

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

24 February 2025

Time: 18h30

Venue: RA Room

2025.08.01. Welcome and Attendance

Present:

- President: Mr Siyanda Vilakazi
- Vice President: Ms Linathi Ndubela
- Secretary-General: Ms Kotulo Nxasana
- Treasurer-General: Mr Bulumko Sukwana
- Media: Ms Owami Kunene
- Residence: Mr Mpho Phologolo
- Academic: Ms Unarine Ndou
- Activism and Transformation: Ms Lwazi Dzingwe
- Community Engagement: Mr Sesethu Mtshelu
- Environmental: Mr Lona Mazindla
- International Affairs: Ms Rendani Mudau
- Student Benefits and Sponsorships: Mr Lwango Gamnca
- Sports and Societies: Lesy Makhubedu
- Student Development and Support Officer: Mr Eric Ofei

LATE

- Oppidan: Ms Faith Busisiwe Ntuli

2025.08 .02. Leave of Absences and Apologies

- Projects Manager: Mr Bongani Mtebule

2025.08.03. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed with amendments. Mister Residence and Mister Community Engagement seconded the minutes.

2025.08.04. Declaration of Conflict

There was no conflict declared.

2025.08.05. Matters Arising

2025.08.05.01. Leadership week

- Madam VP reported on the Leadership Week presentation in a meeting held with the Leadership Week Task team meeting, a collaboration of the SRC and the DSSD.
- Feedback on minor details included the consistent use of British English Standard English, Mister TG working on the budget and the sorting out of the Sponsorship Forms. We cannot send additional sponsorship letters without completing the report on sponsorships for Orientation Week and signing the forms for sending out letters.
- Madam VP said that going forward, Mister SBS will be a part of the task team as he will assist with all matters regarding sponsorship and funding.
- Madam VP requested Mister SBS to provide a deadline as to when the report and acquisition of the forms will be completed.
- Reminder about the procedure for high-profile speakers according to the Rhodes University Policy of Inviting High-Profile Speakers.
- Madam VP advises that the Leadership Week letters must be amended according to the adjustments and editing suggested by Ms Senne from the Communication Division. Cooking groups will work together and delegate different letters for drafting.
- Madam International is to work on inviting international SRC to participate in Leadership Week.
- Madam Media has uploaded the Media and Marketing plan on the Leadership Week Drive.
- SBS: 25 February 2025, 23:59 Needs to report back and submit the feedback to the Vice-President.
- Mister TG expressed his concerns that the current budget does not align with the project itself, and the DSSD suggested breaking the budget into detail for specific days.
- Mister President inquired on how soon we can expect the breakdown of the budget
- Madam Media: We need to establish a deadline to hold TG accountable

- Madam VP advised for the budget breakdown to be submitted on the 26 February 23:59
- Mister TG requested that the budget be sent on the 27th of February, 10:00.

Main Issue

- Finalising Leadership Week preparations, including budget, sponsorship, and logistics.

Action Plan

- Mister TG to finalise the budget breakdown of Leadership week by February 26, 23:59.
- Mister SBS to provide a report about the completion of the Orientation week report and acquiring sponsorship forms.
- Madam International to work with Madam VP to invite international SRCs to participate in Leadership Week.

2025.08.05.02. Office Hours

- Madam VP submitted this agenda item as there are concerns about office hours being captured or recorded in the office every week during the week. These concerns can be considered to update the SRC Operational Model
- Madam International expressed how inefficient signing in a register can be and suggests using the Acadly app to log in during office hours. She will explore how we can navigate the app and share it with the council.
- Mister Environmental raises concerns about how, on the 20th of February, he signed in and could not sign out as Mrs Kivvits, one of the staff members who keeps the SRC office register.
- Mister TG raised the issue that the Acadly app can be used to log in at different points, which can be inefficient.
- Mister PGA advised that office hours and Lunch hours need to be revised as some councillors have been swamped with busy schedules and are primarily available during the period of 12:00-14:00. He advised the council to find a way to accommodate this challenge
- Mister Residence concurred with Mister PGA as he feels that having a two-hour lunch break is not feasible. He suggests that lunch hours should be revisited. Moreover, aligning SRC's office hours with the DSSD staff is problematic. He provided an

example of a councilor completing their hours at 17:00, which is not reflected as the DSSD's office hours end at 16:00. This is not accommodating to the 09:00-17:00 set in the Operational Model.

