

# Chairperson 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter feedback report

## TSRC 2021/2022

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# Vhudi Ravhutsi



## Contents

<b>TSRC VISION AND MISSION .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>QUARTERLY FEEDBACK .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>QUARTERLY SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>12</b>

## TSRC VISION AND MISSION

### **Vision:**

An intentional and proactive student body that approaches issues with a collaborative and solution-based mindset to holistically foster an empowering and transformative student experience.

### **Mission:**

- Prioritise **V**isibility and accessibility, **I**nclusion, **S**ustainability, **I**nnovation, **a**ccountability and **t**ransformation.
- Formulate and critically engage on policies that govern the Tygerberg Student Union.
- Foster transparency by utilizing effective communication channels.
- Employ a practical and multifaceted approach to enhance holistic student wellness.

## QUARTERLY FEEDBACK

### ***SRC Executive and General Meetings***

#### **1. Details:**

- The SRC Executive met every Monday, and the general council met every Wednesday according to agenda points submitted. As part of the vision to increase the SRC visibility on Tygerberg campus, we agreed to hold the Executive meetings on Tygerberg every other week and the general council meetings once every term. This mindset made it possible for us to mandate intrinsic consideration of Tygerberg campus in the planning and execution of each SRC portfolio. In March, we engaged to fill in the then vacant Treasurer-General seat on the SRC together with a vacated Senate seat via an election process. I debated the concept of statutory recognition of the TSRC at one of the SRC Executive Meetings. We explored engagement with Central Events and Conferencing Office (CECO) and Stellenbosch University Commercial (SUNCOM) in relation to the short-term rental policy, which fed the MSA issue with prayer facilities that I later engaged on with SUNCOM in collaboration with the TSC. We engaged with Corporate Communications on the adoption of new Ceremonial Emblem designs. In April, we engaged on Safety and Security points directed to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Learning & Teaching and general safety points such as First Aid training and its current deficiencies and Reporting by Campus Security and the Executive meeting. We engaged the Marketing and Communications department on the Draft Communications Policy tabled at a general SRC meeting. We discussed the concepts and methodology of Staff appreciation using SRC funds and SRC member of the week also tabled at the SRC meeting. In the month of May, we opened discussions around SRC Benchmarking with other SRCs of other institutions, SRC's language implementation plan following the publication of the SU Language Policy, future engagement plans with SU Convocation and also assessments of Muslim students during Eid. We engaged on the process of the Rector's Awards for Excellent Achievements and inputs feeding into the process, ratification of the AAC Constitution following the amendment process, and the SU Poster-stamping protocol submitted by Student

Governance. We also explored the prospect of having an SRC Feedback Forum at the SRC Executive meeting. We initiated planning for the Tygerberg Integration conference that was set for the 11<sup>th</sup> of June but postponed due to the postponement of exams.

- These meetings made it possible for us to direct the functioning of the SRC and I took this opportunity to inform the SRC of the Tygerberg perspective for consideration in this functioning intrinsically and not as an after-thought.
- Intentional visibility of the SRC on Tygerberg campus aligns with the vision of the TSRC. We have strived and managed to uphold a healthy and working relationship between the TSRC and the SRC which positively impacts on the livelihood of the TSU, fosters inclusion of Tygerberg at the greater University level and promotes accountability of the SRC to the TSU.

## 2. Key players

- Person 1: Viwe Kobokana (SRC Chairperson), [viwek@sun.ac.za](mailto:viwek@sun.ac.za), SRC Executive
- Person 2: Philip Visage (SRC Vice-Chairperson), [pvisage@sun.ac.za](mailto:pvisage@sun.ac.za), SRC Executive
- Person 3: Alysa-Abby Kekana (SRC Secretary-General), [alysa@sun.ac.za](mailto:alysa@sun.ac.za), SRC Executive
- Person 4: Precious Nhamo (SRC Treasurer-General), [pnhamo@sun.ac.za](mailto:pnhamo@sun.ac.za), SRC Executive
- Person 5: George van Dyk (AAC Chairperson), [vandyk@sun.ac.za](mailto:vandyk@sun.ac.za), SRC Executive
- SRC General council 2021/2022

## 3. Date of event/ task:

- SRC Executive meetings occurred every Monday from the 15th of September 2021, notwithstanding special circumstances, until the exam period, and continued in the new year until the exam period.
- SRC General meetings occurred every Wednesday from the 10th of October 2021, notwithstanding special circumstances, until the exam period, and continued in the new year until the exam period.

