

Student Parliament

*Accountability, Transparency and Consultative Governance*

UNIVERSITEIT iYUNIVESITHI STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

**MINUTES OF STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY’S STUDENT PARLIAMENT MEETING**

**HELD ON** Tuesday 19 March 2019 **IN THE** RW Wilcocks Building 3001 **AT** 18h00

# MINUTES COVERAGE:

1. Opening and welcome
2. Order of proceedings
3. Inauguration of the Speaker
4. Student Parliament Agenda
5. The Housing Issue on Campus
6. The University language policy
7. Remarks by the House

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# Discussion

1. **OPENING AND WELCOME:**

Greetings are extended by Speaker of Student Parliament. He welcomes the House at large and acknowledges the

-Student Representative Council,

-Student Court and,

-Tygerberg Student Council.

He informs that House that the meeting will proceed in terms of Addendums M.

1. **ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS**

The House is informed that all points raised shall please speak with acknowledgement of the Speaker and that all members shall speak only after being directed to do so by the Speaker. All persons are to please refer to Addendum M.

1. **INAUGURATION OF THE SPEAKER:**

The Speaker of Student Parliament called upon the Chair of Student Court, who is invited by Student Parliament in his official capacity as the Chair of Student Court, to facilitate the inauguration of the Speaker.

The Student Court addressed the House. Context was given on the purpose of Student Parliament and the importance of its role as the “democratic student structure where student influence and power is deliberated upon and given effect to” was stressed. The House was then informed that upon the Speaker’s commitment to the oath as set out in Addendum B of Chapter 5 of the Student Parliament Constitution, in the person of those present, all relevant leadership structures and their bodies will be bound.

He then called upon the incumbent Speaker of parliament to join him as he administered the oath as set out in Addendum B of Chapter 5 of the Student Parliament Constitution. The Speaker was led in his commitment to unity as is found is Addendum B of Chapter 5 of the Student Parliament Constitution.

After the Speaker swore in addendum B, the Chair of Student Court was satisfied and declared the officiality of the new Speaker of Student Parliament. The outgoing Speaker of Parliament was then called upon to emblaze him.

The Speaker Inauguration is complete at 18h13.

1. **STUDENT PARLIAMENT AGENDA POINTS:**
2. **Housing issue**

The first topic at hand is the housing issue on campus. Students have come forth to inform student leadership that residency in official Stellenbosch University residences is inaccessible. This is not due to a shortage as they are aware that there are currently many university residences with vacant spaces.

Response: The SRC conceded that they are aware of this issue. The SRC informed the House that certain residences such as Erica and Metanoia had open spaces which, after investigation by the Chair of the Prim Committee, were filled within 5 days. This delay was explained by the SRC by stating that when students cancel their placements at any given university residence, they do not subsequently cancel at the residence placement office. This gap of communication results in vacant spaces. Students are therefore urged to cancel residence placements directly at the residence placement office. This matter has also been communicated to the Prim Committee. The SRC is aware that there are still vacancies in the LLL Houses, but they are working closely with the coordinator to ensure that students are placed as soon as possible and have placed pressure on the placement office.

The SRC is also working with the committee focused on student housing and are also looking into off-campus solutions to find a platform where people can advertise accommodation both on and off campus to aid students.

1. **Language Policy**

There were a number of claims brought forth that certain residences are still using Afrikaans as the medium of instruction to communicate with the whole residence. The question on how this matter will be dealt with is posed to the house.

Response: The SRC stated that the above issue has not been brought to the SRC and appropriate steps will be made to effect the necessary changes to remedy this issue.

The Speaker stresses that the University’s language policy stipulates that the language used must be inclusive to all students. All residence leaders must be in accordance with the policy.

A question was posed asking what the consequences of non-compliance with the language policy would entail and what is being done to enforce such consequences.

Response 1: There is a policy that has been set by the university which is public knowledge and publicly accessible. The complaint must be lodged with the SRC or Student Parliament and either of the two bodies will investigate the matter further

Response 2: In a point of order, it was suggested that there are already structures present within the residences for such grievance issues. Students should first report their concerns to the relevant Primaria and then the relevant Residence Head. If said issue is still not resolved, then the matter may be brought to the SRC and/ or Student Parliament.

Another question was offered to the Speaker concerning whether there still disciplinary measures which have been written down for non-compliance with this policy.

Response 1: The speaker stated that he does not believe that there are any disciplinary measures per se, but university statute violations do have disciplinary measures.

Response 2: The member is advised to check the language policy document issued by the university. Once the residence head has been consulted on a matter, there are external entities that the residence head is accountable to. Residences must be allowed to align themselves with the rules of the university before student look to be aided by external bodies such as the SRC or Student Parliament.

1. **REMARKS BY THE HOUSE**

A question was brought forth by the house to ask when the agenda for the sitting was sent out. The Speaker of Parliament called upon the Secretary General of the Student Parliament Committee to inform him. He announced to the house that the agenda was sent out on Monday 18 March at 18h49.

A point of order was then raised to point the speaker to the Student Parliament Constitution which states that the agenda for any ordinary Student Parliament Sitting must be sent out a week in advance. He was then asked why this provision is not complied with.

Response: Addendum J1 places a duty on the speaker to construct a committee. Due to unforeseen circumstances of the Speaker being elected a week before the examinations in the last quarter of 2018 commenced, it was difficult to construct the committee in that time frame, more especially since there are certain taxing procedures that must be followed beforehand. The Speaker was only able to fulfil this duty a few days before the First Sitting was to be held and while it did not seem preferable to still hold the First Sitting due to the short notice period, S7 of the Stud Parliament Constitution was relied upon which allows the speaker to make any decision he sees fit which enables Student Parliament to work in the best interest of the students. He exercised his power in terms of this provision and decided that the requirements to have a sitting every academic term as well as to have an official First Sitting in the first term were in the best interests of students and outweighed the short notice period.

When no further comments were offered, the Speaker was satisfied that there were no further points of discussion.

The seating was adjourned at 18:37