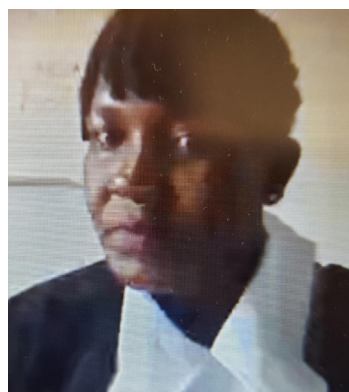




UNIVEN holds first ever virtual SRC Inauguration Ceremony

On Thursday, 09 July 2020, the University of Venda (UNIVEN) held its Inauguration Ceremony of 2019/2020 Student Representative Council (SRC) Cabinet members. This historic occasion was held virtually through Microsoft Teams from 14:30 and was also live on various University social media platforms.



The Inauguration ceremony was presided by Magistrate Shirley Nemutandani of the Thohoyandou Magistrate Court and the programme was directed by the Director of Student Affairs, Mr Lufuno Tshikhudo.



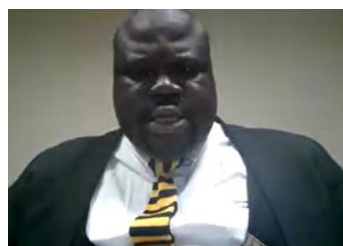
In his Keynote address, the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Dr Bernard Nthambeleni said that COVID-19 pandemic, as declared by the World Health Organisation on the 11 March 2020 has accelerated unprecedented change world-wide and our continent, country and University has not been spared. Dr Nthambeleni further expressed that, before the outbreak of this pandemic, the conventional wisdom had been that lecture rooms and face to face interactions were critical to teaching and learning. He explained that, today as we are witnessing, having prime office and state of the art lecture theatres, is not a solution.

"The pandemic has forced and imposed on us in a very short space of time to adopt new ways of teaching, learning and working. Universities such as ours are forced to reimagine new modes of offering tuition." Dr Nthambeleni also said that in order to mitigate the impact of COVID-19, the University of Venda embraced blended learning as an effective training technique that combines face-to-face training with online instruction through learner management system (LMS).

He concluded his address by advising SRC Members to resist conflating a formal structure of student governance with student politics; to serve genuinely; to always remember that in leadership, criticism is inevitable, but how you respond to it is a choice; to encourage student body to observe the COVID-19 safety protocols to protect themselves and those close to them; to take COVID-19 seriously because anyone can contract COVID-19. "So, please keep yourself and your loved ones safe. Always follow the 5 golden rules, including wearing a cloth face mask, cleaning surfaces regularly and washing or sanitizing your hands often."



Deputy Vice-Chancellor Operations, Dr Robert Martin said that this is indeed a very challenging year for everyone. He told SRC members that the University Management will continue to give student leadership support during this tough times.



SRC President, Mr Gift Chauke encouraged SRC members to always strive to serve students. He further discouraged laziness in SRC members because they were elected to serve students.

The 2019/2020 Cabinet members are: Gift Chauke (SRC President), Dumisani Mabasa (Deputy SRC President); Yanda Mxaku (Secretary General); Billy Mthombeni (Deputy Secretary General); Somthi Afrika (Minister of Finance); Mulalo Ravhura (Minister of Education); Rebecca Ramphabana (Minister of Information, External); Jabulani Manganyi (Minister of Health, Safety and Security); Musa Mokgobi (Minister of On Campus and Off Campus Residences); Mboneni Neluonde (Minister of Culture, Arts and Religion); Bafana Mageni (Minister of Sports, Recreation and Culture Committee); Tshimangadzo Mudau (Gender and People Living with Disability); Dzivhuluwani Mugari (Postgraduate Chairperson); Mosa Machethe (Minister of Legal, Policies and Constitutional Affairs); Andani Masindi (Speaker) and Fulufhelo Matshaya (Deputy Speaker).



Director of Student Affairs, Mr Lufuno Tshikhudo

"...please keep yourself and your loved ones safe. Always follow the 5 golden rules, including wearing a cloth face mask, cleaning surfaces regularly and washing or sanitizing your hands often."