## 4. What went wrong?

- It is not at all easy to be travelling to Stellenbosch every Monday and Wednesday after a workday for meetings. A different campus means an entirely different context so it necessitated a learning curve to adapt to the functioning of Stellenbosch campus so I could apply myself in addition to my Tygerberg experience in order to marry the two.

#### 5. *What went well?*

- Tygerberg campus was successfully considered in the planning and execution of each portfolio and properly budgeted for. The relationship between the SRC and TSRC has drastically improved, and this has made a significant impact for the benefit of the TSU and the extended student body as a whole.

#### 6. *Overall feedback of how event or activity panned out*

- I have enjoyed this SRC journey, it is packed with a lot of learning and involvement in key issues shaping the student experience. I really see the impact it has made on the relationship between the two representative student bodies, and it continues to be carry potential for an amazing working environment for the benefit of the student.
- I think this is also well-received by the members of the two representative bodies with a lot of collaboration between them occurring and being enabled.

#### 7. *Project feasibility:*

- I am actually of the opinion that the TSRC should have a set seat on the SRC Executive based on the amount of successes I have seen just by being the SRC Executive. It allows for a two-way street feedback loop between the bodies and the benefits are vivid. The Tygerberg context is clearly understood and the SRC benefits with direction on how to apply themselves for the Tygerberg Student. This makes it possible for the SRC to fully achieve their mandate.
- No budget is required, travelling costs are covered by the SRC.

### **TSRC Office Proposal**

#### 1. *Details:*

- I drafted a proposal that was sent to Student Governance, DSAF and subsequently the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and learning, following his visit to Tygerberg

Campus. The proposal detailed the plans for the TSRC Office renovations, both short-term and long-term. This was followed by submission of a working document highlighting some of the key issues we are facing like the Osler Hub, ER24 services, Safety and security para-campus, etc. We engaged on these matters continuously and some of things have come to fruition, like short-term renovation plans of the TSRC office.

- The working document submitted to the Deputy Vice Chancellor: T&L has been extensively engaged on and formed a basis of engagement for a number of issues as mentioned above. We have managed to make significant progress with the office, for example, acquisition of laptops, Desktops, Wi-Fi-routers, dishwasher, cutlery, coffee machine and office consumables. Video conferencing equipment for the boardroom have been acquired and the work order to install them has been instituted. Other issues on the working document were also completed, for example, strengthening security around campus with an electric fence installed around cameras and the process to acquire additional cameras having been approved. The SCAC delegatory subcommittee has engaged with SunCom concerning acquisition of a new food supplier for the TSS and we made a formal submission. The work of the subcommittee is to continue to explore the Osler Hub issue together with prospects of a second dining hall. These discussions are scheduled to occur at the end of July.
- The purpose of this initiative was to provide TSRC members with an optimum working environment to enable collaboration amongst themselves and also other stakeholders like the SRC for maximal efficiency. This in turn, will benefit the student as TSRC members will be able to deliver quality student service.
- The TSRC aims to approach issues in a solutions-based way, we engaged intellectually with all relevant stakeholders offering pertinent solutions along every step which

## 2. Key players

- Person 1: Prof Deresh Ramjugernath, [dereshr@sun.ac.za](mailto:dereshr@sun.ac.za), DVC: Teaching and Learning – Primary custodian of working document.
- Person 2: Dr Choice Makhetha, [choicemakhetha@sun.ac.za](mailto:choicemakhetha@sun.ac.za), Senior Director: Student Affairs
- Person 3: Anele Mdepa, [anelemdepa@sun.ac.za](mailto:anelemdepa@sun.ac.za), Manager: Student Governance

- Person 4: Musa Mpanza, [musam@sun.ac.za](mailto:musam@sun.ac.za), Tygerberg Coordinator: Student Governance
- Person 5: Khairoonisa Foflonker: [khairoonisa@sun.ac.za](mailto:khairoonisa@sun.ac.za), Tygerberg Manager: Student Affairs

### 3. *Date of event/ task:*

- The visit was on the 11th of October 2021 with subsequent submission of the proposal and the working document. Engagement on the working document has been continuous since the visit, and short-term renovations occurred in parallel.
- The SCAC working group met on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June for the formal submission for the TSS Food supplier selection.

