



SOL PLAATJE
UNIVERSITY

APRIL 2019

e-BRIEF



Dear SPU Community

The current Strategic Plan of the University is gradually reaching its end-of-life. This plan was drawn up towards the end of 2014 and covers the five-year period from January 2015 to December 2019.

What is remarkable is how well this plan has served our needs and articulated our organisational intentions, given that it was drawn up at a time when the University employed less than 30 people and before the significant development of the SPU infrastructure and systems we see today.

The SPU team clearly did well in developing the plan and then determinedly ensuring that almost every item of the plan was suitably achieved.

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CHANCELLOR, STANDARD BANK RAISE R170K FOR STUDENT BURSARIES

The Chancellor of Sol Plaatje University, Judge Steven Majiedt, and Standard Bank hosted a successful golf day in Kimberley

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DR NHLANHLA MPOFU APPOINTED TO CHE ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

Director for Teaching, Learning and Programme Development, Dr Nhlanhla Mpfu was appointed as a member of the

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SPU INFRASTRUCTURE BY THE NUMBERS

SPU's Data Science Honours programme began on a high note this year with the University receiving a mention in

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ECO CAMPAIGNS PLANNED TO CLEAN UP, SAVE WATER AT SPU

The University is planning two side-by-side environmental campaigns to help keep the University free of litter as well

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REGISTRAR'S OFFICE: APPLICATIONS FOR 2020 OPEN

The Registrar's Office has confirmed that applications for the 2020 academic year opened on Monday, 25 March 2019.

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R967m ALLOCATED TO STUDENT HISTORIC DEBT

The government has announced that the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) has allocated an

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FOCUS ON RESEARCH: SPU'S DR MARGA STANDER TACKLES PLAGIARISM

Dr Marga Stander of the Department of English in the School of Humanities at Sol Plaatje University has recently had a

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WRITING, POSTGRADUATE RETREAT IMPROVES SKILLS

The Centre for Teaching, Learning and Programme Development held a five-day Writing Retreat earlier this year.

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ACADEMIC STAFF DISCUSS HIGHER EDUCATION LANDSCAPE

The Centre for Teaching, Learning and Programme Development held a five-day induction and support programme

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THE SPU E-BRIEF IS PRODUCED BY THE SOL PLAATJE UNIVERSITY FOR ITS EMPLOYEES.

Contributions, comments and suggestions are welcome and these can be sent to comms@spu.ac.za

The next edition is due out in May 2019.

Editor: Kashini Maistry

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VICE CHANCELLOR'S MESSAGE

The current Strategic Plan of the University is gradually reaching its end-of-life. This plan was drawn up towards the end of 2014 and covers the five-year period from January 2015 to December 2019.

What is remarkable is how well this plan has served our needs and articulated our organisational intentions, given that it was drawn up at a time when the University employed less than 30 people and before the significant development of the SPU infrastructure and systems we see today.

The SPU team clearly did well in developing the plan and then determinedly ensuring that almost every item of the plan was suitably achieved.

*However, Sol Plaatje University now
needs a new five-year strategic plan
and a process has been initiated to
develop this next plan.*

The process will start with a critical assessment of the aspects of the current Strategic Plan that have indeed been achieved and those aspects or instances where we may have fallen short.

We have commissioned two senior and experienced higher education leaders who will act as reviewers of our performance over the past five years. They will provide considered feedback - from the perspective of outside and detached specialists - using evidence such as all SPU's Annual Performance Plans, Annual Reports and Academic Planning Documents.

These two reviewers will further consider the self-assessment reports which are currently being drawn up by each of the four academic Schools and each of the four administrative Divisions.

These reports are expected to be completed next month. The two reviewers will then visit SPU for a few days in May this year, to interact with, interrogate and evaluate these self-assessments, before delivering their final review report.

The self-assessment reports from the Schools and Divisions, the views and verdicts of the assessors and a number of further processes will be part of the overall effort to develop a new five-year Strategic Plan for SPU, covering the period 2020 to 2024,



which will have to be approved by Council in December 2019, for implementation as from 1 January 2020.

