



Stellenbosch

UNIVERSITY
IYUNIVESITHI
UNIVERSITEIT

SRC

Students' Representative Council
Ibhunga elimelele abaFundi
Studenteraad



SRC TERM 2 REPORT

PRIM COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON



Students' Representative Council
Third Floor, Neelsie Student Centre
Private Bag XI, Matieland, 7602
Tel: +27 21 808 2757
Email: sr@sun.ac.za



Stellenbosch

UNIVERSITY
IYUNIVESITHI
UNIVERSITEIT

SRC

Students' Representative Council

Student's Representative Council
Ibhunga elimele abaFundi
Studenteraad

Table of Contents

Constitutional Responsibilities	3
Portfolio Overview	3
Committees/Task Teams	3
Term 2 Overview	3

saam vorentoe · masiye phambili · forward together

Students' Representative Council
Third Floor, Neelsie Student Centre
Private Bag X1, Matieland, 7602
Tel: +27 21 808 2757 | Email: sr@sun.ac.za

Margra Wevell – Prim Committee Chairperson – marge@sun.ac.za



Foreword

Dear Maties,

I am incredibly proud of every student leader who played a role in ensuring the Welcoming period was a success. Your dedication, effort, and sacrifices have not gone unnoticed, and I am incredibly proud of the accomplishments of the Student Communities.

Being a part of the student community space is a privilege and an honour I do not take for granted. It has been a pleasure working with such dedicated student leaders committed to making a difference in the lives of our fellow students. Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our community.

My commitment to you is that I will continue working diligently to support the Student Community space and ensure their needs are well-represented.

Kind regards,
Margra Wevell

Constitutional Responsibilities

ACCORDING TO THE STUDENT CONSTITUTION:

As per Chapter 9 of the Student Constitution, the Prim Committee is an autonomous student representative body tasked with advocating for the welfare of residents of residences and PSO members at the SRC and within the University management. Its primary responsibility is to ensure that the interests and concerns of these groups are adequately represented and addressed in relevant decision-making processes. The Prim Committee is constitutionally mandated to fulfil specific responsibilities, which include:

1. Actively promote the rights of students contained in CHAPTER 2, specifically the right, under Section 8(1), to an enabling campus environment in which student success and academic excellence are encouraged and pursued.
2. Serving as a forum of house committee leaders that strives to protect and further the interests of all students by advising the SRC via the Prim Committee Chairperson and Vice-chairperson.

ACCORDING TO THE PRIM COMMITTEE CONSTITUTION:

Chapter 2, Section 4 - 6: Founding Principles of the Prim Committee

The Prim Committee's core values of representation, accountability, transformation, and intentionality guide its actions and decision-making processes. The committee's vision is to sustainably foster a collaborative, advisory, and accountable relationship between Communities and advocate for the needs of the students within those communities. Its mission is to ensure that the university's values are reflected within communities and upheld intentionally when representing students, accomplished through collaborative and deliberative engagements.

Chapter 2, Section 7: Nature of the Prim Committee

The Prim Committee is an autonomous student representational body established by the Student Constitution, as explained above. The committee works in partnership with the Centre for Student Communities (CSC) to advocate for community-based needs to the CSC, the Student Representative Council (SRC), and SU Management. Additionally, the committee serves as a reliable relay of information between university structures and the Prims through the presence of the Prim Committee Executive members on various relevant bodies.

The Prim Committee Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson function as ex-officio members of the SRC, forming a chain between the Centre for Student Governance and the CSC. Furthermore, the committee is responsible for ensuring that all Communities represented within the committee operate in alignment with the student constitution and residence rules. Any community deviating from these policies will be held accountable by the Prim Committee.

saam vorentoe · masiye phambili · forward together

Portfolio Overview

The Prim Committee, also known as the PC, is an ex-officio structure of the Student Representative Council (SRC). The PC Constitution outlines the primary duties of the Chairperson. According to the constitution, the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Prim Committee must be representatives of either Private Student Organizations (PSOs) or residences. As indicated in the Term 1 report, the Chairperson of the Prim Committee is the designated representative of the Private Student Organisations for the duration of the 2022/2023 term.

Prim Committee Constitutional Duties

As the Chief Executive and Head Leader of the Prim Committee, the Chairperson is responsible for a range of crucial activities to ensure the effective functioning of the Prim Committee. These duties are outlined in Chapter 46(1) of the committee's constitution.