### 4. *What went wrong?*

- A big problem that remains apparent is finding a solution for the Osler Hub issue. Full renovations of the TSRC cannot roll out without this problem being solved. Osler does not have a space to relocate temporarily or permanently.

### 5. *What went well?*

- The whole engagement process with Student Governance, DSAF and DVC: T&L went smoothly and according to plan. I recommend an objective and assertive approach with a bit of lobbying in handling any similar matter.

### 6. *Overall feedback of how event or activity panned out*

- I think the proposal and the working document was received well. The para-engagement was also productive.
- I think the TSRC was received well in our plea.

### 7. *Project feasibility:*

- Engagement of this issue should be continued to ensure things do not come to how they are currently. Maintenance plans should be made, and responsibility cast to different stakeholders to ensure the upkeep of the TSRC office.



- *No budget required operationally from the TSRC. We used the reserve funds without an upper limit.*

## **Institutional Committees/Task Teams Committees**

### **Committees**

#### **1. Dean's Management Team (DMT)**

- The Tygerberg Students' Representative Council (TSRC) Executive Committee (EC) meets the Dean's Management Team 8-weekly to discuss high level issues brought forth by the TSRC or the DMT. These issues usually are generally concerning management or fall directly under responsibility centres of the DMT members.
- On the 13<sup>th</sup> of June, we met with the DMT to engage notably on two major issues, namely Transformation in Academic Spaces following the critical engagement that the TSRC hosted with the TSU on the 18<sup>th</sup> of May, and the #CrazySocs4Docs campaign. The TSRC made formal submissions on both issues (please see Addendum A and B). Both the submissions contained points necessary for the submissions to be translated into working documents to attack the specific and systemic issues highlighted on both.

#### **2. Strategic Committee on Recruitment, Selection and Admission (SCORSA)**

- The establishment of this strategic recruitment, selection, and admission committee for the FMHS was proposed, to provide overall direction for selection and admission to the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences. This includes developing undergraduate and postgraduate minimum admission requirements and guidelines for selection. That considers the approved Admissions Policy of the University, enrolment planning as well as diversity targets, amongst others. It is guided by several principles which could include enrolment planning in terms of DoHET and partner employers, requirements of the Admissions Policy of Stellenbosch University, Faculty strategic direction in terms of driving both diversity and transformation, increasing access i.e., reviewing the extended degree programs, as well as the numbers of students required in terms of the HPCSA and other statutory bodies and Human Resources for Health (HRH) strategies.
- Matters of this committee are widely confidential. The committee met on the 16<sup>th</sup> of March and some mentionable issues discussed when this committee met are update to the 2023-intake selection guidelines, Reports on the implementation of the Situational Judgement Test (SJT) for 2022-intake, Work Psychology Group Evaluation Report for Stellenbosch University SJT 2021, Selection Office feedback report, Undergraduate selection and registration statistics, SU undergraduate Open Day, FMHS Recruitment Plan, and update on Rector's Discretionary Placement numbers and process.

#### **3. Advisory committee for Tygerberg Student affairs (ACTSA)**

- This committee was established to advise and inform the function and operation of the Tygerberg Student Affairs. It serves to gather and align student input and ensure throughput of this input to decision-making of Tygerberg Student Affairs.
- The team met to discuss Matters raised by Faculty programme representatives (Nursing & Midwifery, SLHT, Dietetics, MBChB, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy), Centre for Student Leadership, Experiential Education and Citizenship's Leadership Development online training and offerings, issues raised by the TSR, TPSC, TAAC, TSC, and TSP, The impact of COVID in the residences, food-related matters, Centre for Student Counselling & Development (Developments and trends during lockdown, Food security, feedback on the Mental Health Plan and Substance Abuse, Policy development, Campus/Res Life and Culture Review, and Communication regarding interruptions and hospitalisations of students.

#### **4. FMHS Faculty Board**

- FMHS Faculty Board is a standing committee of the Senate for the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences. Faculty Board makes proposals and recommendations to the Senate in respect of academic programmes and activities in the faculty, and advise the Senate on any matter, and perform any function, referred to it by Senate.
- Matters of this committee are largely confidential. Mentionable points from the meeting held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 2022 Recruitment and Selection - FMHS Vice Dean: Research and Internationalisation.

