



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

Alumni Association AGM

Minutes of the meeting held at 18h00 on Wednesday, 20 February 2019

Kramer LT2, Middle Campus, UCT

UCT Management Present:

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng
Registrar, Mr. Royston Pillay
Executive Director DAD, Dr Russell Ally

Note: The meeting was quorate, 4 members of the AAB were in attendance as well as general alumni.

1. Register and Apologies

The Chairperson of the Alumni Advisory Board, Ms Dianna Yach welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the meeting. She specially thanked the Vice Chancellor, Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng, Registrar, Mr Royston and Executive Director: Development and Alumni, Dr Russell Ally. She thanked the Alumni Relations team for their professional and dedicated service during the year 2018. She extended a warm welcome to the newly elected President of Convocation, Professor Eddy Maloka and also thanked the outgoing President of Convocation, Ms Lorna Houston for her contribution during her term.

She informed attendees that the Alumni Association's new Alumni Advisory Board (AAB) was elected at the AGM on 26th April 2018. She introduced AAB members who were present. She thanked Professor Nombulelo Magula who had recently stepped down from the Board for her contribution to the AAB work. She indicated that the Alumni Association and Convocation were exploring ways to work better together in the future.

The Chairperson informed attendees that the Alumni survey would soon be live and urged everyone to participate. She also informed everyone that the Centre for Extra Mural Studies and Summer School will soon be integrated within the Development and Alumni Department.

2. Welcome address by Vice-Chancellor, Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng

[Unedited speech below]

VC speech to Alumni Association AGM:

Evening of 20 Feb 2019

Good evening, Gooie naand, Dumela!

I have had the privilege of serving as vice-chancellor of the University of Cape Town for just over six months now. In reflecting on the past year, I would like to acknowledge my predecessor, Dr Max Price, for his dedication over the first half of the year and, of course, the previous 10 years.

My overriding sense is that 2018 has been a steady and solid year for UCT. We completed the full academic year without any disruptions – after three turbulent years of protest – we are committed to continuing to resolve issues of transformation, curriculum change and inclusivity on campus. Before I continue I would like to recognise the wonderful, committed and selfless work of many, many colleagues across the institution, this year and over the last few years – it has been a challenging but important period for the institution.

Our community

More than 7000 students graduated in 2018 – a wonderful achievement! On 13 December we held a special graduation ceremony that included my formal installation as Vice-Chancellor. I preferred to be robed within a graduation ceremony because the focus of any university is our students and their success. During that special graduation ceremony, we capped 90 graduands whose debt was paid by a generous donation as well as money that was budgeted for my inauguration. In April, we celebrated the graduation of 5 200 graduands during 14 ceremonies and in June we graduated more than 350 graduands of the Graduate School of Business.

We celebrated some of our outstanding colleagues in November at the UCT Annual Awards – a new event which honoured, in an inclusive manner staff from across the institution. 104 staff received an honorary promotion and 134 staff received Long Service Awards. Professor Robert Dunn, Associate Professor Jacqueline Yeats, Professor Pradeep Navsaria and Gregor Leigh were honoured as Distinguished Teachers, and Professor Heather Zar was awarded the prestigious Alan Pifer Award.

Our top scientific minds shone at the 2018 National Research Foundation (NRF) Awards ceremony, accounting for 11 of the 37 academics honoured. Closer to home, we welcomed four new members to the UCT College of Fellows and celebrated six new Young Researcher awardees.

Civil engineering staff and students made a significant contribution to research with the world's first bio-brick grown from human urine, signalling a paradigm shift in waste recovery and sustainability.

We hosted seven inaugural lectures in 2018 to mark the appointment of colleagues to full professor. We also hosted Professor Tshilidzi Marwala, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Johannesburg, speaking on [The Fourth Industrial Revolution and Society](#) at a Vice-Chancellor's Open Lecture; and Professor Pumla Gqola, the Dean of Research at the University of Fort Hare, who presented the TB Davie Memorial Lecture titled "Between Academic Inheritance and the Urgency of Definitions".

I hope that you will join me in celebrating UCT's jump of 15 places from 171st to 156th position in the latest 2019 Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings. We have maintained our position as the top university in Africa.

