



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

Alumni Association AGM

Minutes of the meeting held at 18h00 on Thursday, 26 April 2018

Kramer LT1, Middle Campus, UCT

UCT Management Present:

VC, Dr Max Price
DVC, Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng
Registrar, Mr. Royston Pillay
Executive Director DAD, Dr Russell Ally

Note: The meeting was quorate, 5 members of the AAB were in attendance as well as general alumni.

1. Welcome:

The Vice Chancellor, Dr Max Price welcomed everyone and apologised for the inconvenience regarding the AGM starting time change from 17h30 to 18h00 might have caused as there was a lecture taking place in the venue from 17h00 to 17h45. He informed everyone that it was his fault due to the fact that he was hosting a function at the same time as the AGM and he did not want to miss the opportunity of being part of the AGM as that was his last presence in meetings for the Alumni Association as his term at the helm of UCT ends in June 2018

He thanked the board for their important role that they have played and that they continue to play, their voluntarism as well as the care they have shown for UCT and its alumni. He said because it is difficult for the Convocation to launch Chapter across the world, even in Cape town, Alumni Association has done a good job, it has created ways to ensure that UCT get feedback from alumni across the world. He also informed everyone that he was hoping to meet the new members of the Advisory Board that were going to be elected on that day before the end of his term and wished them all the best in case that does not happen.

He specially acknowledged Prof Phakeng's presence as a VC designate. He thanked her for the support she had given him and the whole Executive management of UCT. He also said that he was so delighted to the fact that since the university was in good hands under his leadership, it was still being handed over to the good hands of Prof Phakeng. He wished her all the best when she takes over on 01 July 2018. He also thanked the Chairperson of AAB, Ms Dianna Yach for all the good work and for the invitation to attend the AGM.

Register and Apologies

The Chairperson of the Alumni Advisory Board, Ms Dianna Yach also welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the meeting. She specially thanked the Vice Chancellor, Dr Max Price and said she hoped the VC enjoyed engagements with Alumni Association over the years. She also acknowledged the presence of VC designate: Prof Mamokgethi Phakeng and said that she was looking forward to working with her once she fully assumes her position as the VC. She also acknowledged Registrar, Mr Royston Pillay and outlined accolades about him saying that, He is a person who knows the rules and who always make sure that they are always on track as AAB. The Chairperson also acknowledged the presence of the Executive Director: Development and Alumni, Dr

Russell Ally, The President of Convocation: Ms Lorna Houston as well as The President of the Legacy Society: Mr Hugh Amoore. The Chairperson also informed attendees that she was moved when the New Science lecture was named after Chris Hani. She also said it is not right that we tend to celebrate people today and then forget about them.

Lastly she acknowledged receipt of the apologies tendered from the following individuals:

Prof Barney Pityana
Tim Crowe
Carla Watson
Dr Derek Yach
Prof Nombulelo Magula
Clinton Herring

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the AGM held on 15 March 2017 were approved.

Matters Arising

One of the attendees asked the Chairperson as to whether the constitution of the AAB had been revised to include a broader range of alumni.

The Chairperson replied by informing everyone that they were reminded by one alumnus that the Alumni Association was broad enough to proceed on the basis of including Chapters and Affinity groups as part of a proposed General Assembly so that no further amendments were made. She said this was work in progress. She also said that she was hoping for more representation from Chapters and Affinity groups across the world particularly in Sub- Saharan Africa.

Alumni Advisory Board Chairperson's report

The Chairperson once again extended her warm welcome to current VC, Dr Max Price noting that he was attending his last Alumni Association AGM, The VC designate Prof Mamokgethi Phakeng, President of Convocation, MS Lorna Houston, President of the UCT legacy Society, Hugh Moore, Executive Director of the Development and Alumni Department.

She thanked members of the AAB and the Development and Alumni Department for their loyal and committed service during the year

She also thanked all alumni who continue to be willing to go the extra mile for UCT and acknowledged the work of the newly established local Cape Town Chapter of the Alumni Association.