#### **Task Teams**

##### **1. SRC Task Team for creating Student Parliament Rules**

- This Task Team was established to develop a constitution for Student Parliament, rules for the Student Assembly and Student Imbizo, and submit the constitution and both sets of rules to Student Court for approval.
- The task team had its first meeting on the 8th of March 2022 to divide the team to focus on the two bicameral bodies and come up with provisions for suggested rules and regulations.
- The rules for the Student Imbizo have been completed and we are in progress to complete the rules for Student Assembly.

##### **2. TSRC E-wasting and Recycling Task Team**

- This Task Team was established to aid the TSRC Office Proposal. The function of this task team is to renew the TSRC spaces by discarding, recycling and e-wasting equipment in the office using green and sustainable means to make the office space more usable. Further to this, the Task Team is responsible for conserving institutional memory at the FMHS Faculty Archive.

- The task team has been meeting and organizing with different stakeholders like IT, the TSS Recycling centre, Student Governance and the Office of the Deputy registrar: Tygerberg to fulfil the above-mentioned duties.

### Miscellaneous:

- I took over the TSRC Policy Office when the Policy Officer was incapacitated and oversee the development of 6 TSRC Financial Policies, Transformation Framework, and a Mental Health Policy. I led the team to make formal submissions on the Assessment Policy, Communications Policy, Poster Stamping Protocol, and the Institutional Transformation Policy.
- I was part of the organization of the SU Students Mobilization following the racial incident that took place on the 15<sup>th</sup> of May 2022 and subsequently made a formal submission to the Vice Dean: Learning and Teaching for the postponement of exams.
- I organized TSRC engagement with the Western Cape Department of Health on social mobilization on campaigns such as vaccination drives.
- I gave a seminar talk on Leadership at the Tygerberg Societies Council Leadership training.
- I organized a formal engagement between the TSRC and CCMD on the official brand of the university including the ceremonial emblem, informing policies governing its use.
- I formed part of the Academic Affairs Council Constitutional Review Committee which reviewed and renewed the AAC constitution.
- I assisted the TSC in mediating between the MSA and SunCom on the lack of free prayer facilities following institution of the Short-term Rental Policy.
- I led the TSRC Executive in appointing the new Election commissioner for the term 2022/2023.
- I met with Student Governance and The Office of the Deputy Registrar: Tygerberg Campus to organize logistics around elections and TSRC Honorary Awards.
- I attended SRC (EC) / DSAf meetings in my capacity as TSRC Chairperson and subsequently Rectorate meeting.
- I mediated between TSC and other stakeholders such as facilities and IT in finding a sustainable solution for Wi-Fi problems in the TSS through using a portion of the Societies room.
- I attended the Innovation & Leadership Talk with Prof Eugene Cloete in my capacity as TSRC Chairperson.
- I attended the Indiana State University study visit in my capacity as TSRC Chairperson.
- I attended the North West University Dinner at De Warenmarkt in my capacity as TSRC Chairperson.
- I did a Youth Day Interview with DSAf in my capacity as TSRC Chairperson.
- I did one-on-one meetings with the whole TSRC to inspire them to plan and execute their jugular points.
- I attended the Dean's Gala Dinner in my capacity at TSRC Chairperson.

## QUARTERLY SUMMARY

This quarter has been extremely difficult, from having to dismiss one of my ex officio members, to losing a portfolio manager to losing my Vice Chairperson. I however continue to see it as a journey of growth and development, and I am looking forward to reaching the finish line.

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Yours in Transparent Student Leadership and Governance,

Vhudi Ravhutsi

Addenda:

# TSRC Critical Engagement on Racism and Discrimination – 18 May 2022

## Preamble

This document is written by the Tygerberg Students' Representative Council (TSRC) to highlight points raised by the Tygerberg Student Union at the critical engagement hosted by the Social Justice portfolio on the 18th of May 2022. The document will be shared with SU Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences (FMHS) Management and Division of Student Affairs (DSAf) and will serve as a basis of engagement to offer resolutions concerning matters raised in the document going forward.