Students

While UCT's focus is on academia, our students also engage in more than 40 sporting codes. In 2018, UCT Cycling elected its first woman chair, formed a women's racing team and launched a cycling scholarship programme.

The 2018/19 Students' Representative Council took office at the end of 2018, with women holding 9 of the 15 positions. At the 2018 Student Leadership Awards, Sarina Mpharalala won the Vice-Chancellor's Award and Husna Moola received the Deputy Vice-Chancellor's Award. The 2018 Women's Day saw the launch of three research programs for womxn, focused on gender issues.

The Inclusivity Policy for Sexual Orientation was launched during Rainbow Week, and the current student mental health policy was approved by Council in August, just ahead of the Student Wellness Service's second Student Wellness Drive.

Social responsiveness and other developments

The Development and Alumni Department had a busy year hosting alumni events and securing funding. A donation of R11 million from the FirstRand Foundation allowed the Disability Service to expand its accessible vehicle pool from two to three, among other things.

In a meeting in October with local principals and stakeholders I shared my vision for UCT and encouraged open dialogue with the university. As a signal of our commitment to inclusivity, I spent a day visiting health sites and community projects on the Cape Flats, Khayelitsha; Crossroads; Hanover park; Mitchells plain, Phillipi, Masiphumelele and Oceanview getting to know how our students are learning and contributing.

In 2018, 51 of the *Mail & Guardian's* Top 200 Young South Africans came from UCT, a remarkable indicator of our continuing impact on society.

Primo, UCT Libraries' new multi-platform cloud-based search tool, was launched by Deputy Vice-Chancellor Associate Professor Lis Lange. She has also called for comment on the Curriculum Change Framework, an essential tool for transformation.

Authentic transformation acknowledges past errors. During a recent audit, we discovered that UCT's Human Skeletal Collection included 11 skeletons obtained unethically. Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Loretta Feris has been working with the Sutherland community to return the remains of nine of these people.

With a watchful eye on student needs, the Food Security Task Team organised a UCT Food Security programme from 29 October to 16 November. In 2019 we will be working on a strategy for a more long-term, sustainable project to help those students who need food provided during the academic year. This is an investment not only into their future but into the future they will help to create for South Africa.

UCT reached a historic landmark on 26 February 2018 when the Institutional Reconciliation and Transformation Commission (IRTC) held its first formal meeting. The IRTC's objective is to map an inclusive and fair course for the university as we tackle the legacy of the so-called Shackville protests and to focus on the issues that have caused division on our university campus. In July Mr Siphosiso Pityana, the Chair of Council, announced that in the interest of restorative justice, Council had resolved to approve the recommendation of the IRTC to grant amnesty to eight students in respect of the events on campus of 16 February 2016. We await the final report of the IRTC based on its findings.

Governance

At present, 16 of 23 positions in my Leadership Lekgotla are filled by permanent appointees, with Council having recently supported the filling of two additional posts: the deans of Science & Law). The remaining positions are occupied on an acting or interim basis. The executive will oversee all outstanding recruitment processes to ensure the continued smooth governance of UCT.

UCT faces many of the same challenges as our nation, as you know. In September unions tabled various demands during a period of strike action. We remain committed to dealing with union-raised issues and finding amicable solutions.

I have called for regular reports on the issues that affect the UCT community, so that we can monitor the situation on campus and act accordingly. The first of these reports were presented to Council in October and covered, among others, crime, gender-based violence and student mental health. In response to the changing university environment, we have also called for a review of Senate and its committees. Additional reports including reporting stakeholder engagement were tabled at our December council meeting and they will be shared more widely with the university community. These reports help us to understand the key strategic issues facing our institution and guide our responses.

The recent completion of the Department of Labour's employment equity declaration forms will clarify the university's demographic breakdown and inform the institution's employment equity targets.

Along with increasing staff and student numbers comes infrastructure growth. Work has started on the construction of a R130 million state-of-the-art academic conference centre on the GSB campus and the new Neuroscience Institute at Groote Schuur Hospital. In July we launched the Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance, which will strengthen our excellence as a university, and help to drive transformation and ensure a sustainable future for UCT. As an increasingly diverse community, we all contribute to the success of the academic project. This drives my vision, and it is in our collective efforts that the vision will be achieved.