In her report, she informed everyone that she would like to address the following 3 key areas:

1. Revisiting the objectives of the Alumni Association and Alumni Advisory Board
2. Report on the ways in which the AAB has worked to fulfil its objectives and
3. Offer personal reflections on her tenure as Chair of the AAB

The Chairperson then reported as follows:

1. **Revisiting the objectives of the Alumni Association and Alumni Advisory Board**

She recited the Objectives of the Alumni Association and Functions of AAB to everyone as follows:

The Objectives of the Alumni Association

Acting through the branches, chapters and affinity groups of the association, the objectives of the Alumni Association are:

- To promote among its members support for the University of Cape Town and to maintain close ties with the University
- To act as a conduit for the views of its members to UCT and from UCT to its members
- To assist in and promote fundraising activities by or for UCT

The Alumni Association will achieve these objectives by communication with members, facilitating and assisting with reunions of its members, arranging social/educational functions and activities for its members, by promoting internet access by alumni to the UCT website or in any other manner that may be considered appropriate.

Functions of the Alumni Advisory Board (AAB)

The AAB is essentially the Executive Committee of the Alumni Association. Its key function is to act as an advisory body to the University and to the Vice-Chancellor of the day via the Alumni Office or directly. The Board aims to ensure that UCT Development and Alumni Department and UCT alumni work together to build a dynamic and robust alumni programme one that will translate into a vibrant and supportive UCT alumni community.

The AAB presently 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.

Roles of the AAB

The chairperson narrated the Roles of the AAB as follows:

The AAB essentially has 3 roles:

- To serve as the “conscience” and the “voice” of the UCT alumni community by expressing concerns both 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
- To establish and oversee the branches and chapters of the Associations round the word and

- .To advise the Development and Alumni Department on relevant alumni events and alumni communications.

2. Report on the ways in which the AAB had sought to fulfil these 3 roles

During the year the AAB has actively sought to fulfil these three roles in the following ways:

1. AAB role as “Conscience” and “Voice” of the UCT alumni community

The AAB invited key members of the Executive Leadership Team and selected Senior Leaders to engage with them on key developments at UCT. She said she was so pleased to welcome:

The Registrar, Mr Royston Pillay who gave them an overview of what was happening at UCT including progress towards exams and graduations in the light of potential and actual disruptions by individuals, and the recent SRC elections. He also updated the AAB on the status of the UCT Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020, approved by Council. She read out the Registrar’s report as follows:

The new UCT Strategic Plan has 5 strategic goals:

Goal 1: to forge a new inclusive identity that reflects a more representative profile of students and staff, and the cultures, values, heritage and epistemologies of the diversity of UCT’s staff and students

Goal 2: to promote UCT as a vibrant and supportive intellectual environment that attracts and connects people from all over the world and advances the status and distinctiveness of scholarship in Africa

Goal 3: to advance UCT as a research-intensive university that makes a distinctive contribution to knowledge, locally and globally

Goal 4: to renew and innovate in teaching and learning – improving student success rates, broadening academic perspectives, stimulating social consciousness and cultivating critical citizens

Goal 5: to enhance the scope, quality and impact of engaged scholarship with an emphasis on addressing development and social justice.

Ms Yach also emphasised that Mr Pillay offered insights into the latest thinking from the Naming of Buildings Committee and offered an overview of the industrial relations landscape. She informed attendees that AAB welcomed the University decision to insource staff and for navigating some of the challenges involved in industrial relations so effectively.

She also informed everyone the Mr Pillay explained the difficult decisions that the University had to make in the light of the volatile situation on campus related to campus safety and security, particularly in the light of the University’s duty of care to students and staff and the need to ensure vulnerable sites were safeguarded to prevent harm to life and property.

She informed everyone that Mr Bernard Soules, Head of Campus Safety and Security in his address to the AAB reinforced the fact that the University was committed to ensuring an open campus whilst at the same time ensuring safety of everyone concerned.

The Chairperson informed all attendees that Mr Sidney van Heerden, Head of Fundraising reassured them that despite a difficult 2015 and 2016 for the University, the results at the end of 2017 were better than expected in that UCT managed to retain more donors and managed to increase the number of first time donors to the University. Support from international foundations remained steady although challenges remain to keep levels of giving to UCT high.

She also highlighted what Mr Ashley Francis, Director of Finance updated them on the University financial position. Given the reduction in state funding, coupled with the fact that the University is not a profit making institution and was unable to rely on increased student fees this remained a time for austerity at UCT and prudent fiscal oversight. She mentioned that Mr Francis reminded the AAB that additional costs had to be made to support the Jammie Shuttle, infrastructure and maintenance and to support as a priority mental well health and wellness initiatives for students and staff. Ms Yach also informed everyone that Mr Francis also mentioned that there had been additional costs as a result of staff being fully insourced. The recent reports that Government research funding for Universities will be substantially cut was also a matter of deep concern.

