



Stellenbosch

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SRC

Students' Representative Council
Ibhunga elimele abafundi
Studenteraad



SRC TERM II REPORT

SRC TRANSFORMATION MANAGER



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Foreword

Hello Maties!

My name is Abongile Quthu, the Transformation Manager of the Student Representative Council (SRC) of Stellenbosch University. Firstly, I would like to thank the SRC of SU for the opportunity to serve in their team aimed at creating an experiential, inclusive and accessible environment for the student community.

I am firm believer of the philosophy of “UBUNTU”, I pride myself by living my life to the values, ethos and expressions of “Ubuntu”, and I believe this is one of the drives behind my eagerness to be an SRC Manager, as to ensure that we approach our students with kindness, servitude, caress, excellent leadership and inclusivity. Mine in the council is to champion for quality servitude to the student community, further by enhancing a culture of belonging and strive towards the grounds of not leaving any of our students behind. I pioneer for a society that stands with #OurVoicesEquateOurFreedom, and the cruciality of this movement is to ensure that our students proudly express themselves, exercise their rights and grow in SU. Gugu Mona expresses that, “transformational leaders are like the roots of a tree. They may not be visible, but they keep the tree alive.” And my purpose in the SRC resonates with this quote, where my duty is to ensure we tackle the grassroot issues to ensure that our students experience amazing time in Stellenbosch. The baton might be yours next time, make sure you follow the SRC.

Yours in transformation,

Abongile Quthu

Constitutional Responsibilities

According to the student constitution by constitutional responsibilities are the following:

Transformation does not have specific constitutional responsibilities outside of those stated in the Stellenbosch University (hereinafter SU) Student Constitution for the Stellenbosch Representative Council (hereinafter SRC) in its entirety. Chapter 3 (1) to act in the best interest of students and to actively promote students' rights under (11); (2) to represent students at – (a) the University Council; (b) the Senate; (c) the Institutional Forum; (d) other committees, bodies and functionaries of the University; and national and international student bodies; (3) to evaluate the University policy and give input in the formulation thereof; (4) to consider the advice of Student Parliament; (5) facilitate projects and initiatives to the benefit of students; and (6) to formulate and maintain policy to ensure that the SRC performs its functions and duties effectively.

Portfolio Overview

- 1) The purpose of SRC Transformation is to develop a varied student experience that best upholds justice and human dignity. The biggest accomplishment of change is a friendly campus that respects everyone's rights and recognizes the distinctions between people. The portfolio provides a deeper understanding of justice to the institution and the student body. It is because of this that prejudice is unacceptable in academic settings. The portfolio is a champion of equity for everybody. It gives people the chance to be treated with respect and without fear as fellow humans. All students on campus must be represented by the transformation manager. It aims to offer a learning environment that is inclusive of all students without discrimination.
- 2) 2) The Transformation Manager must therefore close the gap by offering a universal experience that respects everyone's rights regardless of their language, gender, religion, social class, or political affiliation. The objective is to establish a setting where students will have the chance to learn from one another through embracing multiculturalism. The transformation goal is driven by justice and human dignity. It is further the duty of the Transformation Manager to actively interrogate if the environment is transformative.

Committees/Task Teams

I serve on the following Committees and or Task Teams:

1. Student Institutional Transformation Committee

This committee is chaired by the Transformation Manager, in this instance, Abongile Quthu, and the purpose of this committee is bring the student leaders together, and create a platform of developing and enhancing transformation in our institution.

saam vorentoe · masiye phambili · forward together

2. Institutional Transformation Committee

The Institutional Transformation Committee (ITC) is a committee mandated by, and reporting to, the Rector's Management Team (RMT) on matters relating to transformation at our University. The ITC's role is to:

advance the implementation of the transformation imperatives provided by the Strategic Framework; participate in drafting and regularly revising the SU Transformation Plan; participate in drafting key performance areas and strategic management indicators for transformation; monitor and report progress on realising our University's transformation imperatives; propose interventions to help our University pursue its transformation imperatives; and advise the Transformation Office, the Senior Director: Social Impact and Transformation, the Vice-Rector: Social Impact, Transformation & Personnel and the RMT on transformation matters.

