



RHODES UNIVERSITY
Where leaders learn

STRATEGIC PLAN

2019 - 2021

DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS



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1. INTRODUCTION

The complex services offered by the Division of Student Affairs (DSA) lead to students being offered a wide range of new experiences and opportunities outside the classroom, which enable them to embark on the process of understanding themselves as critical and engaged citizens. Rhodes University wishes to provide a safe and nurturing student support system as well as a diverse array of residential, sporting, cultural and leadership opportunities that will foster the all-round development of our students, the university, and the region as a whole. Three Sections in the Division of Student Affairs are tasked with ensuring the above is achieved namely: Wellness; Sports Administration and Student Services sections.

2. CONTEXT

The *Wellness Section* consists of the Health Care Centre; Counselling Centre; HIV office and Careers Centre. The Wellness section is responsible for ensuring that the holistic development of students is observed through a wellness approach to life. Emphasis is placed on ensuring that each student takes responsibility for his or her physical, academic, social, emotional and spiritual wellness. Support services are vitally important in the promotion of learning.

Sports Administration manages competitive Clubs, Residence Sport, Facilities and the Health Suite. Physical and social wellness are given attention through this administration but the unspoken emotional and academic benefits that sports carry cannot be underestimated. If a student is physically well, their wellness approach to life is often evident in their broader purpose, values and general character.

The *Student Services* Section consists of the Student Representative Council (which includes the governance of all societies), the Residence System (wardening and leadership structure), Disabilities and First-Year Orientation. The residence system contributes to personal transformation in the students that is lasting. The principle of social inclusion fosters this transformation. Optimally, the residence system celebrates diversity and respects difference. The living and learning space includes spaces to learn about community engagement and social responsibility. Students are encouraged to engage with the SRC and partake in the residence environment for their own self-reflection and personal holistic growth.

3. VISION

The Division of Student Affairs' vision is *to create a living and learning student support system and environment that is inclusive and conducive to academic success, through promoting a healthy lifestyle and personal growth.*

4. MISSION

In pursuit of its vision, DSA wishes to provide a welcoming, professional, affirming and safe student support system as well as a diverse array of residential, sporting, cultural and leadership opportunities that will foster the holistic development of students.

The DSA undertakes to

- (i) Promote the development of the student outside of the teaching and learning environment (e.g. through residence system, societies, clubs, community engagement);
- (ii) Develop students' leadership potential (e.g. providing leadership opportunities, ensuring an effective Student Representative Council as well as establishing and promoting opportunities for leadership development for all students);
- (iii) Promote student well-being in all its facets through the provision of appropriate support to students with difficulties affecting their well-being and academic success e.g. counselling support, primary health care services;
- (iv) Provide an environment for students where they can enjoy quality of life at Rhodes University (e.g. ensuring a student culture that celebrates diversity and respects difference providing recreational facilities, sports clubs and societies, ensuring that timeous and fair disciplinary action is taken)
- (v) Ensure a viable and effective wardening system to support students in the residential system as well as Oppidan students (students living off campus).

5. VALUES

- Encourage potential and cultivate academic success and excellence
- Develop ethical leaders and responsible citizens
- Value and celebrate diversity
- Promote personal growth and resilience
- Cultivate sporting participation and excellence

- Promote a wellness approach to life

6. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The Division of Student Affairs' strategic operational plan is based on the Rhodes University Institutional Development Plan. The second strategic goal of the IDP (*Enable access to Rhodes University by all academically qualifying students and provide them with conditions which enable all students to flourish and which promote their holistic development as critical citizens*) is directly linked to the DSA. As a result three objectives inform the strategic goals of the division.