- Activism explains that the Acadly app requires a coordinator for five minutes, which can cause an issue in signing in the register, and the coordinator may not always be available to initiate the login process.
- Madam VP proposes that the Operational Model be amended to make office from 08:00-17:00 and lunch hours from 13:00-14:00. She raised that there is no reason to cap office hours at 9 hours and that council must make their office space comfortable and easy to work around. Furthermore, this does not disadvantage the student body. If anything, it will lead to an increased number of SRC when students come to the office.
- Madam VP expressed how inconvenient the register being with a staff member can be as the staff members
- Mister President asked if anyone would second the proposal by Madam VP.
- Mister Residence seconded the motion.
- Mister TG, rising on the point of information, asked why the council was voting on a proposal raised by Madam VP; however, when he proposed the amendment be from 08:00 to 16:00, he was informed to follow the procedure that entailed that his amendment proposal would first have to go to the office of the Vice-President through an email.
- Mister CE stated that he recalls that the procedure had to go to Madam VP, followed by the Executive Members of the Council, and then to the council for voting.
- Madam VP stated that she is now raising a motion because Mister Ofei said that the amendment of office hours is a reasonable request to be brought to the table rather than following procedure.
- Madam SG stated that there should be a level of consistency with how proposals for amending the Operational model are dealt with.
- Madam International raises that the procedure that was advised to Mister TG should also apply to the proposal raised by Madam VP.
- Mister Residence, concurring with Madam International and Madam SG, stated that the council should be consistent and follow the procedure, either paper trial or motion voting.

- Madam VP says that the council should have voted on the amendment after Mr Ofei's suggestion and that it should have been addressed there and then.
- Mister President settled that we follow the way proposals have been considered

Main Issue

- Reviewing and revising SRC office hours to accommodate councillors' schedules.

Action Plan:

- Madam VP to follow the procedure of revising office hours (08:00-17:00) and lunch hours (13:00-14:00) on the SRC Operational Model.

2025.08.05.03. McDonald's boycott:

- Madam International voiced concerns and worries that the Council continues to be swayed away from its stance on the McDonald's Boycott when new information arises that more companies are affiliated with Israel. This reflects the council's disregard for the commonality that the Israel and Palestine Conflict shares with apartheid South Africa, a crime against humanity.
- Mister TG asks the council to maintain the established premise of the boycott: to boycott all companies affiliated with Israel. As new information of Israeli affiliated companies such as Google Chrome, Microsoft or even Volvo, the council should not pick and choose what is boycotted.
- Madam VP raises the discrepancies in this matter as the council's recent actions, such as eating at McDonald's, have not been taken as per the stance taken.
- Madam Oppidan says that a solution could be to draft a document for all companies affiliated with Israel.
- Mister Residence says the council should always be consistent with all the SRC's actions during the water march. We should not be politically affiliated; the council should use the same approach as McDonald's.
- Madam AT stated that we are transparent, honest and consistent in our actions and the stance we take
- Madam International: The document was created at the beginning of the year. She sent it to former Madam President and former Madam SG. The consensus of boycotting was reached.

- Mister TG raised the point that consensus was reached abruptly. He cautioned the council not to disregard the silent majority.
- Mister President rising on the point that when new information arises, it prompts council decisions to be reconsidered. He requested that the document that Madam International created be revised.
- Mister President stated that a standard Google document will be created by Tuesday, 25 February 2025, at 23:59 and circulated to the council on Wednesday, 26 February 2025, at 12:00. Input from the council will be closed on Saturday at 18:00. It will come back as an agenda item.
- This will be done through Madam SG consulting Madam VP about the previous document sent and circulated to the council on Wednesday, 26 January 2025, at 12:00.

Main Issue

- Reaffirming the council's stance on boycotting companies affiliated with Israel.

Action Plan

- Create a document listing companies affiliated with Israel.
- Council to revisit and reaffirm its stance on the boycott.

2025.08.05.04. Alcohol Policy:

- Madam VP stated the reason for submitting the agenda item, alcohol policy, is to have SRC commentary as it is to sit in a committee meeting, and the organisers of the meeting would like to include the SRC's opinion on the policy. It has also been sent to the Student Parliament for comment.
- Mister PGA requested that the agenda item be moved to next week as the agenda was sent late, and there was not enough time to engage with the policy.
- Madam VP said that Mister Ofei provided a deadline for all student governance structures to have input by this week, Friday, the 28 February, 23:59.
- Mister President requested that a separate feedback document be created by Madam VP and be circulated to the council for inputs to be made at 23:59 on Friday, 28 February 2025.

Main Issue

- Providing SRC input on the university's alcohol policy.

Action Plan

- Madam VP to create a separate feedback document for council input and for council to provide input by 28 February, 23:59.

