



**Stellenbosch**

UNIVERSITY  
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UNIVERSITEIT

**SRC**

Students' Representative Council  
Ibhunga elimele abaFundi  
Studenteraad



## SRC TERM I REPORT

Prim Committee Vice-Chairperson



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## Rudi Claassen – Prim Committee Vice-Chairperson – rkclaassen@sun.ac.za

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### Foreword

**DEAR STUDENTS,**

It has been a great privilege thus far to serve my fellow students, and student communities, on the Prim Committee and the SRC. Since my election in August 2022, I have made it my mission to represent the needs of student communities on various platforms and to provide the necessary support to student leaders in community spaces.

Through my experience as a HC member and then as Prim, I have learnt the skills required to effectively manage the workload of being a student leaders. It is my hope that I can equip others with these skills so that they may become the future leaders on campus, and thrive whilst doing so.

I look forward to continuing my journey as an ex-officio member on the SRC to creating a better time and Stellenbosch University for all students!

Warm regards,

Rudi Claassen

## Constitutional Responsibilities

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Chapter 9 of the Student Constitution (“SC”) deals with the Prim Committee (“PC”) and sets out the various powers and duties of the Prim Committee.

Section 98 of the SC explains the composition of the PC. It is important to take note of section 98(1)(a) which holds that “the PC consists of the chairperson and the executive committee of the PC with rights as granted to them by the PC Constitution”. Section 99 of the SC deals with the duties and powers and holds that the PC represents the interests of all residents of residences and members of PSOs at the SRC and University management and further states that decisions taken by the PC are binding on all House Committees. Section 100 sets out the PC’s constitutional mandate and holds that the PC must actively promote the rights of students as contained in Chapter 2 of the SC and makes specific reference to section 8(1) of the SC. Section 101 of the SC deals with the different communities’ constitutions, rules and regulations. This section holds that the PC Constitution is binding on all communities’ constitutions which form part of the PC. Section 101(5) of the SC gives the PC the power to “establish a committee for the purpose of approving any constitutions, rules, or regulations, or amendments, thereto by House Committees”.

The PC is mainly governed by the PC Constitution.

## Portfolio Overview

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The Prim Committee is an *ex-officio* structure to the SRC. The Vice-Chairperson’s basic duties are outlined in the PC Constitution, which includes the duty of ensuring that all student communities operate to their full potential. As per the PC Constitution, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the PC must be the representative of either PSOs or residences. For the 2022/23 term, the Vice-Chairperson is the representative of residences.

The PC serves as a platform where any student in a community space may raise a query through their respective House Committees and Prims, who then reports it to the PC meeting. The PC Executive will then deal with the matter directly or refer it to the relevant structure where appropriate. The Vice-Chairperson’s duty is to ensure that all queries in the residence spaces are heard and then resolved as expeditiously as possible. If the matter can’t be resolved on PC level, the matter will be referred to either the SRC or CSC.

## Committees/Task Teams

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In my capacity as Vice-Chairperson of the Prim Committee, I serve on the following Committees and or Task Teams:

### 1) Institutional Forum (IF)

Per the SU Statute, the IF's core responsibility is to advise the Council on various matters, including the implementation of race and gender equality policies, the selection of candidates for senior management positions, the fostering of institutional culture which promotes respect for human rights and creates an appropriate environment for learning teach and research, etc. To that end, the IF also advises the Council on institutional transformation matters. The IF consists of 23 members, comprised of representatives from the governance and management, staff, students and community sectors.

I was appointed by the Prim Committee to represent its interests on the IF. The first meeting of the new leadership term took place on 14 October 2022. As the contents of IF meetings are confidential I am unable to elaborate on any matters of discussion at the meeting. The bulk of the meeting was geared towards endorsing a range of new and amended policies, providing recommendations where applicable.

### 2) Student Communities Advisory Committee (SCAC)

The SCAC, previously named the 'Student Housing Committee', serves as a platform where any matters concerning student communities are discussed. These include maintenance or upgrades to residence spaces, the construction of Cluster HUBs and the like. The committee is chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Learning and Teaching, Prof Ramjugernath, and consists of various members from facilities management, finance department, SUNCOM, the Centre for Student Communities (CSC) and student leaders.

There were two meetings during the first term in office: 19 September and 2 November 2022. Both meetings commenced with a report by facilities management on various upgrades and maintenance being undertaken at various residences. We also went on a tour of the new Victoria Cluster HUB on the 18<sup>th</sup> of September 2022 to check on the progress of the construction – it is scheduled to be completed in 2023. The committee also received the proposed student housing budget from SUNCOM, which included the proposed increase in accommodation fees for the 2023 academic year.

The committee finally discussed ways in which the loadshedding crisis could be addressed on campus. Generators have been acquired for all academic buildings and plans to set up generators for residences have been commenced. At the first meeting, student leaders raised concerns about the lack of access to WiFi during loadshedding due to the lack of study space available in the lead up to the November examinations. The committee undertook to make the lecture halls in the Jan Mouton available for students to study at during the examination period.

### 3) Welcoming Programme Committee

The Welcoming Programme Committee is chaired by the Director of the Centre for Student Communities and consists of representatives of all faculties, as well as the CSC and student leadership. The purpose of the committee is to collaborate on the programme for Welcoming and to ensure that all stakeholders are adequately prepared for Welcoming.

There were two meetings during the first term in office. The meetings addressed certain queries raised by the faculties as well as CSC staff.

### 4) Maties T-Shirt Committee

I attended two meetings of the committee to approve the design of the 2023 Maties T-shirt. Designs were provided by the Matie Shop and were discussed by the committee members, which included CSC staff and the Prim Committee Chair and Vice-Chair.