We are treating the development of the next strategic plan as an opportunity for fresh thinking and new insights on the next phase of our University's development.

As we take stock of successes and failures and reflect on the positioning of SPU and its "sense of place" in the broad community, we will work hard to ensure the best possible outcomes for all who will work, learn and engage with us at SPU.

Prof Yunus Ballim
Vice-Chancellor and Principal



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CHANCELLOR, STANDARD BANK RAISE R170K FOR STUDENT BURSARIES



The Chancellor of Sol Plaatje University, Judge Steven Majiedt, and Standard Bank hosted a successful golf day in Kimberley that raised R170k for students who were not covered by NSFAS.

He thanked Standard Bank and the other organisations for their sponsorships as well as the Kimberley Club for their continued support of SPU.

Vice-Chancellor and Principal Prof Yunus Ballim thanked the Chancellor for his commitment to developing our students and for his commitment that no student should go hungry.

*He commended the sponsors
for their support which had
enabled the University to
achieve tremendous growth
over the last five years.*

Mr Anton Nicolaisen, Provincial Head (Free State and Northern Cape) of Standard Bank said it was important to Standard Bank that SPU was a success.

The competition was won by George Moorcroft.



Captions (from top to bottom):
The SPU student team: Mphoentle Moletsane, Tshepang Koloti, Kaone Moemedi and Milton Olyn. The SPU team: Fritz van Dyk (City Librarian, Sol Plaatje Municipality), Cobus Rademeyer (Senior Lecturer: History, SPU), Wayne Olivier (Cluster Manager, HOSPERSA) and Johnny Higgs (Regional Manager South African Revenue Services).

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DR NHLANHLA MPOFU APPOINTED TO CHE ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

Director for Teaching, Learning and Programme Development, Dr Nhlanhla Mpofo was appointed as a member of the Council of Higher Education (CHE) Accreditation Committee from February 2019 to February 2022.

The Council on Higher Education is responsible for the accreditation of public and private higher education institutions' learning programmes leading to qualifications registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and registered by the Department of Higher Education and Training (https://www.che.ac.za/focus_areas/accreditation/overview).

The Accreditation Committee supports the work of the Council.



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SPU INFRASTRUCTURE BY THE NUMBERS

NO OF YEARS
OF BUILDING
ON SITE

± 6yrs

NO OF YRS UNTIL
COMPLETION OF
CONSTRUCTION

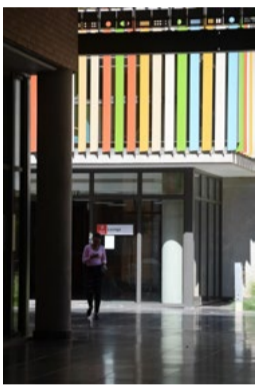
± 10yrs

NUMBER OF
NEW BUILDINGS
COMPLETED

6

NUMBER OF
REFURBISHED
BUILDINGS COMPLETED

5



NUMBER OF
PROJECTS
CURRENTLY ON SITE

12

NUMBER OF
WOMEN-OWNED
CONSTRUCTION
BUSINESSES
BUILDING AT SPU



AREA BUILT
BY END 2018

59,845m²

AREA OF OFFICES

6,252m²

AREA OF CLASSROOMS

6,746m²

NUMBER OF
SPU STUDENT
BEDS

1,070

% OF SPU BEDS PER
UNDERGRADUATE
ENROLMENT

56%

NUMBER OF
NEW CLASSROOMS BY MID-YEAR 2020

9





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ECO CAMPAIGNS PLANNED TO CLEAN UP, SAVE WATER AT SPU

The University is planning two side-by-side environmental campaigns to help keep the University free of litter and to conserve water.

Director of Facilities and Services Lawrence Blackenberg explains that the management team are keen to get the Keep SPU Clean campaign off the ground.

Lawrence says that while the campaign is a necessity from a cleanliness point of view, it is also part of the University's Institutional APP.

Since water is an ever-increasingly scarce resource across the country and with Kimberley having experienced severe water shortages, water saving has become critical.

He says that already the University has made some headway in building structural measures for better water control.

