Meeting students who want to start a society

Where a student would like to start his/her own society I meet with them from the initial stages to make sure they meet all the requirements as set out in the Societies Council Constitution and to help them along with the process. I maintain email correspondence with them and then meet them again in the final stages of their registration.

Minutes and Agendas

The agendas and minutes for meetings need to be compiled and sent out to the relevant parties as mandated by the Societies Council Constitution.

E. Projects Completed

1. Second Term 2014

a) University Open Day

Aimed outcome of the project and was it achieved?

The Societies Council's presence at Open Day was aimed at making prospective students and their parents aware of societies and the role they play on campus. Emphasis was placed on the wide variety of societies on our campus and their importance in creating a well-rounded and happy student, creating a place for everyone to feel at home.

Planning and Budgeting:

No funds were allocated for this project.

The Societies Council Executive Committee manned the stand throughout the day, in accordance with a roster set up.

Would you recommend this project continues?

Yes I would. It is a great opportunity for exposure for societies in general.

What would you do better (Assuming it should continue)

I suggest that a small budget be allocated to this event, for décor of the stand and reading material for students and parents.

The stand would have much more of an impact and look more attractive if the Societies Council were to allocate a budget for a tablecloth and other décor. Students and their parents tend to be in a quite a rush to get to all the stalls and events and often just want to grab a brochure. I would suggest designing a brochure for this purpose.

This year we had sweets at the table which definitely attracted a lot of people.

b) Society Half Year Reports

Aimed outcome of the project and was it achieved?

This is to provide societies with the opportunity to reflect on their activities and re-assess their goals. It further helps with the continuity of societies and makes the handover period smoother and more efficient. It is also a good opportunity for the Societies Council to see what societies are doing on campus, where they are making a difference and where the Societies Council can help.

Planning and Budgeting:

No funds were used/required for this project.

All societies were required to submit a half year report by the 9 May.

Would you recommend this project continues?

Yes I would. It ensures the continuity of societies and reaching of goals with the Societies Council.

What would you do better (Assuming it should continue)

Even though the Chair Handbook specifically instructs societies to hand in half year reports, they need to be reminded thereof several times and far in advance. I do think it should be a requirement for reregistration of societies.

c) Update the documents relating to starting a new society

Aimed outcome of the project?

To provide students with the most up to date and relevant information in order for them to start their own societies efficiently and effectively. Further, to minimize queries and empower students to solve minor issues themselves.

Planning and Budgeting

No funding is required for this project.

The documents were updated by the Societies Council Chairperson and now accurately reflect the requirements and procedures for starting a new society.

These documents will also be made available on the new societies website.

Would you recommend this project continues?

Yes, I recommend that these documents be continuously updated as circumstances and procedures change, in order to ensure accuracy and less unnecessary queries.

What would you do better (Assuming it should continue)

I would ensure that all information is always up to date.

F. Projects in process/incomplete

a) Society socials

Aimed outcome of the project?

To promote unity and support among societies and their committees. To create the opportunity for societies to find common projects and to share resources where possible.

Planning and Budgeting

No funds are required for this project.

This is an on-going project. After every Societies Council meeting I encourage society chairs and their committees to join for a brief social. I feel that this will create a better culture within the Societies Council and encourage chairs to get to know each other on a personal level, in order for them to work together on projects in the future.

This is a trial project and will be reassessed after the first semester. So far it is very poorly attended and do not think it will continue next semester.

b) Subsidy application for societies

Aimed outcome of the project?

The aim is to provide societies with lack of funding the opportunity to apply for funding for a specific project.

Planning and Budgeting

The Societies Council has been allocated funds for this project from the SRc budget.

Societies were required to apply in accordance with the subsidy criteria set out (see Addendum A) by the 29th of April. Very few applications were received and some of these were incomplete. As

soon as all complete applications have been received, appropriate allocations will be made in accordance with the subsidy criteria and Societies Council Constitution.

c) Update the Chair handbook and supporting documents

Aimed outcome of the project?

To provide chairperson with the most up to date and relevant information in order for them to manage their societies efficiently and effectively. Further, to minimize queries and empower chairs to solve minor issues themselves.

Planning and Budgeting

No funding is required for this project.

This is an on-going project. I intend to update this handbook to bring it in line with current operations, specifically with regards to the financial protocol changes. I suggest that this handbook is continuously updated. Further, I intend on updating the supporting documents, specifically the registration form.

This process is almost complete and will be distributed to all new chairpersons.

d) Website

Aimed outcome of the project?

To provide students and the general public with accurate information on societies and allow them to contact societies, as well as sign up to societies via the web portal. To bring the societies website in line with the image of the university and enable future Societies Council Executive Committee to amend information as needed.

Planning and Budgeting

No funding is required for this project.

This is an on-going project. The basic structure of the SharePoint website has been set up. Two members (including the Societies Council Chairperson) have attended SharePoint training in order to populate the website with society information. There are many benefits to this new website, including that it is in line with the image of the University, that there is better search ability and that the information can be updated as needed.

The website is currently 90% complete and will be live as soon as possible. It is a very time consuming process but will allow future Societies Council Executive Committees to update information easily.

G. Discontinued Projects

a) MFM announcement slot

This project was discontinued. MFM felt that the Societies Council fell under the SRC and therefore we need to make all announcements in the SRC MFM slot.

b) Weekly newsletter to societies

This project was discontinued as there was not enough information shared by societies in order to warrant a weekly newsletter. The information provided by societies intended for sharing can easily be shared individually.

IV. Plans for the next quarter

A. The Third Academic Term

a) Society open day

Aimed outcome of the project?

The aim of this project is to provide societies with a further opportunity to market themselves on campus, where they don't usually get a chance to do so.

Planning and Budgeting

I think this would be particularly effective at the beginning of the second semester when the international exchange students arrive.

Funding will be required for marketing material.

This project will only be completed should societies show enough interest in the event.

b) New Societies Council Chairperson Elections

Aimed outcome of the project?

The aim of this project is to elect a new chairperson for the Societies Council to serve for the next term, in line with the SRC term of service.

Planning and Budgeting

This project does not require any funds.

Due to the amendments made to the Student Constitution the Societies Council Chairperson elections will take place at the Societies Council meeting on the 29th of July, facilitated by the Election Convenor. The nominees will be made known to the current Societies Council in the agenda on the 24th of July. All current chairpersons wishing to stand for Societies Council Chairperson will need to send in their complete applications to the current Societies Council by the 27th of June.

c) Re-registration and registration

Aimed outcome of the project?

Re-registration is aimed at the continuity of a society. Re-registration further makes the chairperson of the society eligible for honoraria where all the set out requirements are met. All societies are required to elect their new committees before the reregistration of societies can take place.

Registration is aimed at creating new societies.

Planning and Budgeting

No funds are required for this project.

This project entails the re-registering of societies, and leaving a comprehensive database for the incoming Societies Council Executive Committee.

d) Chair Handover Function

Aimed outcome of the project?

This is aimed at recognizing the service which has been delivered by the outgoing chair and to congratulate the new chair on his/her appointment.

Planning and Budgeting

Planning and budgeting for this project will commence in the third academic term.

This project is dependent on the Societies Council budget excess.

V. Conclusion

A. Closing Remarks

My term as Societies Council Chair so far has been both challenging and rewarding. This term in particular has been challenging due to the added academic pressure. I look forward to the term ahead, to meeting new people and rising to new challenges.

VI. List of Addenda

Addendum A. Subsidy Application Criteria