3. Division of Student Affairs Transformation Forum

This forum is under the Division of Student Affairs, and it focuses on how we can create a transformative student experience for the student community. The forum is chaired by Mr Yeki Mosomothane, and involves various colleagues within the student affairs units, and my role is to represent the student community in this committee.

Term II Overview

In Term 2, in my portfolio, I actioned the following duties:

JVS and SRC Transformation Collaboration

I collaborated with the JV Society, in a critical engagement that was themed – “Human Rights Advancement through a legal lens with focus on LGBTQ+ Rights”. The purpose of this collaboration was to necessitate and raise awareness on campus in relation to the LGBTIAQP+ community rights. This was a project close to my being, as a gender non-conforming and queer person myself, I know how it feels to be excluded on campus, thus we were aimed at educating people in terms of realization of the human rights of the LGBTIAQP+ community. The discussion was an in person event, held at Old Main Building and we were honoured to be addressed by Advocate Letlhogonolo Mokgoroane, who is an alumni of Stellenbosch University. The event was a success, as we had a good turnout of students. This event took place on the 22nd of March 2023.

GBV Dialogue

On the 12th of March 2023, the South African Union of Students (SAUS) hosted a Gender-Based Violence Dialogue under their Transformation and Gender Office. The purpose of this event was to bring together various student leaders nationwide, to indelibly engage on the importance of dismantling this dehumanized issue in society. We were able as the delegates of the Stellenbosch University SRC, to make various contributions into the necessity of making our universities a safe space for the students. The event was held in the University of KwaZulu-Natal in KZN. The event was a joint collaboration between SAUS and HigherHealth.

Hugonote College LGBTIAQP+ Event

On the 28th of March 2023, I was invited in my capacity as the Transformation Manager of SU SRC to serve on a panel discussion which was aimed at expressing the lived experiences of queer students in institutions of higher learning, furthermore, to actually contribute as to how we can foster for an inclusive education system that caters for all students on equal basis.

Model Policy Framework Launch by Gender Dynamix

In my capacity as the Transformation Manager of the SU SRC, I had the opportunity to be invited to a high standard colloquium that was focused on the inclusion of trans and gender diverse students on the higher education sector.

PSH Radio Interview

On the 13th of April 2023, I was invited to PSH Radio in Parow to discuss Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) and its importance to the education sector, and how we can utilize the guidelines developed by government to ensure we create a safe space for all students without othering them.

SITC Planning

The Student Institutional Transformation Committee (SITC), is a committee under the Transformation Office aimed at bringing in the student voice into ensuring that our transformation journey as an institution involves all stakeholders. The SITC had their first meeting in March 2023, where we discussed as to how the SITC is formed and the functionality of the committee within the institution. Prior to the gathering, Shante Neff (Programmes Coordinator, Transformation Office) and I developed a guiding document as to how the SITC forms part of the institution. This was a remarkable moment because, prior to this year's committee, the SITC had no framework as to how it fills in to the institutional transformation agenda.

Institutional Events

During this term, I attended numerous institutional events to represent the student community, these events include, but no limited to, the International Office Celebration, various book launches in the Law faculty, the Human Rights Lecture and the DSAf Transformation Summit. The importance of attending these events is to continue the quest of visibility of our structure, and also learn from various communities as to how we can promote a social cohesive society.

Plans for Next Term

SOGIESC Training for Student Leaders

I have realized a gap within our student leadership community when it pertains to creating a transformative student experience, and one of those gaps is to how do we promote inclusion in all the various spaces within our institution. This led to the ideation that we need to have a SOGIESC Training in collaboration with Gender DynamiX, as to how we can foster a community that embraces diversity within our institution. This training will capacitate our student leaders with the necessary skills of dealing with a diversified student community.

VoicingUS Student Discussion

This is an initiative that is headed by the Transformation portfolio with the aim of bringing the student voice into discussion, and get a sense of what the student community. The event is planned to be open for the entire student community to raise concerns in relation to their experience of the institution. The initiative is aimed at obtaining the student voice towards the formulation of the student transformation charter.

BeYou Initiative

The BeYou Initiative was a brainchild of the former SRC Chairperson, Viwe Kobokana, with the aim to affirm students in their preferred titles. The initiative was a success, and as a beneficiary of the initiative, I believe it is necessary to continue the legacy of affirming our student community. For example, my student title changed from “Mr” to “Mx” as to affirm my gender non-conforming identity.