Lawrence says that the campaigns will help to change behaviour which should have the biggest positive impact on these eco-initiatives.

EVERY
DROP
COUNTS



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APPLICATIONS FOR 2020 NOW OPEN



The Registrar's Office has confirmed that
APPLICATIONS FOR THE 2020 ACADEMIC YEAR
opened on Mon, 25 March 2019

An updated application form will be available on the website shortly as well as the 2020 prospectus.

Although the plan is to make applications available online, this is yet to be finalised.

Last year, the University received over 4,000 applications.

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FOCUS ON RESEARCH: SPU'S DR MARGA STANDER TACKLES PLAGIARISM

Dr Marga Stander of the Department of English in the School of Humanities has recently had a research article published in the Journal of Further and Higher Education.

Entitled, *"Strategies to help university students avoid plagiarism: a focus on translation as an intervention strategy"* the article focuses on the importance of not overlooking the issue of plagiarism in an academic setting and creating an awareness of plagiarism avoidance.

Writing centres were established at a number of universities in South Africa to help students develop their academic skills through appropriate interventions. Nevertheless, additional intervention strategies need to be implemented to help them avoid plagiarism.

One such intervention, in the form of translation, was investigated at a rural university campus to test whether translation would reduce plagiarism amongst first-year students.

A quantitative research approach was used to collect and analyse the data. Plagiarism in students' work was detected using manual evaluations and the Turnitin™ application. An intervention was carried out to develop students' skills in paraphrasing and to inform them about plagiarism.

This article describes the scaffolding process followed and reports on the results found after applying the translation method.

To link to this article:

<https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2018.1526260>



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DHET NEWS

GOVERNMENT ALLOCATES R967 MILLION TO STUDENT HISTORIC DEBT

The government has announced that the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) has allocated an additional sum of R967 million to the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) to settle the historic debt owed to universities by 52,514 NSFAS-funded continuing students.

The allocation is for those who had been funded by NSFAS before 2018. Historically, these students were required to fund part of their costs through family or own funding and were not able to do so, hence the debt.

Minister Pandor indicated that this is the first phase of the assessment of the historical debt owed to universities.

“Historic debt refers to money owed to the university by continuing NSFAS qualifying senior students who were registered in the 2018 academic year; were funded by NSFAS on a family income threshold of R122,000 per annum; and who met the academic criteria to enable them to graduate within the minimum time plus two years.”

It is expected that all the students funded through the old scheme on the R122,000 threshold would have exited the system by the 2022 academic year.

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NEWS FROM ACADEMIC SCHOOLS

EDUCATION



DR MPISI TALKS ABOUT SPU'S TEACHING MODEL

Dr Anthony Mpisi from the School of Education presented the SPU teaching model to the Northern Cape branch of the teacher union, SAOU.

The presentation was made to school principals and deputy principals at the provincial seminar which took place at the University.

The seminar aimed to engage stakeholders on such topics as school management, violence in schools, and the current political environment and the role it plays in school management.



Dr Anthony Mpisi is introduced by the Chairperson of the Session and Principal of NJ Heyns Special School Mr Van Wyk at the recent SAOU provincial seminar which was held at SPU.

SPU WELL-REPRESENTED AT EDUCATION CONFERENCE

Six of the University's academics, which included the DVC Prof Jean Baxen, boosted the University's representation at the Education Association of South Africa (EASA) annual conference, held earlier this year in Polokwane.

The School of Education academics presented various papers under the conference theme of paradoxes of educational transformation in South Africa.

These included:

- Drs Anthony Mpisi, Emma Groenewald and Dr Emma Barnett (*Experiencing "otherness": A journey with first-year university students*)
- Dr Mpisi also presented another paper in collaboration with Prof G Alexander of CUT (*Chalk and cheese? - Teacher-learner relations in South African multicultural classroom*)
- Dr Glynnis Daries (*Funds of Knowledge and agentic strategies of young children in a marginalised context*).



The School of Education's Dr Tony Mpisi and Dr Glynnis Daries share a moment at the conference with SPU DVC Prof Jean Baxen (centre) who participated in the World Education Research Association (WERA) panel discussion.