The Chairperson informed attendees that Prof Mamokgethi Phakeng, DVC for Research and Internationalisation at the time told the AAB that there was a need to grow the masters and doctoral numbers amongst our students and there is a need for greater diversity in that regard. Funding for post graduate students was a real challenge. Prof Phakeng also expressed concern that local research funding came from the National Research Foundation and that this is likely to see further reductions.

She told attendees that Prof Phakeng emphasised the importance that strong international partnerships contributed greatly to UCT's image and reputation and that these links needed to be strengthened.

The Chairperson also reported on IRTC Process

She informed everyone that the Council approved the establishment of a Multi Stakeholder Steering Group to oversee the Institutional Reconciliation and Transformation Commission on 10 December 2016.

The AAB was invited to nominate two representatives to serve on the Steering Group.

There was agreement that the nominees should be unifying figures committed to working with diverse stakeholder groups, accustomed to creating a supportive and inclusive environment for constructive engagement and committed to forging a sustainable institutional culture for the future. Additionally it was felt that some prior experience of mediation and conflict resolution would be desirable.

At a special meeting of the AAB on 12 January 2017, Prof Bulie Magula and Ms Lorna Houston were duly elected as the AAB representatives.

The AAB is fully supportive of the IRTC process which they hope will contribute positively towards UCT's commitment to forging a new inclusive identity.

2. AAB role in establishing and overseeing branches, chapters and affinity groups around the world

The Chairperson informed all attendees as follows:

During the year the Development and Alumni Department worked closely with the AAB to strengthen ties with alumni across the globe. The Alumni Relations Office led by Libo Msengana-Bam supported by Sihle Mabaso have invested considerable time and energy working with branches, chapters and affinity groups both at home, in neighbouring provinces and countries and abroad. She mentioned that the newly established Cape Town Chapter has demonstrated the enthusiasm local alumni have to participate in the life of their University, hosting lectures and networking events as well as exploring possibilities of acting as mentors to UCT students.

The Botswana Chapter has made great progress on supporting alumni owned businesses and raising funds for students in need of financial aid.

The Alumni Office continues to work actively with alumni associations in Switzerland, East Africa, USA, Australia, Singapore, Kigali and the UK. Closer to home, they have arranged a number of high profile lectures for alumni in Athlone, Khalitsha, Grassy Park, Phillippi, Cape Town whilst they have also participated in road shows with the Chair of the AAB in Durban, Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth and East London.

She informed everyone that during Women's Month (which really should be all year long) she was privileged to Chair an alumni event in Johannesburg. The topic was "Patriarchy – women's experiences in the workplace" – and the guest speakers were two UCT alumnae -Prof Pumla Gqola and Shafieka Isaacs. She said she was hoping to host a similar event in Cape Town later this year.

3. AAB role as advisor to DAD on events and communications

The Alumni Office initiated a new social networking platform in February 2017 called UCT Connect. Special features include mentorship and internship opportunities; online chapter and affinity group reports, mobile GPS feature that allows for tracking of UCT alumni in the local vicinity/city. A new DAD website is under construction.

The Development and Alumni Department's fundraising strategy for 2017 has focussed on bursaries (an ongoing priority; postgraduate bursaries in particular, is becoming a huge need) and the Student Wellness Service (funding for psychologists posts has been a priority), as well as projects in the arts (e.g. Opera School, Baxter Theatre), law (Growing a Lawyer campaign), health sciences (Clinical Neurosciences, UCT in Eden), sciences (African Climate Development Initiative) as well as various social justice (e.g. Children's Institute, Knowledge Co-Op) and social responsive initiatives (e.g. 100 Up school intervention programme; Abalobi Small Scale Fishers project).

The emphasis in fundraising has not only been on soliciting major gifts from corporations, foundations and trusts, but also on alumni giving. Donations from alumni make an important contribution to UCT, and the fundraising team has been encouraging alumni to give regularly to the university using the adage, 'every donation, no matter how small, but given regularly, makes a huge difference'. This strategy, using fundraising mechanisms such as the Annual Fund, Phonathon and UCT staff appeal, is seeing steadfast increase in regular alumni donors to the university.