2025.08.05.05. Water March Terms of Reference

- Madam VP submitted this agenda item for the council to provide input on the Terms of Reference of the Water March that will be shared to the CMR, Concerned Makhanda Residents as it has already gone through the council's Executive Members.
- Mister Residence stated that the SRC has received an email from Mrs Jay Pillay stating that all dining halls shall receive food vouchers from Pick and Pay due to the closing of dining halls because of the water March by CMR, which will be taking place on Wednesday, 25 February 2025.
- Madam VP requested that the council establish whether it will proceed with the Water march and return to a regular academic schedule or whether the university will have a full-day shutdown, including the suspension of the academic project for Wednesday.
- Mister Residence was advised by Dr Tondi to gain clarity from top management if the university is having a complete shutdown and if they will be attending the Water March.
- Madam AT emphasised the importance of establishing the stance of the SRC for the Water March and said that this stance should be communicated to the student body as soon as possible.
- Mister Ofei advised that the SRC quote an emergency meeting of all student-governing structures at 20:30 to discuss the logistics of the water March. Furthermore, the SRC should communicate with the Vice-Chancellor on its stance on a full-day shutdown.
- Madam International, rising on a motion, requested the council decide whether it will commence with a full-day shutdown, and Madam Academics seconded it.
- The voting process resulted in 13 council members saying yes, with Madam Media and Mister SBS abstaining.
- The motion passed that the SRC calls for a full-day shutdown on 26 February 2025.
- Mister Environmental asked for a councillor to reach out to the projects team due to the absence of Mister Projects.
- Mister PGA asked that information regarding the emergency meeting be shared on a collaborative governance group chat

- Madam Media asked if it should be all constitutionally elected substructures or all student governance structures
- Mister Ofei advised on working around stakeholder engagement and that
- Madam Oppidan asked about the time that the council can communicate with their substructures
- Mister Ofei advised that a message be drafted first, and then the council will be given ten minutes to make calls and return to plan the logistics of March before the arrival of all student governance structures.
- Mister PGA requested that the council continue with other items remaining on the agenda.
- Mister President confirmed that the emergency meeting will be at 21:00 and that the remaining agenda items will be discussed after the emergency meeting

Main Issue

- Finalising the Terms of Reference for the Water March and confirming the stance of the SRC on a full-day Shutdown.

Action Plan

- Council to review and provide input on the Terms of Reference.
- Mister President to communicate with top management regarding the university's stance on the Water March.
- Calling for an emergency meeting with all student governance structures to discuss the logistics of the water march.

2025.08.05.06 Rumours and Misinformation

- Mister Residence asked what the process is to go through or what penalty a councillor incurs when they spread rumours and misinformation referring back to past actions of the council to make a decision and then go out into the public and speak against the decision.
- Furthermore, Mister Residence inquired how it can be determined whether the councillor committed this action or is telling the truth.
- Mister Ofei stated that the cheat would have to be determined on a balance of probabilities by assessing how that information was conveyed and in what context.

- Madam SG stated that this would constitute going against a council decision regulated by the operational model to be a deduction of 100% from that councillor's honorarium.

Main Issue

- Addressing the spread of rumours and misinformation by councillors.

Action Plan

- Identify ways to address the conduct of an SRC Member who acts against council decisions.

2025.08.06. Other Matters for the Agenda

PG Orientation

- Mister PGA requested the finalisation of the five SRC members who will assist in setting up the PG Orientation event.
- He further requested that even though he needed five councillors, the entire SRC should attend the event.

Update to the tree planting project

- Mister Environmental stated the reason for the delay in the tree planting in every dining hall on campus is that he was supposed to inform Mrs Nomonde from Grounds and Gardens, who would give him permission to plant the trees and notify the wardens in each dining hall.
- Mister Environmental said that the further logistics to be finalised about the tree planting event are plugs, how the SRC logo will be positioned and how the cheap planting will be communicated as an SRC initiative.
- Mister President asked when the council can expect the trees to be planted,
- Mister Environmental said that Sunnyside provided him with outside plants, contrary to what had been expected initially, as each dining hall would be provided with indoor plants, prompting the revision of the initial plan. Quotations from Mister TG have also not been requested.
- Mister President advised that further information about this project should be taken offline.

2025.08.07 Student Development and Support Office

- Mr Ofei expressed the importance of Dining Hall visits, which can facilitate engagement between the SRC and student body to uncover some of the problems they face within residences and to ensure accountability amongst the student leaders that exist within the residence system, such as the reporting of issues that residents may face.
- Deductions will go into SRC's training and be repurposed into SRC initiatives
- A Policy Conference will soon occur, and the dates will be announced. All SRC Councilors and substructures are encouraged to draft and/or finalise their policies.

2025.08.08. Housekeeping

- Madam SG reminded the Council that their first monthly report should be submitted on 1 March 2025.

2025.08.09 Time and Date of next meeting

The time and date of the next meeting will be announced by email by Madam SG due to clashes with Dinner with the Vice-Chancellor.