It is not enough that we are a leading institution today. We need to ensure that UCT will lead the charge to understand and manage the changes that are rapidly unfolding in the world. I have set up the Futures initiative to consider how our university may be affected by the accelerating changes from climate change, the fourth industrial revolution and artificial intelligence, technological advances, global migration and the Generation C phenomenon, among others.

I asked Professor Alison Lewis, dean of the Faculty of Engineering & the Built Environment, to lead UCT's Futures Think Tank, which involves an interdisciplinary team from within and outside UCT to develop our institutional responses to these challenges.

Our new "Leading Scholars" programme, which will run until 2030, will focus on student leadership and student entrepreneurship. These future leaders are social justice advocates, alive to the challenges in our society; they are active citizens and community leaders who work towards the improvement of our country; they are collaborative young leaders who will remain critical thinkers as they shape the world around them.

Another initiative, called "Inclusive Futures", focuses on expanding our knowledge and understanding of the environment, social responsiveness, responsible citizenship, decolonisation and gender equality, among other problems facing our society.

I can't think back on the year 2018 without reflecting on the very sad loss of Professor Bongani Mayosi, Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, who took his own life on 27 July. Prof Mayosi's passing brought

home in a very painful way that we need to care for one another and seek help when we feel overwhelmed. In many ways we are still in pain as an institution - we continue to grapple with the loss and the lessons we can learn through this experience.

Thank you for your participation in this evening's AGM. Your participation demonstrates your commitment to the university and its students, to transformation and the smooth running of UCT.

As I said previously, since I took office I have made it a priority to meet with different stakeholder groups. I gave to those groups the same invitation and challenge I give to you today. It's so important to hear what you have to say about your alma mater. The fact that you are here today, shows you feel a strong identity with UCT. To make that identity really mean something for the future UCT needs your involvement on a more personal and frequent basis. UCT needs you to own her!

Owning UCT means admitting to the challenges and committing to help address them. And who better to help define these challenges, and to help find solutions, than individuals who have been through UCT themselves?

I want to be honest about the challenges that UCT faces, but I also want to invite our alumni to commit themselves a little further in their ownership of UCT.

I invite you to visualise the UCT of 2030: imagine the students who would be in the degree programmes, the new ways of learning they would be practising, the research that we would be carrying out. The languages that might be spoken in lectures and labs. And now visualise the steps we would need to take to get UCT to that point. I would encourage you to also reimagine UCT and find a role that plays to your strengths – whether it is drafting guidelines or policies, creating programmes for learners, or raising funds.

Because of our history and the sense of tradition – that was often exclusionary and elitist – that shadows institutions like UCT, it is easy to forget that today we have the wonderful opportunity to be the history makers and to set new traditions that are inclusive and celebrate our diversity. Our generation has lessons to offer for the students who will come after us and the people who will teach them. You are in a privileged position to help make the changes that are needed not just to transform, but to lead transformation across South Africa.

It is not uncommon for alumni of any university to express opinions about what is happening on campus and it is right that you do, but it is important how we do it. It is important that we not only talk about a need at the university, but also help to identify the solution, helping to put that solution into action and resolving the challenges that give you so much concern. For instance, we are all concerned about the need for more student accommodation. That is a project that would greatly benefit from hands-on involvement of people like yourselves.

UCT does not belong to me or Council. It doesn't belong to the government; it belongs to all of us, alumni, students, academics, professional and support staff, to the entire community of Cape Town and the country. We all need to work together to keep this university great.

I hope to have many more opportunities to discuss with you how you can be directly involved in building the UCT we want to see for the future. Thank you!

ENDS

3. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the AGM held on 26 April 2018 were approved.

4. Matters Arising

- **Motion raised during previous AGM about students cases**

With regard to the cases that were reported to the SAPS and which the state was prosecuting, and in respect of which the National Prosecution Authority (NPA) had approached UCT to advise that it intended to seek to divert these cases out of the criminal prosecution system contingent on the students concerned accepting responsibility for their actions, and undertaking to do community service, the Registrar confirmed that UCT had responded to the NPA that it would not oppose such a process and its intended outcomes.

