

STUDENTERAAD
STUDENTS'
REPRESENTATIVE
COUNCIL

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Constitutional Responsibilities

As the Prim Committee's Vice-Chair and having been assigned the responsibilities of the committee's PSO Chair, I am mandated to represent the 11 PSO (Private Student Organisation) communities on the PC's Executive Committee, the SRC and other bodies and/or teams I form part of in this capacity. In the spirit of the previous term's PC Residence and PSO chairs to operate as co-chairs, both myself and the PC Chair take equal responsibility for our respective constituencies as well as the PC as a whole.

A primary, mandatory goal of my position is the personal and leadership development of PSO Primaria to benefit overall community-building in our private student structures. This is done both informally on a relational basis with PSO leaders, as well as at structured developmental Strategic Conferences (Stratcons) which offers a platform for PSO Primaria and Vice Primaria to engage collaboratively with community-specific and campus-related issues in order to develop leadership abilities and promote the PSO project. The PSO Chair works alongside the PSO Office at SSG to develop and orchestrate three annual Stratcons, each tailored appropriately to the needs of the communities.

The key responsibilities of the PSO Chair include the following:

- Planning and attending biweekly PC Meetings,
- Offering support at biweekly Prim Development Programme (PDP) sessions,
- Participation in various committees including the MAK, SHK, Welcoming Program Committee, and SRC,
- Biweekly meetings with the PSO Office,
- Orchestration of three Strategic Conferences,





- Regular meetings with SSG directors,
- PC Executive committee participation, and
- Planning of various developmental opportunities for Primarii.

The role of an ex-officio SRC member in this context is fulfilled through active participation in the body and accurate representation of the PSO constituency. A trusted and reliable link of information and representation between the PSO structures and the SRC are formed through my role's position on the SRC.

I have fulfilled my mandate regarding SRC meeting attendance.

Portfolio Overview

1. The SRC

The SRC being the highest structure of student representation in the university, is comprised of members that thus represent their constituencies in such a structure. With this comes the responsibility of true and accurate constituent representation, valuable thought leadership, and an honest humility to gauge between the two. Practically, I achieve this through sound communication and trust between my affiliates on the SRC and the PSO Primarii whom I represent on the body. This allows for a clearer expression of student needs that can reach the agenda of the SRC, and a consequentially clearer response to the student body or, at the very least, the privately accommodated student body.

2. Stellenbosch University

My position affords me opportunity to represent my constituency on various management structures and committees, which is a crucial aspect of the position. It is





often that a case needs to be made to university management for a particular desire of my constituency, which introduces a negotiative element to the job description which becomes particularly consequential when the debate is of budgetary or even ideological nature. The materiality of this becomes increasingly evident when noting that PSO students form 75% of the student body.

The success of the PSO project is detrimental in supporting Stellenbosch University's vision in community building and a transformative student experience. Without thriving PSO communities, a burden falls on residences, residence placement, the University's value system and Student Affairs at large. My role thus accepts a responsibility to promote thriving PSO community spaces and structures as far as I am capable.

3. South Africa

The foundational mandate of a positional student leader representing communities is that of community building. The legacy of our country, the preamble of its constitution, and the inclusion of student leadership, namely the SRC, in the DHET's requirements of South African universities, all promote an idea that student leadership should be an honourable pursuit that aims to promote a thriving community experience in education for all. This describes the ethos for which I define my portfolio in the context of South Africa.

Committees / Task Teams

Institutional

Student Housing Committee (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.

Monitors Advies Komitee (MAK) – Receives and acts upon information provided by the monitors program during the welcoming period in order to compile an annual Monitor's Report to report on and align communities' welcoming practices. The committee was comprised of the PK Chair and Vice-Chair, Pieter Kloppers (Director of CSC), Monica du Toit (Res-ed Coordinator: Victoria Cluster), JC Rademeyer, Kristan Sharpley, Martin Viljoen, Jonathan Arries, and was chaired by Prof DX Simon.

Registration Work Group – Amalgamates registration stakeholders in order to align registration related strategies. Chaired by the Registrar.

Welcoming Program Committee – Amalgamates the annual Welcoming Program's stakeholders across the University's structures.