Prim Committee Chairperson



saam vorentoe · masiye phambili · forward together

Committees/Task Teams

As a member of the Student Representative Council (SRC), my active involvement in various committees and working groups are directed towards serving the interests and needs of the student community. Currently, I serve on the following Institutional Committees:

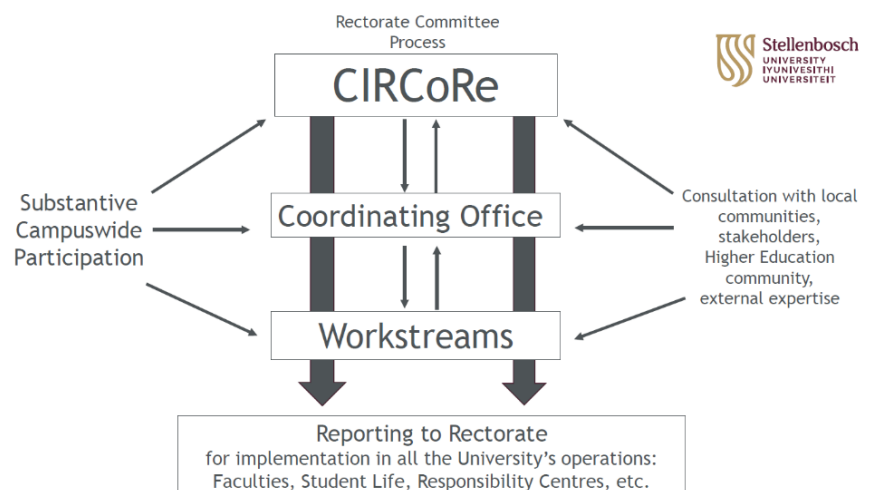
Senate

As per the SU Statute, the Senate is responsible for overseeing the academic and research functions of the University. This includes regulating learning, teaching, research, and academic support functions and recommending academic policies to the Council. The Senate advises the Council on a variety of other academic matters.

On March 24, 2023, the Senate held its quarterly meeting for the first academic term. As Senate meetings are confidential, the meeting details cannot be disclosed. However, it is to be noted that the Senate passed a motion of confidence in and support of the Rector and Vice-Chancellor, Prof Wim de Villiers, and his management team in their pursuit of inclusivity and multilingualism at SU.

All members of the Senate were invited to a special joint-sitting of IF and Senate to discuss the institutional response to the findings of the Khampepe Report. Given the report's recommendations, SU has embarked on a two-year, committee-led process to develop and implement the university's institutional response. The Committee for the Institutional Response to the Commission's Recommendations (CIRCoRe) has been established to lead, oversee, coordinate, monitor, and implement the necessary transformation initiatives. These proposals will be reported to relevant stakeholders, including Council, Senate, and IF.

The five workstreams are Student Life/Communities, Compulsory Core Curriculum offering embedded in processes of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Renewal, Institutional Culture, Race, Human Categorisation, and Science, and Simplifying and Aligning University Structures, Policies, and Regulations with Transformation.



Institutional Forum

As per the SU Statute, the Institutional Forum (IF) advises the Council on various issues, including policies, conduct, and management policies. The IF comprises 23 representatives from multiple sectors, including governance and management, staff, students, and the community. However, during our second term in office, no IF meeting was held due to a lack of agenda points.

The nomination and election process for a Deputy Chairperson from the ranks of IF members are currently underway, with nominations set to close on 28 April and voted on in the next IF meeting scheduled for Tuesday, 9 May 2023.

As a Prim Committee Chairperson, I serve on the following Committees and/or Task Teams:

Monitor's Advisory Committee

Comprised of management members, the Monitors Advisory Committee (MAC) is chaired by Dr Choice Makhetha, the Senior Director of the Division of Student Affairs. The committee reviews complaints and positive feedback related to the Welcoming Programme from cluster monitors and Matie Monitors, as reported by the Head Monitor. The Prim Committee Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Director of Student Communities report to the MAC Committee based on actions taken. Throughout the Welcoming Programme, there are typically four scheduled MAC meetings.

As soon as an incident is reported, the Head Monitor and Monitors Coordinator promptly inform the Director of Student Communities and the Prim Committee representatives. The Prim Committee Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson then collaborate with the Director of CSC to determine the most appropriate course of action. Action is then taken and reported to the MAC committee in the following meeting. To ensure that all outstanding issues are resolved, the committee may request additional steps to be taken or further feedback to be provided at the next meeting.