5. Chairperson's Report, Ms Dianna Yach

[Unedited report below]

This evening, the theme of my report is "Connecting, reconnecting and reaching out to our diverse alumni".

In delivering my report, I will address 5 key areas:

1. What is the purpose of the AAB?
2. How can alumni influence decision making at UCT?
3. How alumni can become more engaged with UCT?
4. How can alumni get involved in upcoming initiatives?
5. Concluding thoughts

1. What purpose does the AAB serve?

The UCT Alumni Advisory Board (AAB) is the Executive Committee of the UCT Alumni Association. Its key function is to act as an advisory body to the University and to the Vice-Chancellor of the day through the Alumni Office or by communicating directly with UCT leadership. The AAB aims to ensure that the UCT Development and Alumni Department and UCT alumni work together to build an inclusive, dynamic and robust alumni programme that translates into a vibrant and supportive UCT alumni community.

In case you do not know what, we do, the AAB has 3 key roles:

1. To serve as the conscience and the voice of the UCT alumni community by expressing concerns about actions taken (or not taken) by the University, as well as about circumstances and opportunities in the wider society that might impact upon the University
2. To establish and oversee branches, chapters and affinity groups of the Association around the world
3. To advise the Development and Alumni Department on relevant alumni events and alumni communications

The AAB includes 7 members elected at the AGM in addition to Council members elected by Convocation, the President of Convocation ex officio and UCT ex officio members. The AAB also enjoys a productive working relationship with the University of Cape Town Association of Black Alumni (UCTABA) and GSB Alumni Association Board.

Following the appointment of a new Alumni Advisory Board at the AGM in April 2018, we have been actively considering how the Alumni Association can be more closely aligned with Convocation. I recently met with the newly elected President of Convocation, Prof Eddie Maloka to explore the possibilities for translating this vision into practice. Prof Maloka expressed enthusiasm for a close working relationship between the two bodies. He is interested in encouraging intergenerational dialogues amongst alumni on key issues that impact the university, working with us to invigorate greater alumni support on an individual and collective level and encourage alumni giving back/paying forward.

Given his pivotal role in the African Union, he also offered to provide support to UCT Alumni Chapters on the Continent and to utilise his networks to strengthen and support the work that they do. During Africa month we agreed to examine how the Development and Alumni Department, Convocation and the AAB could work together to host an event entitled "Governance in Africa".

2. How can alumni influence decision-making at UCT?

Although the AAB has no executive functions, we play an important advisory role. During the year, key members of the UCT's Leadership Lekgotla are invited to engage with us on current and emerging developments at UCT. Presenters included, the Vice-Chancellor, Registrar, Finance Director, DVC for Research and Internationalisation and the Head of Campus Safety and Security. These engagements have been invaluable in enabling the AAB members to share information and help to influence policy development and implementation in critical areas, most notably, providing input to the development of the UCT Strategic Plan.

3. How can alumni become more engaged with UCT?

The AAB and the Development and Alumni Department enjoy a close and constructive working relationship. During the past year the AAB has supported the Department's efforts to strengthen and deepen ties with alumni across the globe. Both the AAB and Alumni Department have sought ways to mobilise alumni from historically disadvantaged backgrounds including younger alumni who

historically may not have been fully involved with their alma mater owing to feelings of alienation.

The Alumni Department has worked tirelessly with branches, chapters and affinity groups both at home, in neighbouring provinces and countries abroad. A key role of the alumni relations department has been to support networking activities especially in areas traditionally underserved by UCT such as arranging high profile lectures for alumni in Athlone, Khayelitsha, Grassy Park and Philippi. The AAB supports these and other engagement initiatives such as the new social networking platform – *UCT Alumni Connect*;

During Women’s Month, the AAB participated in an exciting alumni event in Johannesburg. The topic was “Patriarchy – women’s experiences in the workplace and the guest speakers were two prominent UCT alumnae. We are hoping to host a similar event in Cape Town in 2019.

The Alumni Advisory Board continues to actively encourage our alumni community to become more involved in enhancing the student experience by offering their time as mentors (especially to students from their own Faculties), providing bursaries and scholarships, providing internships and work shadowing opportunities for students, finding ways to provide a launch base for students going into employment and establishing their own businesses; participating in Distinguishing UCT events and suggesting speakers or offering to become a speaker at these events.