After obtaining input from Prims and other staff members, the committee decided on a suitable design for the 2023 T-shirt.

In my capacity as SRC member, I serve on the following committees:

#### 1) Senate

Per the SU Statute, the Senate is responsible for the academic and research function of the University. The Senate regulate the learning, teaching, research and academic support functions at SU and makes recommendations to the Council in respect of policies concerning academic matters. The Senate is further empowered to advise the Council on various other academic matters. The Senate is chaired by the Rector, Prof Wim de Villiers, and is composed of the rectorate, the COO, various academic personnel, administrative and support staff, and student leaders from the SRC and AAC.

There was one Senate meeting during the first term in office which took place on 25 November 2022. As the agenda and contents of Senate meetings are confidential, I am unable to disclose the details of the meeting. The main matters up for discussion included the review of various faculty reports concerning their recommendations on policies under review. Senate also had to vote on whether certain policies would be endorsed for approval by the Council.

## Term I Overview

After being elected to the Prim Committee Executive in August of 2022, the first few months were spent familiarising myself with the portfolio and meeting with various stakeholders from management, the CSC and both incoming and outgoing student leadership. The Chair and Vice-Chair elected an Administrative Officer and Financial Manager from the outgoing Prims who would form the Prim Committee Exec for 2022/23.

## 1. Newly Elected Prim Conference

The first formal order of business as the Prim Committee Exec is to host the Newly Elected Prim Conference ('NEPC' or 'Prim Camp') for all incoming Prims. The camp took place from 2-4 September 2022 and was aimed towards:

- equipping Prims with the necessary basic knowledge and skills to approach their term in office with competence and confidence;
- introducing Prims to the various leadership structures that form part of the SU ecosystem of leadership;
- familiarising the Prims with the Prim Committee Executive their functions on the committee; and
- building strong relationships amongst the Prims to provide them with an additional support structure throughout their leadership term.

The camp was a huge success and reached the desired outcomes.

## 2. Matie Shop queries

After receiving several concerns from Prims, the Prim Committee approached the **Matie Shop** to engage with senior management on the huge increase in merchandise prices. We obtained information from student communities and the CSC to present to the Manager of the Matie Shop, as well as the Senior Director of SUNCOM. Although several matters stood over for further discussion, we managed to obtain a 5% discount on the prices of Welcoming merchandise for student communities for 2023.

## 3. Changes to leadership blazers

The Corporate Communications and Marketing Division presented a proposal to the Prim Committee to standardise **leadership blazers** for all student communities, in essence removing community logos and only including the names of student communities on these blazers. The Prims voiced their dissatisfaction in relation to this proposal. The Prim Committee Executive consequently issued a statement to the CCMD and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Strategy, Global and Corporate Affairs, Prof Hester Klopper. Our proposal was accepted by the DVC and CCMD to have communities retain their logos on their leadership blazers, subject to further discussions to take place in 2023 between CCMD and the Prim Committee.

## 4. Prim Committee Task Teams

In terms of the Prim Committee Constitution, the Vice-Chairperson is responsible for setting up and overseeing task teams that aid the effective functioning of the Prim Committee. In accordance with these provisions, and after consultation with the Prim Committee Executive, we established the following task teams for 2023:

- Constitution Appraisal
- Crisis Management
- Student Wellness
- Finance

These task teams have been appointed in accordance with the PC Constitution and will commence its functions in February 2023. The task teams will regularly report to the Vice-Chairperson, as well as provide feedback on its discussions to the Prim Committee. Task Teams consist of Prims and House Committee members, with the exception of the Constitution Appraisal Task Team which only consists of Prims.

## **5. Feedback on incidents**

As the representatives of student communities, the Prim Committee Chair and Vice-Chair provided the SRC Executive with insight and feedback from residences following certain incidents. After being informed of these incidents, information was obtained from the implicated communities and briefs were provided to the SRC Executive for them to take appropriate steps. The relevant structures and management personnel were also consulted where required.

## **Plans for Next Term**

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The first academic term of 2023 will be geared towards ensuring a successful welcoming for the newcomer students, as well as keeping the momentum after a busy Welcoming period.

### **1. Continuation of Matie Shop queries**

Following engagements with the management of the Matie Shop and SUNCOM in 2022, further meetings will be aimed towards ensuring a sustainable cost model for community merchandise, as well as ensuring better administration in relation to the ordering process.

### **2. Task Teams**

The Task Teams will commence their meetings and mandates in the first term of 2023.

### **3. House Committee Dance**

For the first time in several years, the Prim Committee will be hosting a dance for all house committee members at the Stellenbosch Municipality City Hall. This dance will hope to forge closer relations between the difference student communities and provide the HCs with a well-deserved break after Welcoming.

### **4. PC Meeting with the Municipal Council**

The Prim Committee will attend a meeting with the Executive Mayor of Stellenbosch, as well as members of the Municipal Council. This meeting will facilitate cooperation between the student communities and the municipality, and hopefully provide the Prims with the platform to raise issues pertinent to their community with the Council.



## 5. Welcoming 2023

A huge part of the following term will be dedicated to supporting Prims during Welcoming and forming the link between the CSC, monitors and student communities. To this end, I will serve on the MAC Committee which will review incidents and practices flagged by the monitors.

I am also a part of the SRC Roadshow working group for the Welcoming period, where I will be facilitating engagements with residences and PSOs to improve SRC visibility among the newcomers.

SUBMITTED BY:



### **Rudi Claassen**

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