Recommendations

The Prim Committee Chairperson raised concerns regarding the Student Leadership training. Student leaders may not be sufficiently equipped to address language barriers and natural racial segregation. Future Prim Committee Chairpersons should proactively collaborate with the Residence Curriculum Coordinator in CSC to ensure that student leaders receive appropriate training and tools to effectively oversee the Welcoming Period and structure welcoming events in an inclusive and supportive way. This approach will help to ensure that the Welcoming Programme provides a welcoming environment for all participants, regardless of their backgrounds.

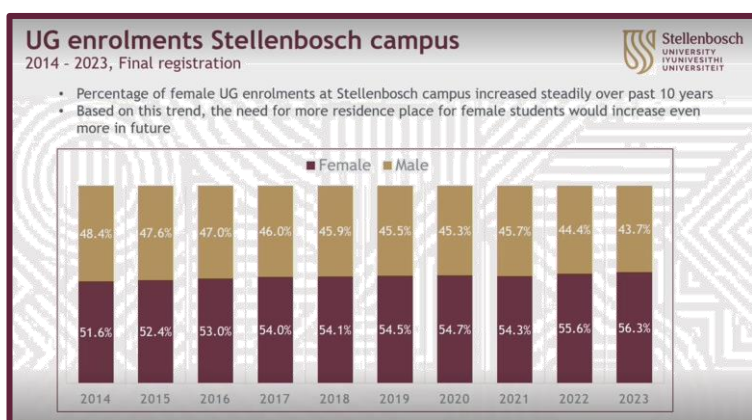
Student Communities Advisory Committee (SCAC)

The Student Communities Advisory Committee (SCAC), previously known as the "Student Housing Committee," serves as a platform for discussing matters related to student communities. Its primary responsibility is to oversee the physical development of student housing on campus. The Vice Rector of Teaching and Learning chairs the committee. It includes the Directors of Project Management, CSC, and the Placement Office, as well as the Senior Directors of SU International, SunCom, Student Affairs, Student Access and Student Access and the Prim Committee Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson.

On March 1, 2023, the Student Community Affairs Committee (SCAC) convened a meeting where they received a comprehensive report from the facilities management team regarding the ongoing upgrades and maintenance activities in various residences. During the meeting, the committee received encouraging feedback on the construction progress of two new residences near Goldfields, which are scheduled to be included in the official Maties Student Community space by January 2024.

During the meeting, the topic of Simonsberg's bathroom upgrades was discussed, and the committee members addressed the importance of upgrading the bathroom facilities in men's residences. Specifically, they highlighted the need to maintain residents' privacy and dignity in these spaces. The committee members emphasised that this task should be prioritised in future building projects, renovations, or upgrades of the residences.

The SCAC meeting on March 1, 2023, also included a briefing by the Registrar, Dr Ronel Retief, and the Director of Admissions and Residence Placement, Dr Celeste Nel, regarding the Rectorate's decision to allocate more residence spaces to female students. This was the first-time Prim Committee representatives were formally informed about the decision. As directed by Prof Deresh Ramjugernath, a working group chaired by Dr Choice Makhetha was established to present a proposal on implementing the decision at the next SCAC meeting on April 12, 2023.



See the data the decision was based on in the slide on the left:
 Taken from the presentation of the First Ordinary Plenary Session of the Student Assembly held on Thursday, March 16th, 2023.

Ad Hoc: Working Group on 60/40 Residence Placement Implementation Proposals

As mentioned above, the working group was established to curate proposals on implementing the SU Rectorate's decision to change the ratio of women to men in residential spaces on the Stellenbosch campus to 60:40, to be reported at the next SCAC meeting. The Working Group comprises representatives from different divisions, including the Centre for Student Communities, Placement Office, Facilities Management, SUNCOM, and the Prim Committee Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. It is important to note that the Prim Committee was not invited to the first meeting, so no feedback on this meeting can be provided.

The working group had its second meeting on March 30, 2023, during which it was decided that only Goldfield's undergraduate residence would be affected by the 2024 placement. This decision was made to allow sufficient time for consultation. From September 2023 to April 2024, extensive consultation will occur regarding residence placements for 2025. Additionally, new residential spaces near Goldfields will be utilised for undergraduate and postgraduate purposes, with the undergraduate residence becoming a part of the Goldfields community.

