



17th August 2016

Dear students

This statement will touch on:

1. The 2017 potential fee increment and concerns around a shutdown
2. The SRCs Funding Futures Campaign
3. NSFAS Central Model

2017 Fee Increment & Potential Shutdown

A number of students have approached SRC members regarding claims of a looming shutdown in the higher education sector and particularly UCT. The SRC published a brief update on our social media pages but we think it necessary to explicate our position. We must begin by clearly stating **that we are not in support nor would we implement a shutdown at this time.**

The protests across the sector in 2015 produced a number of notable gains such as the moratorium on fee increments for 2016 and the setting up of a Commission of Inquiry by President Zuma. However, we cannot ignore the widespread trauma students and staff experienced in realizing these victories. Students found themselves on the receiving end of violence from the police leaving the memory of rubber bullets, stunt grenades, tear gas and arrest deeply etched into our collective psyche.

Furthermore, we cannot underestimate nor romanticize the severe impact on the academic project. The reality of such protest action is that it often places poor, often Black students on the frontlines whilst their peers passively participate through a mass meeting or remain in the comfort of their homes. We at the SRC have seen the material effects of Black working class students losing their funding as a direct result of declining mental health and congested deferred exams. These students then have to seek support from Student Wellness Services who often do not have sufficient capacity or face unaffordable fees from private practitioners. Not only are many of these students struggling financially, but their circumstances are exacerbated by academic results that place them further away from realizing the economic potential their degrees have for themselves, their families and communities.

Where students lead, institutions are reimagined;





Thus, it would be irresponsible of us to participate in action effectively re-traumatising our community at this time. A shutdown remains an unappealing means of collective protest given the very real threat of state violence as suggested by heavy police presence at Wits and the University of Pretoria last week in anticipation of the Ministers announcement. We will continue to meet with University management, government, students and other stakeholders leaving no stone unturned before we meet in the streets. Once we have exhausted every avenue available to us, it is then when we will take active steps to mobilise towards mass protest action mandated to the SRC by the student body. We will keep students abreast with any developments regarding fees both at the University Council and government.

SRC Funding Futures Campaign

As many of you may know, the 2016 SRC embarked on a fundraising effort to assist students with historical debt. We have raised a total of **R2 604 684.20** from fundraising efforts and Jammie Plaza activities. The campaign will conclude at the end of our term and we are in the process of finalizing additional donations that you will be informed of in the near future.

A decision was taken to disburse the funds at the end of the year in the normal SRC Assistance Fund cycle to provide as many students with the opportunity to access the fund. Due to the Old Mutual donation only coming onto the books at the beginning of May, we were unable to begin an application process so close to exams.

However, if you are currently under the Faculty Grace Period that the SRC arranged in February, we ask that you contact us as soon as possible. The SRC contacted Faculty Managers who could not provide us with names as it is confidential information. As a solution, we will request faculties to send communication directly to students or you may contact us directly. We will do our best to assist you in registering retroactively through financial (historical debt) and academic support. Please ensure you have completed all assessments required for your courses. Please email src@uct.ac.za

NSFAS Central Application Model

If you are a student currently on NSFAS or know of a learner in matric who may potentially receive such funding, **please read the change of procedure [here](#)**. The Financial Aid office & NSFAS have said it is vitally important that





UCT SRC

STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

Office of the President
Level Seven
Steve Biko Students' Union Building
Upper Campus
University of Cape Town
Rondebosch, 7700
Telephone 021 650 5001
Facsimile +27 21 650 5051

you familiarize yourself with the new information as soon as possible to prevent any interruptions to your funding for 2017. We will be monitoring the implementation of the model especially in relation to access to funding and efficiency.

We wish you all the best for test week.

Rorisang Moseli
President
UCT Student Representative Council 2015/2016

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