## Context

An incident came to the attention of the Tygerberg SRC on the 15th of May 2022. The incident concerned two students from Huis Marais in Stellenbosch Campus, where one of the students (a white student) barged into the other student's room (a black student) around 04h00 am and urinated all over their belongings (laptop, books, stationary, etc.). Disciplinary processes were immediately initiated against the student. The TSRC's response was two-tier:

1. The TSRC Social Justice portfolio organized a critical engagement with the Tygerberg Student Union (TSU) on the subject-matter. This was followed by a debrief with the Social Justice Portfolio Manager the following day at the TSS.
2. The TSRC in collaboration with the wider SU student leaders organized to transport Tygerberg students to join the mobilization on Stellenbosch Campus in a peaceful demonstration against racism and gender-based violence.

The following are points raised by students at the critical engagement hosted by the TSRC:

**Key: suggestions (S) , questions people had that need to be answered (Q) as well as greater systemic problems that need to be addressed (SI)**

## FMHS

1. What are the processes that exist and are geared towards holding staff members accountable concerning racism and discrimination? How efficient are the existing mechanisms? How do



we protect students from assessment biases from perpetrators when they report cases? Students highlighted that they would rather suffer in silence than risk to be targeted. (SI)

2. What are the diversity plans for Faculty staff and management and how do we deal with resistance to change? The faculty should be reflective of the demographics of South Africa across all levels from students, staff to management. (SI)
3. Prospective students of colour have a negative perception about the faculty and the university concerning racism and discrimination. Racists come into the university because it is safe for them, while people of colour run away. What is the faculty doing to change this perception? (SI)
4. Recruitment bursary is a contributor to the complex problem. What mechanisms have been employed to meet the recruitment efforts for students of colour to make the environment a conducive environment? (Q)
5. Students highlighted that there is an underlying culture of white superiority in our faculty and university that is evident in spaces of learning. How can this culture be dismantled?
6. We need to create and maintain a zero-tolerance approach towards racism and discrimination: what does this look like for FMHS? (SI)
7. The faculty needs to be both proactive and reactive to issues around racism and discrimination. What measures currently exist, how efficient are they and how can they be improved? (SI)

## DSAf

1. Students highlighted that there is a need for a POC forum or a safe space for people of colour to share and discuss their lived experiences on campus and potential solutions (S)
2. Past cases of racism and discrimination handled by the equality unit, their processes, and their outcomes need to be communicated to students.
3. Students indicated that there are people who come into the faculty with taught racism and discriminatory tendencies. What programs can be instituted to reteach these kinds of people? (SI)
4. Compulsory critical engagement sessions (S)
5. Pairing newcomer students based on race (what is the premise of it? How effective has it been? How can it be improved?) (SI)

## Conclusion

The TSRC wishes to relay these issues to the relevant stakeholders in an attempt to dissect the systemic issues we have in our faculty and on our campus by way of a solutions-based engagement. We wish for a collaborative approach in handling the issues that plague our environment to create and sustain a transformative and welcoming student experience for all.



Stellenbosch  
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**TSRC**  
TYGERBERG STUDENTS'  
REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

Medicine and Health Sciences  
EzoNyango nezeeNzululwazi kwezeMpilo  
Geneeskunde en Gesondheidswetenskappe

Yours in transparent student governance  
Vhudi Ravhutsi | TSRC Chairperson 2021/2022

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forward together  
sonke siya phambili  
saam vorentoe

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# TSRC Memorandum on The #Crazysocksfordocs Campaign – 03 June 2022

## Preamble

This document is written by the Tygerberg Students' Representative Council (TSRC) to the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences (FMHS) and the Division of Student Affairs (DSAf) to highlight and engage on the issues around the #crazysocksfordocs campaign, transformation in academic spaces and potential solutions for said issues.

## Context

FMHS Marketing & Communications Department published an article on the 31<sup>st</sup> of May 2022 titled: “#CS4D2022: FMHS staff and students rally to curb mental illness stigma in healthcare”. “Staff and students at Stellenbosch University's (SU) Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences (FMHS) have worked their socks off to prepare for #CrazySocks4Docs (#CS4D) day, which takes place on Friday 3 June 2022. The #CrazySocks4Docs campaign kicked off in 2017 with Australian doctor Geoff Toogood at the helm. Toogood had one objective: break down mental illness stigma among healthcare workers by getting everyone to don “silly” or “crazy” socks. Since 2019, the FMHS has been collaborating with local non-profit entity, the Ithemba Foundation, to bring the campaign to healthcare workers-in training at SU.” According to the article.