Events following the decision:

The Director of CSC arranged a meeting to discuss the 60/40 Residence Placement decision and how it would affect their communities on Tuesday, 7 March. Unfortunately, the meeting resulted in significant controversy due to relevant stakeholders being unable to attend. The lack of data generated a sense of unease, and the Prim Committee expressed concern about the future of their communities. It's worth noting that Dagbreek, Helshoogte, Huis Marais, and Huis Visser were given as mere examples of men's residences that have the necessary infrastructure to be converted to co-ed to accommodate additional female students in the timeline provided by SCAC.

Directly after this meeting, the Prim Committee convened for its bi-weekly meeting, during which the Vice-Chairperson, Mr Rudi Classen, presented the information to all the Prims. The Prims had various questions, some in favour of the decision and others concerned about the future of their community as they knew it. Although some Prims were open to the idea, reservations were expressed about integrating female students into currently male residences. It was emphasised that adequate preparations must be made to ensure the space is equipped adequately for female students.

On Monday, 10 March, a follow-up meeting was held with the Prims of the Men's Residences. It was decided that the Vice-Chairperson would lead the discussion, as Mr Claassen is responsible for matters about Undergraduate residences. Following the meeting, written inquiries were made regarding the data and rationale behind the decision, of which the preliminary inquiries were then presented to Prof Ramjugernath on Tuesday, 14 March. After deliberations with the Prim Committee Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, Prof Ramjugernath clarified that there is no intention to attain the 60:40 ratio by the start of 2024 and that it will be pursued in a phased approach.

saam vorentoe · masiye phambili · forward together

Student Imbizo

The Stellenbosch University Student Parliament comprises two bodies, the Students' Assembly and the Student Imbizo. The latter is an independent entity that strives to foster cooperative governance and uphold the University's values among student structures. On 27 March 2023, the Student Imbizo held its first meeting, though the meeting details remain undisclosed. It can be assumed that the Student Imbizo will continue to play a vital role in ensuring accountability among student leaders and maintaining the student body's best interests.

The Welcoming Programme Committee

The Welcoming Programme Committee, led by the Centre for Student Communities Director, includes representatives from all faculties, the CSC, and student leadership. The Committee ensures all stakeholders are fully prepared for the Welcoming period. It also provides stakeholders with a platform to communicate their expectations, suggest changes, and make recommendations for future welcoming periods.

During the meeting on 23 February 2023, the Welcoming Programme Committee deliberated on the registration period, admissions processes, and the upcoming second welcoming template. Among the proposals discussed was the idea of starting the academic year one week later to allow students more time to register and prepare for the start of the academic year. The committee also received feedback from the PSO Office confirming the benefits of starting the PSO Welcoming a day earlier and committed to doing so again in future Welcoming Programmes.

Ad Hoc Meeting for Danie Craven Institutional Welcoming Event

On January 19, 2023, the Prim Committee Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson attended a meeting with key event stakeholders, such as the Events Co-ordinator from Corporate Communication and Marketing, the MFM Station Manager, and the Head of Rugby from Maties Sport. The purpose of the meeting was to receive a briefing on the upcoming Rector's Welcoming event at Danie Craven. During the meeting, the importance of community members arriving on time was emphasised, prompting the decision that students should leave their residences or PSO meeting places by 16:00. Brandon Como, the Events and Security Operations Officer, also highlighted the significance of having Safety Representatives from different communities present. This topic would be further discussed with the Safety HC members to ensure adequate safety measures were in place.

Recommendations

It is highly recommended that future Prim Committee Chairpersons instruct communities leave at 16:00 for the Rector's Welcoming event in the future and support the Campus Security Staff in ensuring the safety of all individuals attending. It is crucial to take safety measures seriously, and every effort must be made to create a secure environment for everyone involved.

WELCOMING 2023



Term 2 Overview

The Prim Committee Executive has committed to enhancing the efficiency of the Prim Committee by meticulously planning, communicating well in advance, and structuring Prim Committee meetings and other events. This approach was no exception for Welcoming 2023.

Welcoming 2023

Annual Welcoming Meeting

The Executive took the initiative to arrange a meeting with CSC and Campus Security, following the precedent set in the previous year. Thanks to proactive planning and effective communication, the Prims could set aside time for the event, including scheduling downtime immediately after the Welcoming meeting to reconnect with the Prim Committee members.

