

STUDENTERAAD  
STUDENTS'  
REPRESENTATIVE  
COUNCIL

Office: 3rd Floor Neelsie  
Tel: (021) 808 2491 / 2493  
E-mail: sr@sun.ac.za | stelliesrc@gmail.com



<b>Name and Surname:</b>	Ingrid Heydenrych
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Prim committee chair
<b>Subject:</b>	<i>Third Term Report</i>
<b>Email:</b>	<i>ingridh@sun.ac.za</i>



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## Constitutional Responsibilities

My responsibilities according to the Student Constitution 77(1/2) is to represent the residents of the residences of Stellenbosch University (SU) and my Vice-Chair, Michael Burke, represents the students who form part of the PSOs. Both myself and the PC Vice-Chair take equal responsibility for our respective constituencies as well as the PC as a whole.

I am mandated to “actively promote the rights of students contained in Chapter 2, and specifically the right, under section 8(1), to an enabling campus environment in which student success and academic excellence are encouraged and pursued.” Chapter 2 8(1):

- (1) Every student has the right to an enabling environment in which student success and academic excellence are encouraged and pursued.
- (2) Every student has the right to quality education, academic support, and transparent and justifiable assessment procedures.
- (3) The bodies constituted by Section 3 of this Constitution have a duty

## Portfolio Overview

### 1. *The SRC*

As an ex officio member of the SRC with the portfolio of Prim Committee Chair my role in the SRC is to facilitate collaboration and engagement between this leadership structure (SRC) and the Prims. I have ensured that the necessary information flow takes place between SRC meetings and Prim Committee (PC) meetings. This entails giving feedback in the various spaces on the current discussions and decision making that takes place within the various bodies.





## *2. Stellenbosch University*

As PC Chair within the Stellenbosch University context my portfolio entails the maintenance of the optimum functioning of the Prims and their tasks within student communities. I mostly function as a liaison between the Prims and the various university branches that they work with (Maties Shop, Maties Community Service, Alumni Office, Centre for Student Communities, facilities management etc.). In so doing I ensure that the Prims can provide the necessary services to ensure a thriving student environment within their various communities. Through representing the student voice for SU residences on various bodies I ensure that the various events and decisions that inform student culture at Stellenbosch is in line with students' best interests.

## *3. South Africa*

My role as PC Chair allows me to facilitate discussion and cultivate a culture with the members of the PC where focus is placed on the role we play as active citizens in our society. The student leaders of today grow up to be the informed, responsible, and ethical leaders of our nation. It is therefore crucial that the SU student culture promotes active citizenship, where our leaders are prompted to think openly, be tolerant, gain the necessary multicultural exposure and through this learn the skills that are necessary to be good South African citizens. The Prim Committee facilitates this by exposing students to the diverse people that study at our institution and gives first-hand experience in assisting students from various backgrounds and helping them achieve success.





## Committees / Task Teams

*Although some of the committees I serve on operate throughout the year, I will only list the committees that had specific meetings/engagements in this term of my leadership role.*

## Institutional

### **Student Housing Committee/ Studenthuisvestingskomitee (SHK)**

Chiefly oversees physical developmental affairs of student housing on campus. It is chaired by the Vice-Rector of Teaching and Learning and is further comprised of the PK Chair and Vice-Chair, the Directors of Project Management, CSC, Toelating en Koshuisplasing, as well as the Senior Directors of SU International, SunKom, Student Affairs and Student Access.

### **Maties Community Service Governing Board**

Strategic planning for distribution of MGD funds to various communities and brainstorming on how to best support social impact HK's.

### **Residences and Structures Anti-GBV working group**

A branch of the various anti-GBV working groups that was implemented by the rectorate. This specific working group discussed residence cultures.

### **Appointment of Vice Rector: Learning & Teaching**

This committee is involved in the appointment of the new Vice Rector: Learning & Teaching at SU.

### **SU Council**

The SU Council is the highest governing body of the university and approves policies passed through the Institutional Forum and Senate.





