

Student Parliament

*Accountability, Transparency and Consultative Governance*

UNIVERSITEIT iYUNIVESITHI STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

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

**HELD ON** Monday 23 April **IN** Serruria Passion Palace **AT** 20h00

**ATTENDANCE:**

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

KEITUMETSE LEBESA Speaker of Parliament

NHLAKANIPHO MKHIZE Deputy Speaker Internal (Accountability Chair)

THATEGO SELAHLE Deputy Speaker External (Secretary General)

PHILASANDE SHONGWE Treasurer

**ABSENT WITH EXCUSE:**

N/A

**ABSENT WITHOUT EXCUSE:**

N/A

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**AGENDA:**

1. Picture taking Keitumetse
2. Policy Unit Thatego
3. Critical engagement session Keitumetse
4. Administration for second annual sitting of SP Keitumetse
5. Agenda points for second annual sitting of SP Keitumetse
6. General feedback Standing point
7. Reminder of important dates Thatego

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# WELCOMING/ OPENING BY THE SPEAKER.

Þ Meeting opened at 20h10 by the Speaker.

Þ This meeting is being recorded for minute purposes.

The speaker welcomes all members to the meeting. He states that the meeting will proceed in terms of Addendum N and M.

# ATTENDENCE:

All parties are present, and no excuses have been filed with the SG. Quorum is met.

# DISCUSSION:

## Picture taking:

Get a relevant date for availability of members for picture taking.

Question: Professionally or informally?

Response: Preferably professionally. It’s probably best if taken on a good camera by JD as suggested by Student Governance. The trip to Parliament seems out of our reach and its best to adapt alternative measures because its important that the students know us and our faces, especially if we want to use our social media as the platform for communicating with students. Better pictures can be taken at a later stage at Parliament when we go for training there.

The floor is opened to allow for input from the floor on availability.

Question: Before we discuss relevant dates, shouldn’t the relevant person involved be notified?

Response: The person will be notified by us and then plans will be made thereafter.

Proposition 1: Friday 26 April.

Proposition 2: The best person to suggest dates are most likely our SG because she knows the year plan.

Response: Can alternative dates be given to propose to the camera person so we can secure a spot instead of having to reconvene to plan a date. The time given should preferably it be during working hours.

Response: No, the person is likely going to be employed and is not likely to be available.

Proposition 3: Monday 29 April and Tuesday 30th April.

Response: Please be advised that the SRC meet and greet times could potentially be this week, so the dates are likely subject to change.

Both above dates are accepted.

## Policy unit:

The committee need to plan a date where we are all available.

Question: Is it feasible to have a meeting within this 2-week period, because we have a lot to plan this month?

Response: The critical engagement session is not a constitutional mandate and if it too taxing then we must prioritize those things which are our constitutional mandates. The policy forum must be held. There must be a policy forum at least once a semester. We have an obligation to hold the policy unit forum. The workload is quite intense if we think about it. If we don’t have time for a critical engagement session, then it can fall away, and the policy forum must take precedence.

Suggestion: It wouldn’t hurt to set aside a week where we know that the forum will be held in that time. We must at least ensure that we can give members suggested dates within a specific time frame.

Response: The week of the 7th cannot work because this is the last day that extra-curricular activities may be had.

Suggestion: Since there is no previous record of a policy unit forum, can the Student Parliament rely on S7(b)(vi) and hold a ‘virtual’ meeting. The role of the Student Parliament Policy Officer is an accountability focus and advisory one and since there is no foundation to build from, it would be more efficient to ask all members to send through policy reports, so the 2nd semester meeting can commence efficiently and hold members accountable to the revised policy.

Vote for: 3 Against: 0 Abstain: 0

The numbers of the members of the Policy Unit will be given to the SG.

One of the main duties is to scrutinize the constitutions of the members. To ensure that their constitutions are in line. There are internal mechanisms that all mandates all policy officers to do that duty. But it doesn’t necessarily mean that they are conducting themselves as they should. Some forums do not even have secretary generals or policy officers.

Question: Suppose we have a policy forum and there is a discrepancy found, does Parliament we make a recommendation, or do we have the power to rule on that ourselves?