Goal 1 Strengthen ability to provide quality counselling and academic advising to students			
OBJECTIVE	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERSON (S) OR GROUP RESPONSIBLE	TIME-FRAME
1.1 Coordinate assistance for students seeking short term and crisis counselling	100% of students seeking short term and crisis counselling assisted	Counselling Centre	Ongoing
1.2 Provide professional, efficient and effective career counselling services to students seeking career services	100 % Career counselling services provided to students in one-on-one and group workshops Up to date information on career opportunities in various fields of study	Career Centre	Ongoing
1.3 Increase capacity and have adequate resources	Reduction of waiting list and vacancies filled [1:20 ratio guideline]	Director in consultation with Managers	Ongoing

1. 4 Promote respect for confidentiality and professional ethics	One staff training per year Confidentiality clause signed by all staff Continuous Professional Development	All Managers	Ongoing
1.5 Partner with external service providers to enhance service delivery	ER24 Implemented Agreements/MOUs with existing service providers Annual meeting with each service provider	Director and Managers of Counselling and Health Care Centres	ER 24- Beginning of 2019 Annually

Goal 2 Promote a sexually responsible citizenry and safe community within Rhodes University			
OBJECTIVE	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERSON (S) OR GROUP RESPONSIBLE	TIME-FRAME
2.1 Create and coordinate programmes/interventions/events that promote and enable inclusive, sexually responsible citizenship	At least 10 events/projects Updated and accessible information about services Each section has at least an event per term	Managers in Collaboration with Equity & Institutional Culture Division	Ongoing
2.2 Promote an environment free of any form of discrimination	Trainings and workshops provided during O-week and throughout the year. Appropriate strategies are implemented to support complainants of incidents of unfair discrimination and harassment	Student Services Manager Support of Counselling Centre Manager in collaboration with Harassment Office	Ongoing

2.3 Promote and support wellness of all students by providing HIV/Aids and wellness programmes	ARV site up and running Student and staff testing to promote awareness of HIV status and access to ARVs if needed Awareness- raising campaigns on a variety of health issues, including, substance abuse, male and female reproductive health, HIV/Aids, TB,STIs	HIV/AIDS office & Health Care Centre, in collaboration with DoH	Ongoing
2.4 Promote and support wellness of all students by the effective provision of primary health care to students and staff [Grades 1 to 5 only].	100% of students and staff who present to the HCC for professional primary health care services helped	HCC	Ongoing

Goal 3 : Provide enriched student experiences for all students of Rhodes University

OBJECTIVE	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERSON (S) OR GROUP RESPONSIBLE	TIME-FRAME
3.1 Develop a framework to measure students' perceptions of the University.	Annual Overall Student Experience Survey	DSA Office in collaboration with the Planning Office	Annually
3.2 Purposeful provision of programmes and initiatives that supplement and enrich students' experience holistically	Student leadership development Effective and ethical running of student governance	SSM and SRC	Ongoing

3.3 Promote and coordinate sporting events for students as a critical part of student wellness	At least one external event for 10 different sporting codes At least one event [internal or external] per sporting code	Sports Administration	Ongoing
3.4 Promote active participation in sports as part of a holistic healthy lifestyles program.	Provision of quality sports facilities for students Modern and compliant sports facilities and equipment Annual campus-wide sign-up event Percentage of students signed up and retained	Sports Administration & Facilities Office	Ongoing
3.5 Create a welcoming and professional environment with the use of modernised, user-friendly systems, policies and procedures.	Professional training of staff on basic client etiquette (staff development) Identification and review of all DSA policies & protocols Policies easily accessible on website Updated website Modernised technological systems and communication strategies e.g. self-help systems, development of	Director & Managers	Ongoing
3.6 Ensure Financial sustainability in the Division	Financial management and budget training Spending is according to budget allocation and schedule	Director & Managers	Ongoing
3.7 Promote awareness of the services offered in the DSA	One awareness campaign per term	Director & Managers in collaboration with Communications Division	Quarterly

3.8 Provide an environment that is conducive for living and learning	Quality of Life Survey Academic Interviews taking place quarterly Biannual reports submitted	Director, Student Services Manager Wardening staff	Annually, Quarterly & Biannual
3.9 Promote Inclusive student support services including a focus on students with Disabilities, LGBTQIP++, International students and Oppidan students	100% of students presenting themselves are assisted	SSM in collaboration with International Office, Oppidan Office, SRC and Equity & Institutional Culture Division	Ongoing

7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The strategy will be monitored and evaluated annually.