3. Personal reflections

She informed members that two years have elapsed since she was elected Chair of the AAB. When she was elected, she expressly committed herself to helping UCT deliver its promises on transformation. In particular, she had worked closely with the Alumni Relations Office to mobilise alumni from diverse backgrounds including younger alumni who historically may not have been fully involved with their Alma Mater

As part of the effort to broaden representation in the work of the AAB, She said they are planning to co-opt the Chapter leaders based in Johannesburg, Durban, Botswana, Uganda and Kenya to the AAB to realise our ambition to convene alumni general assemblies. She informed all that they have also invited the Chair of the Graduate School of Business to participate in the work of the AAB.

She said much has been achieved despite the challenging environment in which everyone has lived, studied and worked and much remains to be done.

She said that she believe there is a need for the AAB to redouble their efforts to address a key function of the Alumni Association - encouraging alumni to support UCT by offering their time, talent or treasure to the University. Although many of us are actively involved, some of us may feel isolated or disillusioned or just not know how to become engaged. Some of us are radical and progressive, if not revolutionary; others of us are conservative if not reactionary. Some of us believe fervently in the fundamental principle as stated by Paulo Freire – that "nobody is superior to anybody". Some of us are confident in their own skin, knowing who we are and where we came from, if not where we are going.

She also said the many of us feel we are part of a Global Majority with a commitment to building an educational culture that is equitable, inclusive and supportive.

Many of us are protagonists for social change, equality inclusivity and human rights.

Some of us are change blockers.

Many of us see the need to understand each other better so that we learn to live, learn and work together harmoniously. Many of us share the belief that knowledge knows no colour, gender or sexual orientation, nor is it validated only when it is Eurocentric. Many of us are committed to healing the past in order to transform the future and time is running out...

Transformation is not a spectator sport – we are all in this together. If we stay silent or ambivalent in the face of injustice or inequality we are part of the problem not part of the solution. As we all know, transformation is a process that goes beyond numbers – facing up to people's lived experiences which may be very different from our own, being willing to engage in open, respectful and honest conversation even when we may disagree with each other, being willing to critically review our institutional culture to expose the "unwritten rules" and "micro indignities".

She informed attendees that a recent editorial in the Mail and Guardian, reflecting on the passing of Winnie Madikizela-Mandela resonated with her and seemed to describe well some of the challenges we face at UCT. It suggested that "History is never neat ... She said we find ourselves in a vitriolic debate about our history – who did what, why did they do it, who can be trusted and who sold out. Further the editor commented that "debate is a generally a healthy component of public discourse except this debate has devolved into a shouting match in which no one is actually listening."

Those who take issue with transformation would do well to heed the advice offered in this Mail and Guardian editorial which observed further that “it is essential that we listen to ideas that we don’t necessarily agree with. It is essential that we are open to finding ourselves to be wrong. “

She said that we all need to work together to advance equality, inclusivity and human rights in our day today activities – we are all of equal worth. This necessarily means doing things differently – it also requires personal and collective responsibility. UCT’s new Strategic Plan requires that all alumni are fully engaged in the transformation and renewal of our beloved UCT.

She referred to one alumni who stated that – the AAB plays an important role as a sounding board for the university leadership I understanding the diverse views of UCT’s alumni as well all work together to change our university so as to be able to leader our country intellectually and professionally.

In conclusion, she said that transformation will not happen of its own accord. We all need to invest our time, talent and treasure to help UCT reach the next level of excellence in ways that address current and future challenges.

The Chairperson proposed A Call to Action highlighting the following:

Some of the ways in which alumni can get involved:

- Join UCT Connect
- Participate in UCT centenary events
- If you are a former Smuts or Fuller resident – participate in their 90th birthday celebrations
- Get involved in the spirit of 68 celebrations
- Participate in the Distinguishing UCT events and suggest speakers
- Offer to be a mentor to students – make links with your former Faculties
- Support young alumni through providing career internships, assisting them to become entrepreneurs
- Participate in the Golden Graduation events
- Sponsor a student
- And importantly – if you know alumni who are currently out of the UCT loop – please ask them to give AAB their details so they can be added to the DAD database.

She quoted the President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa “We should seek to pursue at all time that which is right and true and just, no matter how inconvenient, how unpopular or how difficult...” and thanked everyone for listening.