The TSRC believes such a campaign serves a unique opportunity for reflection on our status quo, teaching and learning environments, systems we have in place, and how they impact the mental health of our students, and how we can transform. It is not enough that we wear colourful socks one day a year to raise awareness without any systemic change lest we demonstrate performative activism.

## Key areas of Transformation

### FMHS

1. One of the biggest predicaments that that we face is balancing expectation of students in terms hours of work in the hospital platform and acquisition of skills appropriate



- for a particular student level, and study time and rest.
- a) What guidelines exist and are utilised by teaching staff in the hospital platforms to inform the required hours and type of student engagement? Have these guidelines been benchmarked and are they evidence-based?
  - b) How do the hours we spend on the clinical platform correlate with the minimum required hours by the HPCSA? We are known for our fantastic clinical exposure. However, students often spend much of the time they are on the clinical platform, waiting for ward rounds to begin, for example, as such, how much of the total time spent on the platform actually amounts to clinical exposure, and how can we better utilise the time to ensure students are not essentially wasting time?
  - c) The TSRC is of the belief that there should be a policy that informs this process and is protective of students in ensuring that students get adequate contact time with patients and teaching staff but are not subjected to expectations that are beyond their scope or level. This policy should aim to critically define the relationship (including responsibilities) between the students (of all levels) and teaching staff.
  - d) Often teaching staff have dynamic schedules that change from time to time. Good administration and communication should be strongly encouraged between rotation administrators and students to avoid time-wasting.
2. A common problem amongst the student population is misconduct from teaching staff but students being unable to report these acts of misconduct because of the fear of being targeted and marked down in assessments because of speaking out.
- a) The TSRC is aware of the anonymous reporting mechanism recently established. How efficient is this mechanism and how can it be improved?
  - b) What are the processes in place to deal with perpetrators in case of potential misconduct and how protective are they of the reporting student? We need clear guidelines for this process so as to ensure anonymity of students cannot be broken. The reports need to be reviewed by an objective third party and the identity of the student should try to be removed from the report as far as possible.
  - c) The TSRC finds value in potentially utilizing external examiners in appropriate circumstances. Is this an explorable avenue? If yes, how can we integrate external examiners into the assessment processes?
  - d) Is there a way for students to hold staff (and supervisors) accountable? Are there actual policies or a framework put in place as to what is considered misconduct that staff (and supervisors) are held accountable to? With this in place students can report misconduct according to this policy or framework instead of having the “he said, she said” dispute which often invalidates the gravity of the students experience or complaint of misconduct.
  - e) In Allied Health, outside professionals are hired as supervisors and they often cross the line in what is considered misconduct in the way students are treated. Do these professionals receive training in dealing with students? Is there any way students can hold them accountable seeing as though they are not staff but rather “part-time” supervisors who oversee practicums 3 to 4 hours a week? What

- measurers can be taken to ensure that students (individually or as a group) are protected from potential backlash from reporting misconduct?
3. Absenteeism remains a huge concern on Tygerberg campus with students missing clinical responsibilities because of various reasons ranging from overwhelming course material in a short period of time, lack of adequate holiday time, mental health issues, etc. Concerning leave of absence from clinical responsibility, only a doctor's sick note is currently appropriate and acceptable.
    - a) How efficient is this in covering all aspects of a student's life that potentially might be limiting for a student to attend to their clinical responsibilities?
    - b) What provisions are available for students who suffer from mental illnesses?
    - c) Additionally what consideration is there for students diagnosed with neurodivergent or mental illnesses. These students still have to attend clinical rotations regardless of how they feel. (Feelings associated with mental illness may vary from time to time as influenced by other stressors. It is often not possible to get a doctor's note for this). Students' ability to perform in hospital, clinic or school is significantly influenced and having to continue in such a state may prove futile in hospital and non-beneficial when having to work with patients.
    - d) Rotations often require 80% attendance to pass but often students are not aware of this. What strategic ways can we utilize this point without potentiating abuse and encouraging absenteeism?
    - e) Presenteeism is also another major problem on Tygerberg due to several factors ranging from the minimum 80% attendance required as well as the fact that the academic year is so packed that missing out on clinical rotations results in having to catch up rotations in our already very limited holiday time. As such students go to the clinical platform even when they are sick (putting patients, and their colleagues at risk as well) and due to social economic factors, some students are forced to be present as they are unable to afford to see a healthcare practitioner which would enable them to produce a sick note that would be recognized
  4. Delivery and translation of knowledge and skills is an art, an acquired trade. It is essential that teaching staff can reach out to the different demographics of students and deliver knowledge using mechanisms that are sensitive to the makeup of different groups.
    - a) How much effort is the faculty investing in teaching the teaching staff how to teach and is it informed by evidence?
    - b) Allied Health students on campus such as Nursing & Midwifery, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Human Nutrition, and Speech, Language and Hearing Therapy have an intensive module (Clinical Communication) where they are taught either Afrikaans or Xhosa based on their language of proficiency. Which is progressive and helpful. However, a student is expected to write their report for their patient in their patient's home language regardless of the student's own language proficiency. For example, an English student may have to write a report

