

ANNUAL REPORT 2001 THE INSTITUTIONAL FORUM

COMPOSITION

The Institutional Forum has twenty-eight members, seven from each of the following groupings: the governance sector, the staff sector, the student sector and the community sector.

This representation is made up as follows:

Governance sector: Two members of Council elected by Council; three members of Senate elected by Senate; one member of management appointed by management; and the Registrar or a person appointed by the Registrar.

Staff sector: Two members elected from their own ranks by the permanent non-professorial academic staff; one member appointed from their own ranks by the academic support services; two members elected from their own ranks by recognized trade unions; and two members elected from their own ranks by administrative support services.

Student sector: Two members of the Students' Representative Council elected by the Students' Representative Council; two members of the Committee of Head Students appointed by the Committee of Head Students; one member appointed from their own ranks by the student societies; and two members of the Academic Affairs Council appointed by the Academic Affairs Council.

Community sector: Two members of Convocation appointed by the President of Convocation; and five persons appointed from their own ranks by the representative bodies of civic society.

REPORT OF THE INSTITUTIONAL FORUM

The Institutional Forum (IF) is an advisory body which, in terms of the Higher Education Act (sect. 32 of Act 101 of 1997), fosters on-campus discussion and debate on various matters that come to its notice. In the year under review the IF played a role in this regard in several areas.

The IF's activities are on the whole conducted by its three standing taskgroups. These are charged with the respective areas designated as "Diversity and Equity", "Planning" and "Culture" and they are supplemented by the two ad hoc groups for Language and for Senior Management.

Each task group has the capability to investigate, and to report to the IF and to advise it on, such matters as may fall within the area referred to in its designation.

The following is a summary of the matters dealt with in the course of the year.

Monitoring of initiation practices

Having raised the issue of the monitoring of initiation practices by independent observers, the IF advised that such monitors ought to be persons that were independent of University structures (report 2/2001(1) MA, following a meeting held on 5 April 2001)

Appointment of a Rector

On 8 May 2001, the IF voted on the appointment of a Rector, the outcome being a clear majority in favour of Prof R Stumpf. This choice by the IF from among the candidates was duly communicated to Council (report 2/2001 (2) MA)

Policy regarding temporary staff

On 14 June and again 5 December (reports 3/2001 MA and 6/2001 MA), the IF advised Council that the proposed policy for temporary staff should be retrospectively applied and that its scope should be extended to cover not only the allocation of fringe benefits but also the conditions of service.

Senior management and review of policy documents

Several written submissions relating to senior management and to the general review of the University's existing policy documents were made to Council, Senate and the IF by Prof Brink. The IF gave its comments on these submissions in report 1/2002 MA. The proposed changes have been heartening to the IF, especially in that they require each policy document to refer explicitly to the statement of the University's values in the Strategic Framework.

Leonie Overbeek

Chairperson