SPU will host EASA's 2020 conference in January next year.

ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES



SCHOOL SAYS FAREWELL TO PROF NELSON

The School of Economic and Management Sciences bid farewell to Professor Carnot Nelson who spent six weeks at SPU during the first semester of 2019 as a Visiting Scholar.

He is a Fulbright Specialist and Emeritus Professor of the University of South Florida whose expertise is in Industrial/Organisational Psychology.

His major research and professional interests include evaluation research, organisational change, knowledge utilisation, organisational theory, person perception and cross-cultural research.

In the six weeks which Professor Nelson spent at the School, he reviewed the syllabi of at least one course of each academic staff member, reviewed examples of assignments and exams, lectured to four classes, gave a public lecture on Emotional Labour and made suggestions on research for six dissertations.

Ms Caroline Hoorn, who coordinated Professor Nelson's visit and stay was singled out for special praise for her efforts in this regard.

Professor Nelson said that the School has "fantastic staff"; and that SPU has an impressive student body who were intelligent and engaged.



Caroline Hoorn with Professor Carnot Nelson.

He expressed his appreciation for the way he had been received at SPU and said that he had a great experience in a short time. He wants to maintain the relationships he had formed here through collaborations between SPU and his home institution, the University of South Florida. He encouraged the staff to remain in contact with him.

SPU JOINS NATIONAL TREASURY WITH BUDGET OUTREACH

The School of Economic and Management Sciences hosted the annual Budget Outreach in March 2019.

Two senior analysts from the National Treasury, Mr Vusi Maupa and Ms Ornissa Velayadum, presented the #RSABudget 2019 to a sizeable group of staff and students in the Library Auditorium.

In her welcome remarks, the DVC Academic, Professor Jean Baxen, noted that SPU was opening spaces for our students to understand what it means to be responsible citizens.

Mr Maupa led the presentation entitled Risk, Renewal and Growth. He outlined the main aims of the #RSABudget 2019 which are to introduce economic and fiscal measures intended to move the economy onto a new trajectory and reduce the long-term risks to South Africa's finances.

In light of these considerations, the budgetary priorities for 2019 are to:

- Narrow the budget deficit and stabilise the national debt-to-GDP ratio
- Support restructuring of the electricity sector, and reduce the immediate risks Eskom posed to the economy and public finances
- Renew economic growth by strengthening private-sector investment, improving the planning and implementation of infrastructure projects, and rebuilding state institutions.

Many of the questions were focused on the Eskom rescue plan which entails government support of the utility's balance sheet to the amount of R23 billion annually over 10 years.

This would though be dependent upon the appointment of a Chief Reorganisation Officer; the creation of a separate transmission company; and greater transparency around the financial position of generation, transmission and distribution.



NEWS FROM ACADEMIC SCHOOLS

HUMANITIES



HWSETA AWARDS 15 BURSARIES TO SPU HONOURS SOCIAL SCIENCE SOCIOLOGY STUDENTS

The Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) has awarded 15 bursaries worth R871,500 to the School of Humanities Honours in Social Science (Sociology) students for this year.

This is a shot in the arm for the first postgraduate cohort in the school. The funding covers student tuition, research support and other expenses.

The degree aims to develop research capacity and support innovative research. It will also contribute to generating new knowledge and promoting research themes relevant to the health and welfare sector.

It also aims to foster stakeholder partnership through collaborative research for the benefit of the health and welfare sector.



University honours students celebrate HWSETA bursaries.

BOOK LAUNCH BONANZA

In collaboration with various partners, the University has celebrated an eclectic mix of book launches ranging from Sihle Bolani's *We are the ones we need: The war on black professionals in corporate South Africa* to Renaud Ego's *Visionary Animal: Rock art of Southern Africa* and Prof Zakes Mda's *The Zulus of New York*.