in Afrikaans and be marked at the same level as an Afrikaans student writing the same report in Afrikaans.

- c) Is the plan for the new MBChB curriculum to include language every year instead of just in first year?
- d) What training opportunities and courses exist for teaching staff to enrich their teaching methods and are they compulsory?
- e) What innovation is being explored to dynamize the faculty's teaching methods and transform the curriculum?
- f) What changes are being made to the old curriculum to inform the new curriculum and how efficient will those changes be?
- g) How much feedback from students and intern doctors is/ was collected to inform the new curriculum and teaching methods, in terms of theory taught in class and practical expectations?
- h) There is a disconnect between clinicians on the clinical platform in terms of expectations of students. This is a big problem in all undergraduate programs. It is a well-established reality that some clinicians are "stricter" in their marking methods than others. Marking of a practical assessment is a very subjective process and so what measures can be put in place to ensure that all clinicians are assessing all students from the same cohort on the same level? A moderation process needs to be implemented or refined.
- i) A common complaint from students is being taught high-level knowledge in different specialist fields without emphasis on the basics they need to know as an intern doctor or a general practitioner.
- j) Additionally, there is a huge disconnect between the content learnt and observed on the clinical platform and the content assessed in written EOBs. Are the EOBs being moderated to ensure the questions are truly assessing the knowledge required to function as an intern in the South African context? How are the tests set up? Are the question banks regularly updated? If not, why not? When students complain about the EOBs, what processes of accountability are in place?
- k) How does the new curriculum solve the block system problem where students need to learn enormous amounts of work in a short space of time in a cyclical manner with minimal time for revision and consolidation?
- l) How much effort is being put towards promoting healthy learning environments for students in clinical platforms?
- m) Tygerberg Hospital is experienced as a toxic work environment for many students. Although the university has no jurisdiction over the hospital itself, what measures can be put in place to better equip students to cope with the environment in the hospital? This is not in keeping with the environments in the clinics and district hospitals – which tend to be a much more inviting and positive learning experience than Tygerberg Hospital.

## DSAf

1. The biggest complaint and proponent of mental health issues amongst students on Tygerberg is the feeling of confinement and lack of access to affordable ways of going out of campus for essentials and entertainment.
  - a) The TSRC is currently exploring phase 3 of the shuttle proposal that investigates creating and sustaining an intercampus shuttle between Tygerberg and Stellenbosch campuses. This initiative would potentially reduce the burden by giving Tygerberg students comparable access to services as such accessible to students on Stellenbosch campus.
  - b) A second layer to this and potential solution would be collaboration with the city of Cape Town to build a Myciti bus station close to campus. This would give Tygerberg students an opportunity to get off campus at affordable prices.

## Conclusion

The contents of this memorandum include systemic issues that may need to be translated into a working document and be delegated to the different responsible centres and workstreams. The TSRC recognizes mental health as pivotal in training future health professionals and wishes to engage stakeholders using a solutions-based mindset to find ways of optimizing the student experience and creating and sustaining healthy learning environments and conditions.

Yours in transparent student governance  
Vhudi Ravhutsi | TSRC Chairperson 2021/2022