Other Committees / Task Teams

PC Executive – Oversees the strategic planning of the Prim Committee and is comprised of the PC Chair (Ingrid Heydenrych) and Vice-Chair, the PC's treasurer (Zander Prinsloo), the PC's secretary (Neil de Kock), the external Cluster Convenor (Philip Steenkamp), and the Tygerberg PC Chair (Slindekahle Msane).

PSO-Societies Task Team – Chaired by myself and the Societies Council Chair, Yanga Keva, to promote improved and sustainable collaboration between societies and PSOs.





Residence Placement Policy Task Team – Mandated with the revision of the policy guiding student placement in communities.

Budget Overview

No budget allocated or used.

Term Overview

1. SRC

The global COVID-19 pandemic has had a considerable impact on this term's execution, primarily with the migration to online interactions. Regarding my constitutional mandate as per the Student Constitution, I have fulfilled my attendance requirements of SRC meetings, and have actively engaged with the agendas in order to fully serve my constituency.

The fourth term with the Prim Committee has involved tying up loose ends facilitating election and handover proceedings. The uncertainty with regards to the University's reaction to the global pandemic has still meant that prior plans have needed to take a backseat to focus on the efficient migration of community living to an online platform. I have offered support and guidance to the Prims, PSO cohort in particular, in aiming to develop sound virtual engagement strategies with the intention of improving community engagement in the long term. Specifically, each PSO has successfully executed online elections for its leadership structures, and in doing so have helped to execute a quality community experience to its members despite not being on campus. These plans were developed with my support, consultation and guidance.





A successful PSO leadership development and training conference was held this term, and was aimed at the incoming and aspiring leaders within the PSO cohorts. An informative and developmental programme was curated and executed.

This term also saw the first steps in translation of the Prims' community-specific alcohol policies to Residence Rules, through which controlled alcohol usage in communities will be enforced post-pandemic. The PC has been a thinktank and supportive body in aiding each community's policy development, which has been positively received from the CSC.

The term has, as mentioned, focused on executing online elections – a first for the PSOs. Voter turnout has mostly surpassed historic expectations and a permanent alternative to in-person House Meetings for elections, which are historically poorly attended across the board for PSOs, has been identified.

With the PSO office at the CSC, focus has been on structurally including Tygerberg PSO, Osler, into the planning and execution of initiatives and support offerings. The incoming visiting head of Osler has been included in the structure which bodes well for the future. A senior PSO pilot project is in its preparation phase, as well as one for remote PSO hubs, the first of which is planned to be developed in Somerset West.

2. Committees and Task Teams

Student Housing Committee (SHK) – This committee continues to exercise its mandate with adequate representation of student voices.

Monitors Advies Komitee (MAK) – No meetings were held this term.





Registration Work Group – This committee had no sittings this term.

Welcoming Program Committee – This committee had no sittings this term.

PC Executive – We have had regular meetings discussing campus matters and PK agenda points, as well as informal team-building and bonding sessions.

Residence Placement Policy Task Team – I was able to engage on the document and provided extensive input into its revision.

3. Other

This term I also held a position on Aristeia PSO's Election Panel and helped to facilitate each of their leadership election caucuses.

Recommendations for Portfolio Improvement

In the spirit of community building, and echoing the sentiments proposed in the first section of this document relating to the importance of thriving PSO communities, this portfolio should continue to focus on developing communities that are unique and above all identify with a purpose. I fear that in the interest of collaboration, individual community identities have been overlooked in the PSO context. Frankly, if we have ten identical PSOs – we might as well have one. A sincere recommendation to Student Affairs would be to hire more PSO Coordinators to each coordinate fewer communities, or to restructure the PSO project to assign individual community guardians to each PSO to offer direct, tailored assistance and create an honest and evident sense of community.





I strongly recommend this portfolio remain a necessary voice for PSO students within the SRC's leadership structure as an ex-officio member.

Important Contacts

- Pieter Kloppers (SSG Director): pwc@sun.ac.za
- Gareth Cornelissen (SSG Deputy Director): gmc@sun.ac.za
- Yeki Mosomothane (SSG: Multicultural Coordinator): yekim@sun.ac.za
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