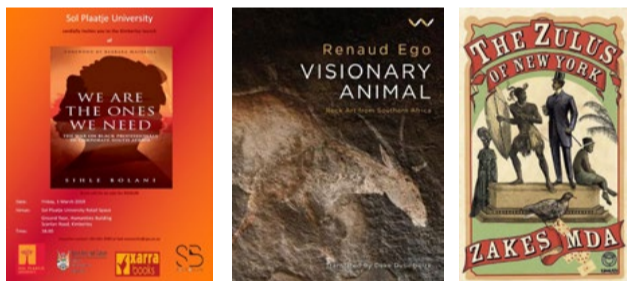
Sihle's book delves into the challenges faced by black professionals in South Africa's corporate environment and shares some of her own experiences in some of the country's top companies.

Visionary Animal is a rich collection of essays on San rock art from across southern Africa and illustrated with more than 140 photos taken by French specialist in southern African rock art, Renaud Ego.

The Zulus of New York is a glorious new novel which draws on the true history of "Farini's Friendly Zulus", men who were taken to Britain and then to America as performing curiosities. Zakes Mda further described his book as "a story aimed at humanising people who had their dignity stripped of them through the atrocities of the past".



Author Sihle Bolani talks to psychology lecturer Ayanda Simelane at the SPU launch of Sihle's book.



Book launch Bonanza for SPU: *We are the ones we need* (Sihle Bolani), *Visionary Animal* (Renaud Ego) and *The Zulus of New York* (Zakes Mda).

NATURAL AND APPLIED SCIENCES



SPU PROMOTED AT SCIFEST AFRICA, GRAHAMSTOWN 2019

Scifest Africa, South Africa's National Science Festival was established in 1996 by the Grahamstown Foundation with the aim of promoting public awareness, understanding and appreciation of science, technology, engineering, mathematics and innovation.

The 2019 theme "Discover your element" celebrated the International Year of the Periodic Table of Chemical Elements as proclaimed by the United Nations. Further focus also included scientific facilities across the continent, the aspects of "edutourism" which is travel for the purpose of learning, or "scientific tourism" including a focus on Space tourism and other current hot topics.

Our contribution to this year's festival was to promote and market SPU to inform the broader scientific community about our existence and academic programmes.

Overall, approximately 300 visitors passed through the SPU table for information. We obtained details of more than 250 Grade 11 and 12 learners and their educators, from different schools across the Eastern and Western Cape, who showed a keen interest in joining SPU next year.



The School of Natural and Applied Sciences' Frank Komati (top picture) and Dr Themba Tshabalala (bottom) are seen here engaging with some of the 44,511 visitors which included 233 schools to the festival. The University was part of the 70 participating organisations at the 2019 National Science Festival.



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ALUMNI REGISTRATION

To strengthen relations with the University's alumni the University now has a facility on the website for alumni to register and give their latest details.

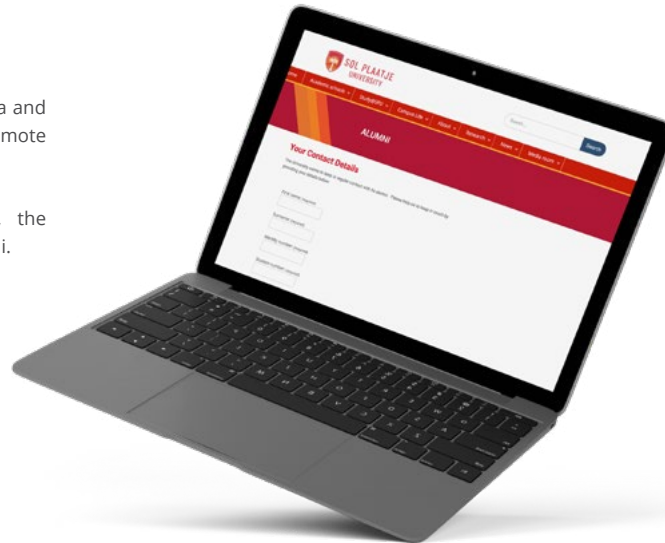
This new facility will be promoted on social media and the website. Please support this initiative and promote it to the alumni with whom you may have contact.

Once the database is sufficiently populated, the University will regularly correspond with its alumni.

The website address for the alumni database is:

www.spu.ac.za

and can be found on the About Us tab.