Prim Committee Executive Welcoming Participation

The Prim Committee Executive requested that the Prim Committee extend invitations to attend special events during the Welcoming Programme. This invitation allowed the Executive members to participate in the community's awe-inspiring moments.

Some of the highlights include Aristeia and Huis Marais's Jan Marais Social, Aurora's Disco Night, Eendrag's Shirts Evening, Erica's Candlelight Ceremony, Isa's Red Frog Event, Helshoogte and Irene's Culture Evening, Huis Visser's Special Reveal, Nerina's Culture Evening and Simonsberg's Prim Introduction.

Daily Check-ins on Stellenbosch Campus

During the Welcoming Programme, the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Prim Committee conducted daily check-ins with the Prims and attended several events. The Prims contacted us when a crisis arose or when they needed general advice regarding their House Committees. We also did walkabouts, checking in spontaneously on communities throughout Welcoming.

SRC Roadshow

The SRC Roadshow aimed to engage Newcomers and Student Leaders by formally introducing the SRC structure, members, purpose, and events that the SRC plans. The Prim Committee Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson were members of the SRC Roadshow Working Group and were responsible for creating the SRC Presentation. They also coordinated the administration of the sessions by compiling a sheet and following up with Student Leaders via WhatsApp. The team effectively communicated the purpose and function of the SRC and the opportunities available for students to participate in SRC activities. Multiple sessions were conducted throughout the Welcoming Period. The responsibilities were shared within the group, which ranged from facilitating the ice-breaker activity to encouraging Newcomers to vote and run for the SRC.

#TheFutureOfSU

saam vorentoe · masiye phambili · forward together

PSO StratCon

The PSO StratCon (Welcoming Edition) provided essential information regarding various topics related to Welcoming. The topics included financial management responsibilities, registration team focus, food packages and dietary requirements, tent and safety measures, shuttle service and transportation, and walkovers and PSO transitions.

Financial Management Responsibilities:

The Financial Manager manages food and clothing, with support from the Prim and Vice-Prim. The registration team must remain focused to avoid administrative errors that may result in significant financial losses. Common mistakes should be avoided, such as accepting cash payments and giving merchandise to non-members. Students should be informed that food packages are non-refundable. Special dietary requirements should be communicated to food vendors in advance, and quotes should be compared with other PSOs to avoid discrepancies.

Tent and Safety Measures:

Regarding tents, no one is allowed under them until engineers have approved, as it is a building site. The primary tent should only be booked when the community will be present. Fire extinguishers should be signed out and returned to the CSC Office, and the community was liable for any loss. Sprinklers may go off near the grass, so no electrical equipment should be left overnight.

Shuttle Service and Transportation:

The PSO Office provides a shuttle service to designated areas in the evenings, and newcomers are responsible for arranging transport from the drop-off point to their homes. One House Committee member should be appointed to manage shuttles, and daily reminders should be made to enquire if anyone still needs transport. The PSO Office will try to accommodate those who forgot to submit their names, but it is best to contact them as soon as possible. Newcomers should be walked to the PSO Hub to ensure they arrive safely and on time.

Walkovers and PSO Transitions:

Per the placement policy, walkovers are strictly prohibited as they can have detrimental effects on the Newcomer's future opportunities within the community. It would be wrong to deny them the chance to participate in activities and meet new people.

Reflection on Welcoming

In conclusion, serving as the Prim Committee Chair during the Welcoming Programme was an honour. It allowed me to support the Prims and attend special events in the Student Communities while carrying out my official duties as a Prim Committee member, which included working with the Monitors Advisory Committee (MAC), the PSO Office and the SRC. Overall, it was a fulfilling experience to serve as Prim Committee Chair during the Welcoming Programme.

Events during the Second Term

During the second term as Prim Committee Chairperson, the following matters were pertinent to the Prim Committee and Student Community space.

Accommodation Crisis

A crisis regarding accommodation occurred on campus, which stemmed from the NSFAS Cap. The SRC engaged with NSFAS to address issues regarding capped accommodation allowances, slow funding application processing, food insecurity in residences and delayed NSFAS funding lists. A feedback mass meeting on this was held on the first Friday of classes, relevant SRC members' reports should provide more information.

Recommendations

A Prim Committee member suggested training committees, especially PSO HCs, to better assist struggling students with accommodation instead of referring them to the SRC Office.