Questions and Answers

Dr Karen Daniels made a suggestion that UCT should utilise social networking platforms like Webinars which would complement UCT alumni connect.

Another attendee suggested that those who studied and some were unable to graduate in 1987 when there were students/campus unrest should be documented and profiled in one of UCT's magazines. Lorna Houston generally asked as to how Alumni Association engage with those people who did not graduate, the ways they can use to get those people back to UCT, she questioned whether the climate was conducive enough to do so at UCT. Another attendee suggested that a Newsletter that talks about that era must be developed. Christie Renfrew also proposed that the Board must do something or a Committee must be established to look around history during 1985 – 1990 era.

One of the attendees who also studied during the 80s alluded that the University is turning a blind eye to those who studied during that era and urged UCT to give them the same respect that was given to "Fees Must Fall "students. Laurence Gawronsky also that history must be told starting with the first year students when they come to register.

Keenan Hendrickse made a point that there is still a huge generational gap and suggested that they need to think carefully about capturing the point that was being discussed regarding history between 1985 and 1990. He also said that there must be meaningful engagements. He acknowledged that the events that UCT organises are wonderful but are not enough.

Prof Brian Williams commended the Chairperson for a detailed and insightful report saying that it showed that the AAB had been doing a lot of work. He said even though the VC said that the Alumni Association is an advisory not executive body, the fact that AAB has no level of independence hinders the voice of alumni to be heard independently and that suggest that there is inequality in a way how relationships are shaped at UCT. He said there are calls for alumni to be funders and support the University but their opinions are not executed and carried out. He said as Alumni Association they can talk and talk on an annual basis but he was concerned that nothing would be done and that the AAB are treated more like a lobby group.

He also said that at UCT law enforcement agencies are activated in order to deal with students and that UCT supports criminalisation of students. UCT must continue in its efforts to provide more effective independent dispute resolution measures.

The Chairperson said that the point by Prof Williams is one the tasks that the IRTC is working on. Prof further said that all criminal actions involving students that are currently underway must be stopped. He then raised a motion as follows:

Prof Brian Williams's proposal

I propose that all University of Cape Town students who were involved in protest action should not be criminally charged for allegations of violence related to that protests. The University of Cape Town as an independent authority should hold such students accountable in terms of its own laws, regulations, protocols and norms. The traumatising impact of such arrests and possible criminalisation of young students should be avoided at all costs. Furthermore the university should do everything in its power to assist students facing criminal charges and support the withdrawal of the charges so that internal remedies can be applied. Ends

Ms Bidy Greene needed clarity on the kind of crime that Prof Williams had proposed. The Chairperson explained that it relates to Protest actions only.

Dr Karen Daniels suggested that there must be a way of solving problems as some students end up being arrested and dismissed without any evidence. Another added that she also witnessed police hunting and assaulting students at Forest Hill Residence in 2016.

Another attendee also said that she would not like to see children through the criminal justice system and asked everyone to ask themselves as to why are the students so angry after 24 years of democracy before they start condemning students and after asking themselves that, they will then be able to respond accordingly. She then called for decriminalisation of “Fees Must fall” protests.

Prof Brian Williams again made a clarification that by his proposal/motion he does not imply that there mustn't be accountability but he was merely suggesting that UCT must use its own mechanisms to solve problems associated with students' protests. UCT must not be complicit in destroying young children's lives.

The Chairperson then asked attendees to vote on the motion by showing of hands. The motion was supported by a majority of attendees with 2 abstentions and 1 opposed.

Voting for the Alumni Advisory Board

Ms Libo Msengana-Bam led the voting process from the start to the end.

13 Nominations had been received prior the voting item on the Agenda .4 more nominations were taken from the floor. The total number of nominations was 17.

Contenders were then allowed chance to briefly tell the attendees about themselves before voting could start.

53 Alumni Voted and elected the following alumni to serve on the Alumni Advisory Board 2018-2020

1. Dr Aditi Bye Hunma
2. Dr Karen Williams
3. Ms Nobukhosi Dlamini
4. Ms Dianna Yach
5. Ms Keitumetsi Nare
6. Prof Nombulelo Magula
7. Mr Paki Zandile

The Chairperson, Ms Dianna Yach thanked everyone for attending and for showing interest of participation .She also thanked Alumni Relations team for making the AGM a success.

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned just 21h00