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LEARNING, TEACHING AND DEVELOPMENT WRITING, POSTGRADUATE RETREAT IMPROVES SKILLS



SPU academic staff with DVC Prof Jean Baxen and facilitators.

The Centre for Teaching, Learning and Programme Development held a five-day Writing Retreat earlier this year.

The retreat was organised for academics writing journal articles by improving their skills in abstract writing, article writing and career path planning.

The second group focused on postgraduate studies completion where academic staff were provided with insights into research design, instrument development, use of tools for data analysis and career path planning.

The retreat was facilitated by five experts - Prof Lesley Le Grange, Prof Yvonne Reed, Dr Sherran Clarence, Prof Brigette Smit and Associate Prof Moyra Keane.

The next writing support programme will take place from 11 to 14 July 2019.

In the interim, academics who wish to continue writing in a collaborative space, are invited to meet at their convenience on the fourth floor of the Library every month.

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LEARNING, TEACHING AND DEVELOPMENT ACADEMIC STAFF DISCUSS HIGHER EDUCATION LANDSCAPE

The Centre for Teaching, Learning and Programme Development held a five-day induction and support programme in January and March for the University's academic staff.

A total of 46 academics attended the January and February programmes both of which were facilitated by Prof Jean Baxen with support from Associate Prof Moyra Keane.

The aim of this programme was to discuss the changing higher education landscape: national and global perspectives; contextual and current factors shaping higher education in SA; global trends in pedagogy, curriculum and assessment and the context of SPU with regards to the staff profile, new generation of academics, first-time students in higher education and mentorship opportunities.



Vice-Chancellor and Principal Prof Yunus Ballim welcomes the staff to SPU.

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NEW APPOINTMENTS

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES

Dr Tinashe Nyamunda

Senior Lecturer: History

Dr Godfrey Maringira

Associate Professor: Anthropology

RESIGNATIONS

Mr Mandla Mthembu

Lecturer in the School of EMS (28 February 2019)

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COUNCIL NEWS

Council confirmed the following appointments:

1. Mr RH "Holly" Clarkson's reappointment to Council and as the Chairperson of the Council Finance Committee
2. Mr H Maritz as an External Expert Member to the Council Finance Committee
3. A one-year, post-retirement contract for Mr R Naidoo, as the University Registrar.

Council received a report from the Institutional Forum on the possibility of establishing a student newspaper; the need for an awareness campaign for students around managing relationships; and a proposed a poster campaign to address littering on campus.

Council received a report from Senate that included the following information:

- **New members of Senate:**
 1. Dr Audrey Msimanga (Head of School of Education)
 2. Mr Sabelo Chizwina (Director: Library Services)
 3. Mr Thabo Moolwa (SRC Representative for 2019)
 4. Mr Itumeleng Senye (SRC Representative for 2019)

- **Honours-level programmes have been implemented in all four schools.**
- **The Senate Research Ethics Committee has been constituted** and has already considered three research projects to be undertaken by academic staff.

The Vice-Chancellor reported the following to Council:

- SPU produced 214 graduates in 2018 which represented a 54% cohort graduation in the minimum time.
- SPU received over 4,400 applications in 2018 for admission in 2019. We made 1,156 firm offers, and the uptake rate of registrations to offers was around 75% in 2019.
- The latest student enrolment figures for 2019 are as follows:
Undergraduate: 1,912
(778 new students, 1,134 returning students)
Postgraduate: 90 (approx.)

This means that in 2019 SPU has enrolled slightly over 2,000 students. Of these students 29.4% come from Kimberley, 31.9% come from the rest of the Northern Cape; 25% come from the North West Province and the remainder from all the other provinces.

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SPU EVENTS & CALENDAR

SPU EVENTS

11 April (16:30 to 20:00) - Teaching and Research Support

Research Funding Proposal Development Workshop

12 April - School of Humanities

2019 seminar series – *“God for us all; Guluva for himself”* – Homeless men’s experience of repeated trauma

ON THE SA CALENDAR

April - Freedom Month

27 April - Freedom Day

WORLD COMMEMORATIVE DAYS

18 April - World Heritage Day

22 April - Earth Day

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