Minutes
Students’ Representative Council Meeting

Date: 2020-10-13
Time: 17:00
Venue: Microsoft Teams

# Attendance & Apologies

* Nomzamo, Unathi, and Masixole were not present at the start of the meeting. Nonetheless, quorum was reached. They joined later during the meeting.
* Apologies from Leoné & Joshua, who need to leave the meeting by 20:00 to attend PK meeting. Request to take PK meetings (Tuesdays at 19:00) into consideration for future special meetings.

# Approval of previous minutes

* Minutes approved by Philip

# Feedback from External committees

* Amendment to agenda: The SRC representative on the Student Fees committee is not Xola, but Unathi & Ayesha instead.

## Bursaries & Loans (Maki)

* Recruitment bursary
	+ Starting either 2021 or 2022, the recruitment bursary will be expanded to not only cover academic costs, but also accommodation and food.
	+ Considering lowering 60% aggregate academic requirement due to COVID-19. Deferred for further discussion.
* SU Loans policy
	+ SU is considering removing their loans policy, but is in discussion with financial institutions to explore alternatives and find competitive rates for students.
* Postgraduate bursary scheme
	+ Applies to Honours, Masters, and Doctoral students.
	+ Document to be made available to SRC in due course. Email Maki if needed.

## Quality Committee (Philip)

* Its function is to audit every department in SU and encourage them to reflect on potential improvements.
* An external committee compiles a report, and the quality committee follows up on whether recommendations and improvements were implemented.
	+ Finance department:
	+ Modernisation of financial system (switching from Tera Term to Oracle Financial Services)
	+ Gender & equity targets have not been met in higher level management in this department
* Campus Health:
	+ Currently starting evaluation, open to suggestions
	+ Considering metrics to measure quality within this department

## Student fees (Ayesha)

* Application levies for 2021 waived
* EMS faculty is considering laptop levies, to offer laptops on loan and will negotiate with bursary schemes (NSFAS) to consider covering those fees.
* Interest-free period for paying student fees is extended for all students, including international students until end of September.
* Residence & gym fees will be billed only for time spent in residence / on campus.
* Recruitment program introduced for international student with external companies, but those students will have to pay an increased fee (commission) per semester spent here.

# Welcoming of Managers (Xola)

* Xola welcomed the new SRC managers to their first SRC meeting

# Feedback: Tygerberg Pantry Project (Maki)

* Maki met with students running the project.
* Previously, the project encountered resistance from management, as there was no overseer or staff member involved, and due to the risk of students handling large numbers of donations & large sums of money.
	+ Applied to become a society, but accreditation was revoked at the last minute
	+ Lost access to their costpoint
	+ Were forced to operate via university suppliers, which inflated costs to a financially unsustainable level
* Maki proposes creating a task team within the SRC that includes knowledgeable parties to guide and kick-start the project.
* Kristin volunteered to be on the task team.
* Although the project is currently operating on Tygerberg, Maki hopes to expand it to a Stellenbosch cluster soon.
* The Tygerberg Societies Council (not main campus SC) has jurisdiction in this regard.
* Xola’s recommendation: Maki will draft a formal report regarding the problems currently faced by the council, potential solutions, and how other stakeholders can contribute to resolving these challenges.

# Task Team: WAQE (Ayesha)

* The task team will investigate how transgender individuals are placed in residences, how this compares to best practices globally, and report the findings & recommendations to management.
* Applications for the task team opening soon, any recommendations from SRC welcome.

# SRC Sensitivity Training (Ayesha)

* Scope: Being informed about and dealing with GBV, queerphobia, etc.
* Xola’s recommendation: facilitate these sessions outside SRC meetings, perhaps in collaboration with Leadership & Development portfolio (Kira)
* Ayesha would like to spread this training out into shorter sessions, to encourage attendance & commitment from SRC members.
* One session will be hosted towards the end of 2020, with more to come during the registration period in 2021

# SRC Honorariums (Leoné)

* SRC honorariums (and thos of ex-officio members) have not been inflation-adjusted for a long time.
* This matter needs to be negotiated with Dr Choice Makhetha soon, as it may not be possible to adjust next year.
* Jarryd raised the issue with Prof. Schoonwinkel, who was unaware of the issue at the time.
* Eduard to obtain report from Yanga and make it available to the SRC
* Gershwin was involved in the conversation, and we should follow up with him.

# Number of mass mailers needed (Eduard)

* Eduard mentioned that from this year onwards, the SRC will not receive any mass mailers for free, and would like to know how many we should budget for.
* Eduard will confirmed that emergency mass mailers may be sent free of charge, but will follow up on the cost of normal mass mailers.
* The SRC agreed that the SRC needs to use other channels (such as Maties newsletters and its social media platforms) more intensively
* Mass mailers can be utilised for portfolio-specific matters, but this will depend on the portfolio’s justification for sending it and the SRC’s approval.
* Xola’s recommendation: Almé should provide a strategy for improving the SRC’s branding and its use of alternative communications platfirms.
* It is likely not feasible for the SRC to develop its own mailing list, given limitations by the POPI & SU policy, as well as the challenge of setting up a mailing system like Everlytic that manages the mailing list.
* The limitations typically do not apply to r, as they are essential or opt-in. SunLearn also has the option to receive a digest of forum posts only.

# Personalised email addresses for SRC members (Kira)

* Kira will follow up with Sharine, but it will probably be finalised by the end of the week (16 October)
* Mailboxes will be merged, and emails going to either the student number or the customised address should end up in the same mailbox.
* Kira mentioned the need to consolidate upcoming committee applications (with dates) into one email / announcement, as concerns were raised about some students not receiving communication in this regard.

# Subcommittees & Year Plans (Xola)

* It is necessary for those who wish to start a task team or subcommittee / task team, to draft some kind of year plan, which outlines their activities, the roles of each member, and a justification that that member / position is necessary.
* This is to ensure that subcommittees / task teams are not just created for the sake of, but instead are remain functional, motivated and active for the entire year.

# Voting for Communications Officer (Xola)

* Eduard reiterated that he has no objections to taking on this role, and that it is sensible, given how similar the roles of Secretary-General and Communications Officer are, and highlighted the opportunity of building a good working relationship with student parliament this year.
* A vote of confidence was conducted via WhatsApp. Votes of Yes, No or Abstain were sent to Xola and confirmed by Kira.
* Philip reminded the SRC that the managers do not have voting rights.
* 12 Yes votes, 4 Abstain Votes, 0 No votes
* Eduard was allocated the Communications Officer portfolio

# Code of Conduct, voting for SRC Disciplinary Committee member (Kira)

* Confirmation that the position is also open to SRC managers
* Deferred until SRC Special Meeting

# SRC Financial Policy discussion (Philip)

* The SRC’s policy must also be compliant with SU’s financial policy
* Philip highlighted the most important points of the SRC’s financial policies, which was made available to members via email and Microsoft Teams.
* Unathi raised a question regarding advances and what happens if a vendor is unable to provide documentation such as an invoice / receipt within here days
	+ Philip stated that this requirement comes from SU’s financial policy and cannot be changed or ignored. The SRC must abide by it.
	+ Such a scenario is unlikely to occur, as Section 1 of the Advances policy states that advances must first be approved, and vendors that are unable to provide supporting documentation would not be approved.

# Upcoming SRC Meetings

* Special SRC meeting tentatively set for Tuesday, 20 October
	+ Points: Budget, Code of Conduct, Voting for Disciplinary Committee member
* Next SRC General Meeting: 28 October

# Closing

* Xola adjourned the meeting