Branches, chapters and affinity groups across the globe, also provide ongoing opportunities for active involvement in UCT.

For example, the Chair of the Zimbabwe Chapter recently reported that UCT alumni have risen to influential positions across Zimbabwe, contributing to a vast array of economic sectors including tackling challenging and future focused issues such as sustainable energy and leadership development in Africa.. They are also engaging with current students on pressing issues such as student permit applications and post-graduation employment.

Alumni nominated by the AAB have also played a significant part in the work of the pathbreaking UCT Institutional Reconciliation and Transformation Commission (IRTC). It is anticipated that the IRTC process will contribute positively towards UCT’s commitment to forging a new inclusive identity. We look forward to the publication of the IRTC report which is due in March 2019.

Much of the work of the AAB has been devoted to “friend raising” recognising that not all alumni are able to provide money but are able to provide their expertise and time. Apart from “friend raising” initiatives, the AAB is especially interested in finding ways to support students in distress and finding scholarships for post graduate students. The AAB supports the Department’s fundraising strategy which includes provision of postgraduate bursaries (becoming a pressing priority), support for the Student Wellness Service (funding for psychologists), Food Security at UCT, Growing a Lawyer campaign, support for African Climate Development Initiative and social justice programmes including the Knowledge Co-Op, and Abalobi Small Scale Fishers project.

4. Exciting upcoming initiatives

I want to draw your attention to three exciting initiatives:

1. Alumni Survey

Pioneered by one of our AAB members, Dr Aditi Hunma, the UCT Alumni Survey is now accessible on the Development and Alumni Website. The survey has been designed to connect with the broader

alumni community and to identify opportunities for deeper engagement. This is the first in a series of regular alumni surveys planned by the board. The survey is designed to understand where UCT alumni are located (professionally), what you would like to see more of from the institution and in what areas you would be prepared to lend your support. The survey is entirely voluntary and takes approximately 5 minutes to complete. Please complete the survey – we are eager to hear your view and ideas.

2 A screening of “Life is Wonderful”- Mandela’s Unsung Heroes”

This is being co-hosted by the Denis Goldberg Legacy Foundation, Alumni Advisory Board and Development and Alumni Department and will take place on 13 April 2019 at lunchtime at Snoekies in Hout Bay. The film focuses on the Rivonia Trial movie which featured alumnus Dennis Goldberg. Please attend this screening which honours one of our own Engineering alumni.

3 Summer School and the Department for Extra Mural Studies are being integrated into Development and Alumni Department family, a move that is to be warmly welcomed. We believe that this will strengthen our ties with the thousands of alumni who participate in these programmes. The relocation will also offer opportunities for strengthening and refocusing their important work. Summer School and the Department for Extra Mural Studies are hidden gems of UCT. Facts you may not know are that EMS is one of the most transformed departments at UCT; Summer School showcases black academic excellence to an earlier generation of alumni and other UCT supporters and EMS has extended its lecture programme to Athlone, to broaden the rainbow of demography of those who participate.

5. Concluding thoughts

As Chairperson of the Alumni Advisory Board, I am inspired and motivated by the work we do to connect, reconnect and reach out to our diverse alumni stakeholders.

As members of a very special community, as UCT alumni, who have benefited from special opportunities through our education at UCT, I believe we also have some very special responsibilities. Even if some of these experiences have not been optimal in the past, as special UCT graduates or attendees of UCT we all have obligations arising from our association with Africa’s premier university:

- ✓ We have the responsibility to engage in open, respectful and honest conversation, to listen to others, even when we may disagree vehemently with each other
- ✓ We have the responsibility to create a culture of respect and challenge inappropriate behaviours especially those “micro indignities” that undermine individuals’ self-worth and sense of belonging
- ✓ We have the responsibility to serve our communities and give back what we can, whether in the form of time or treasure

ENDS

5. Update from Cape Town Chapter

Ms Nobukhosi Dlamini, member of the AAB invited all alumni who are based in Cape Town to voluntarily join the Cape Town Alumni Chapter. She encouraged everyone to either nominate themselves or other alumni to serve in the committee. Nominations were to be sent via email: ctchapter1@gmail.com

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 20h45