### **SU Language Committee**

This committee is formed out of selected members of council and is responsible for overseeing the SU Language Policy development and implementation.

### **Business Continuation: Housing (COVID-19)**

This was an emergency team assembled in order to make decisions regarding the movement of students in residences.

### **Return to campus committee**

This committee oversees and approves applications of students who requested to return to campus and residences.

### **Staff & students mental health policy**

This committee provided feedback on the mental health policy that was written last year.

## **Other Committees / Task Teams**

### **Alcohol Policy task team**

Consists of members of PC and was responsible for drafting the alcohol policy that was presented to SSG and the rectorate. This term was used to support the drafting of each individual community's policy.

### **PK Exec**

Oversees the strategic planning of the PC.

### **PK Election Committee**

Plans and oversees the prim committee elections alongside the SRC election conveners.





### Co-curricular planning

Consists of a staff member from the co-curricular office, the head of the PDP-program and myself. Oversees the co-curricular program of the prims and works to get the program accredited on their academic transcripts.

### Budget Overview

No budget allocated or used.

### Term Overview

This term was largely overshadowed by crisis management and implementing strategies to navigate COVID-19 within the University community. The start of the term consisted mostly out of setting up online spaces and navigating how to effectively use these spaces.

In the first few weeks, of the nationwide lockdown, the DSAf Covid-19 Contingency Committee met at least two times a week. This was to give feedback to all of the stakeholders within that committee, as well as for suggestions to be taken to the ICBC. All other meetings also moved online to Teams, such as SU Council meetings, Appointment Committee meetings, Language Committee meetings, etc. Having regular check-ins with the prims via phone calls and video calls was also paramount during this time, as it was uncharted territory for them to navigate and I was a direct line between them and the CSC and Student Affairs. Concerns that they had was raised with me to take forward. Aligning processes and decision making groups with each other during this time was challenging, since communication channels had to quickly be adjusted by the University in order to deal with this new crisis. Eventually the communication channels ran smoother and it allowed for decisions and discussions to become much more streamlined.





During this time the PK vice chair and myself also had weekly meetings with the head of the CSC, in order to relay problems and suggest solutions. This was very beneficial to the PK group and student communities in general, as it allowed for the CSC to stay in touch with what students are experiencing, as well as for us and the prims to understand some of the processes better.

One of the goals I had for this term was to update the student constitution as well as the PK constitution, to be in line with what the PK discussed as the way forward and to ensure that the PK and Student constitutions are in line with each other. This meant that a lot of consultation had to take place with the PK group in order to draft an accurate proposal to the SRC.

In an SRC meeting on 5 June 2020, the SRC approved, by way of more than 10 members of the SRC members voting “yes”, the amendments I proposed to be made to the Student Constitution. It is very important for the person taking over my position to be aware of this, as no official communication has been sent to the entire student body detailing that these amendments were approved. The only record of these changes being made that exists is the meeting of the minutes of 5 June 2020 as well as the recording that was made on Teams. The reason I am highlighting this is so that no confusion exists in the future: The amendments to the student constitution were accepted, they have just not been communicated to the entire student body yet or made public yet by the policy officer (or whoever is in charge of ensuring that the latest version of the Student Constitution is available to students). In other words, the Student Constitution with the amendments made on 5 June 2020 is the correct and latest version of the Student Constitution.

During this term I also worked with the Alumni Office to talk about strategies to connect previous prim committees with each other. A reunion was planned for this term, but because of COVID-19 it had to be cancelled. We discussed various ways forward for following years and I gave ideas for how reunions for the prim committee could work in conjunction with the homecoming weekend that takes place every year. Ultimately making final decisions about the reunion will fall onto the person taking over my position.







Meeting with the co-curricular office is largely taken up by the head of the PDP program, but I also attend these meetings in order to soundboard and to relay information to the prims. We are still working on the official process of accreditation for the prims. Conversations about how the HK development program and the Prim development program can integrate and work with each other have been very fruitful.