Amended Constitution

We express our sincere gratitude to Miss Margeaux Wassenaar, the Policy Officer of the Prim Committee, and Mr Claassen for their dedicated efforts in completing and submitting the amended constitution to the Student Court in 2022. The Vice-Chairperson introduced the approved Prim Committee Constitution at the first meeting on 28 February 2023.

Student Court approved the new constitution in January.

- Chapter 1: General Interpretation
- Chapter 2: Vision, Mission and Mandate and Ex Officio Represented on The Prim Committee
- Chapter 3: Composition
- Chapter 4: Meetings
- Chapter 5: Executive – Election, Appointment, Removal, Powers, Duties and Responsibilities
- Chapter 6: Discipline and Conflicts
- Chapter 7: Finances
- Chapter 8: Appeals of Decisions
- Chapter 9: Vacancy and Dissolution
- Chapter 10: Amendments to The Constitution
- Addendum A: Affiliation
- Addendum B: Meeting Procedures
- Addendum C: General Election Procedures
- Addendum D: Sub-Committee Appointments – Task Team Set-Up
- Addendum E: Code of Conduct – Framework
- Addendum F: Constitution Appraisal

Matie Shop

During the Annual Welcoming Meeting, the Prim Committee received multiple complaints about the Matie Shop, ranging from merchandise needing to arrive to incorrect text on T-shirts. Previous proceedings had raised concerns about the significant price increase at the Matie Shop. It needed to be clarified whether the University-Owned Company was meeting its mandate for service delivery.

To address these issues, the Prim Committee took a two-legged approach. Firstly, they resolved to continue conversations at an institutional level to address the downfalls of the consumer-level agreement. Secondly, they proposed the establishment of a Maties Shop Accountability Committee to ensure better service delivery and transparency.

In response to the proposed strategy for Matie Shop merchandise, the Accountability Committee would aim to provide a platform for engagement between the Prim Committee and the Matie Shop and to ensure that the shop meets its service delivery mandate. The committee would work to identify common issues and trends and collaborate on finding solutions.

The Prim Committee is committed to avoiding having the same conversations yearly. To achieve this, each community is responsible for compiling a termly report on the Matie Shop, and cluster representatives are tasked with identifying cluster-specific trends in their reports.

The committee has already set the foundation, selecting representatives from each Cluster and finalising reports for individual communities and clusters. While some communities have struggled to stick to the agreed-upon timeline, this is the first time we have undertaken such a report. The committee still needs to be formally established.

PSO Clubhouse

Aurora's proposal to address the issue of the commandeered PSO clubhouse was presented and discussed in a recent meeting. The clubhouse was built with a significant contribution of funds from the PSO space, yet accessing the space is no longer convenient or practical. The matter will be further explored, and a plan of action will be developed in collaboration with the PSO Office and other key stakeholders.

Plans for Next Term

The Prim Committee has laid out its plans for the upcoming term, including several initiatives to improve the support structures for student leadership and enhance student communities. The committee has also organised an event to foster student engagement and collaboration.

Student Leadership Training: Feedback Forms (11 April)

The Prim Committee, in collaboration with Dr Liezl Dick, has been working to improve student leadership support structures and the House Committee Development SunLearn Course Page. A feedback form will be distributed on 11 April to the Prims and House Committees to gather feedback and insights. The responses received will help identify areas of improvement and enhance the support structures for student leadership.

Matie Shop

Actions will be taken to formally establish the committee and facilitate engagement between Matie Shop and Student Communities. We also recognise the important role that the Student Representative Council (SRC) plays in representing students' interests, and we will seek their input as we move forward.

Prim Committee Merchandise Sub-Committee

The Prim Committee Merchandise Sub-Committee is set to receive a briefing on the various stages needed to complete merchandise orders. The committee is working diligently to ensure the merchandise is ready by the first week of the second semester. This initiative aims to promote unity and identity among the Prim Committee.

Open Meeting to Prospective Prims

Prospective Prims will be invited to an open meeting to learn more about the Prim Committee's objectives and role in representing student communities. The meeting aims to allow prospective Prims to observe the committee and decide whether they would like to participate and contribute to its mission.

House Committee Dance

Miss. Wassenaar is organising the House Committee Dance, scheduled for 5 May. The event aims to allow House Committee members to reconnect after Welcoming and foster community and collaboration among members. The committee is working diligently to ensure the event is successful.

PSO StratCon (10 May)

The next PSO StratCon is set to take place on 10 May.