Response: That power is only given in the 2018 Student Constitution which cannot be relied upon as yet. The role is mainly advisory.

## The accountability forum:

Have spoken to a few heads which include the SRC and TSR and MASC to send their Inter-disciplinary Head contact information and continue to be in contact with them. A group will then be formed on Outlook and on Whatsapp for convenience. The Student Parliament constitution does not expressly outline the duties of the accountability forum. We need to construct a definition and send out to the members of the forum.

Question: Can we allow the Executive Treasurer to have a say in terms of the direction of this forum because he is a part of the executive, but technically not a member of the committee.

Response: Yes. the Treasurer can have input, but he has no voting rights and cannot sway the actual committee and may assist only defining the nature of the forum.

Vote: For: 4

## Critical engagement session:

We overestimated the work necessary to pull through with this session. The forums we are forming are quite taxing and they should be our priority. Table to suspend this thus far. The vote is opened to the floor. There is still an opportunity to have a session in the second semester.

Votes for: 2 Opposed:1

The motion is suspended until further notice.

In closing: certain things are left open ended and we need to add more structure to make the necessary recommendations as to this session.

## The administration for the second annual sitting of Student Parliament

The SG and AC would have to have their own table up front with the Speaker. The member who is responding will give feedback on the status quo of that particular field and give necessary light to the direction that is being taken. Thereafter, the floor will be opened to the house. The Student Parliament member that will not be in front with the Speaker must still participate and please help to enforce conduct. It’s a collaborative effort.

## The agenda for the second annual sitting

We have thus far received two agenda points and they both relate to the SRC. The submissions will close on the 29th of April.

Question: Those SRC members cannot be called to account. The duty to request a member to come before parliament falls within the Deputy Speaker AC. The Accountability Forum has no power to call people to account unless addendum F and E are complied with. They cannot be summoned and only invited to please attend.

Response: The submission is taken. However, members are not being invited to account, they are being invited to inform on the topics at hand which does not require compliance with Addendums F and E. This is in the spirit of co-operative governance.

The agenda for the second sitting will be compiled by the Speaker. Please make that agenda available to the SG ASAP after submissions close so we can plan to distribute it.

# General feedback:

The Executive Treasurer:

Not much to report back on. The Forum was convened pretty well, and all parties did their part. A problem he might encounter going forward is being able to identify and invite all the treasurers that should be there. The time has not been set yet. Only 3 persons have filled out the survey sent regarding dates for the forum, but a reminder will be sent out. Its important to have all members there in the spirit of accountability. The use of money should be justified and it’s a touchy subject so it must be handled as openly and efficiently as possible.

The Treasurer has started compiling a vision and mission for the forum. The SRC treasurer suggested that everyone please come up with a vision and mission.

The accountability forum:

The accountability forum has been dealing with a complaint regarding an SRC member. He has met with both the compliment and then SRC member to gather more information from both parties. After consulting the SRC code of conduct, a complaint has to be filed within 30 days to the Internal Disciplinary Chair and the dispute arose in February already.

Thereafter a meeting was held with the Internal Disciplinary. The Chair said they had no power to deal with the matter (although he was aware of it) because no formal complaint had been lodged with the internal disciplinary. It is the Accountability Chair’s recommendation that all matters please go through internal structures before coming to Student Parliament. The SRC member has been called to attend at the Sitting to comment on the matter. He is awaiting a response from the SRC member. It is important to get the response because it’s a matter of public interest. It will be difficult to get students to file the complaint according to addendum F.

The Chair of Student Court has asked the AC to submit a report with him once the investigation is closed. Once a solution has been found, the report will be released shortly after that.

# Reminder of important dates:

The Speaker must construct rubrics for the interviews this week. The members decide to have the interviews on Friday 26 April at 6pm at the SRC Boardroom. Both seats for the Deputy Accountability Chair and the Communications Officer must be filled. Only of these members can join the executive committee. This person must be voted in by the committee.

A vote must be given vote to the Communications Officer or Accountability Chair.

ACC Chair For: 2

Com Chair: For: 2

Speaker of Parliament breaks the tie in favour of the Communications officer.

# Closing:

Members must please take note of the deadlines above. Members are thanked for attending.

Meeting is adjourned: 22h13.