The MAK Committee also met again this term to discuss the finalization of the report that is presented to the Vice Rector: Learning and Teaching. In this meeting it is important to read the report well before the meeting, so that you can highlight changes you want to make to it and to ensure that accurate information and recommendations are contained in it. Make sure to gather your own feedback from the prims with regards to the monitors that were assigned to them and events that are highlighted in the report.

The way PK meetings were restructured this term in order to accommodate for challenges that were presented by COVID-19, was to use Cluster systems more. We felt that it would net be effective for clear communication to have 42 prims in an online Teams meeting, and we therefore utilized the cluster rep system. This means that all of the prims met in their separate KPK's prior to the PK meeting, and one rep from the KPK then attended the PK meeting in order to be part of discussions and be a link between the PK and KPK. Although this system worked efficiently in terms of communication, improvements can also be made to it, especially when it comes to each prim feeling that their voice is still heard in PK meetings and to keep a sense of community and comradery within the PK. The prims played an amazing role during this time to keep the enthusiasm for PK going.

I was approach by the Corporate Communication division of the University to assist with recording podcasts for the University community that I helped with, also recording one podcast episode myself.

One of the biggest crisis control "events" that took place during this term, was the incident of GBV at the Tygerberg campus. In order to manage this, an extensive meeting was organized between





members of the CSC and the Tygerberg prims by myself. This helped to identify points of improvement for University policies going forward. During this time the chairperson of the TPK did a lot of work with the Tygerberg prims and Tygerberg campus in general and she was one of the most important role players during this time when it came to assistance from the prim committee.

A lot of time was also spent this term on organizing online elections for the PK and communicating with the election conveners. Talking to candidates interested in the position to answer questions and give advice took up a lot of time. Assisting prims with advice and information on how to run their own elections within their houses online was also important.

Other part of my job this term included things that are “consistent” with the job – providing support and assistance to the prims, being the communication link between the prims and the SRC and staff members, continuing with the work on alcohol policies and GBV reports, strategizing with the PK exec and dealing with problems and situations as they arise.

During this time, I also attended all of the online SRC meetings and training/ check-in sessions as required by the SU Student Constitution.

### Plans for Next Academic Term

The biggest focus of the next academic term will be on hosting the elections for the prim committee, as well as ensuring a smooth transition process, challenged by the fact that it will all most likely happen online. Ensuring that a consensus is reached on the alcohol policies with the approval of the rectorate is also something I want to achieve.





## Recommendations for Portfolio Improvement

Ensure that the PDP accreditation is finalized and done at the start of your term as PK Chairperson. It will save a lot of time and meetings, as well as give insurance to the prims that their hard work will be recognized on their transcripts. The PDP program has been in a developmental phase for the past two years and hopefully by the end of my term a structured program will be set out for the person taking over from me to follow easily.

### Important Contacts.

Pieter Kloppers: [pwk@sun.ac.za](mailto:pwk@sun.ac.za)

Elmarie Eygelaar: [cme@sun.ac.za](mailto:cme@sun.ac.za)

Benita Van Zyl: [benitavz@sun.ac.za](mailto:benitavz@sun.ac.za)

Riana Engelbrecht: [rianae@sun.ac.za](mailto:rianae@sun.ac.za)

Michelle Pieterse: [mpieters@sun.ac.za](mailto:mpieters@sun.ac.za)

Leslie Van Rooi: [lbvr@sun.ac.za](mailto:lbvr@sun.ac.za)

Karen Bruns: [kbruns@sun.ac.za](mailto:kbruns@sun.ac.za)

Ferdi Van Dyk: [dfvandyk@sun.ac.za](mailto:dfvandyk@sun.ac.za)

Arnold Schoonwinkel: [schoonwi@sun.ac.za](mailto:schoonwi@sun.ac.za)

Yeki Mosomothane: [yekim@sun.ac.za](mailto:yekim@sun.ac.za)

Naweed Mullajie: [naweed@sun.ac.za](mailto:naweed@sun.ac.za)

Dr Choice Makhetha: [choicemakhetha@sun.ac.za](mailto:choicemakhetha@sun.ac.za)