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Above: Some members of SRC posing for photos (taken prior to lockdown)

“The pandemic has forced and imposed on us in a very short space of time to adopt new ways of teaching, learning and working. Universities such as ours are forced to reimagine new modes of offering tuition.”

UNIVEN Enactus emerges third place during National Virtual Support Competition

UNIVEN Enactus, a student community engagement organization which empowers community members to improve their livelihoods through entrepreneurial action has emerged position three (03) out of Sixteen (16) participating Universities during the National Virtual Support Competition. This virtual competition took place online on Wednesday, 15 and Thursday, 16 July 2020. The competition was live streamed from 09:00 am on several social media platforms.

Faranani Mabada, a UNIVEN Enactus Project Leader said that, Enactus UNIVEN has presented projects that have empowered community members around Thohoyandou with business and entrepreneurial skills that have resulted in better and more sustainable sources of livelihood.

The University of Venda joins hands in congratulating Enactus UNIVEN Team for a job well done.



University of Venda
Creating Future Leaders

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has been upgraded!



For more information
Immigration@univen.ac.za
www.univen.ac.za/myuniven/

16 July 2020

Dear Colleague

RE: THE SPREAD OF COVID-19: DROPLETS AND AIRBORNE AND AEROSOL TRANSMISSION

This communique is prepared in response to inquiries that HIGHER HEALTH has received from the post schooling education and training sector in relation to the suggestions that SARS-CoV-2 virus can be transmitted through the air (aerosols).

The World Health Organization (WHO) has indicated that the SARS-CoV-2 virus which causes COVID19 disease probably spreads mainly through small droplets expelled from the nose and mouth of an infected person, and that these secretion droplets drop to a surface or the floor below. However, there is an emerging body of evidence that suggests that expelled micro-droplets may remain airborne for longer and that they may therefore also be transmitted from person-to-person through the air, via the presence of aerosols. However, more global scientific data on this newly emerging mode of transmission is still awaited, to give more clarity on the extent of transmission from person to person, through the air.

COVID-19 is a respiratory disease. History tells us that respiratory viruses can spread both through droplets and by aerosols. As we increase our medical knowledge about COVID-19, including the rate of transmission through different pathways, it is advisable that we prevent both these modes of spread, regardless of whether one is more likely than the other.

There are no medicines available to prevent infections. Thus, as scientists search for a prevention tool such as a vaccine, we need to follow public health measures to prevent ourselves becoming infected. These are contained in the HIGHER HEALTH guidelines, protocols and algorithms which can help in developing and strengthening effective infection control systems across our campuses.

If we presume that aerosol transmission does occur and until proven otherwise, these additional measures are also advised:

- **Air circulation:** Ensure that all doors and windows are kept open, for good ventilation and circulation. This is challenging during winter, but nevertheless highly advisable.
- **Air-conditioners:** Make sure air-conditioners are fully serviced, the filters cleaned, and where possible, the mechanical exhaust opened to take air out of the building rather than recirculate back inside.
- **Physical distancing:** Retaining at least two metres' distance between you and other individuals significantly reduces the likelihood of spreading the virus.
- **Masks:** Irrespective of whether this virus is spread through aerosol or only spread via droplets, face masks must be worn on campus, as well as in other public spaces, including transport, shopping and so on, throughout.
- **Fumigation/other sprays:** The WHO does not recommend fogging and fumigation. Surfaces should be cleaned with soap and water, dilute bleach or 70% alcohol.

Currently a number of scientific reviews are examining this matter further. HIGHER HEALTH continually monitors scientific, medical and other developments related to COVID-19 and will update its guidelines, protocols and algorithms as development occurs, in this regard.

Kind Regards



Dr Ramneek Ahluwalia Chief Executive Officer

Directors: W de Villiers (Chairperson), A Bawa, M Mabizela, T Mayekiso, SJ Mlotshwa, N Phaswana-Mafuya, A Singh, D Tromp, B Madalane, R Ahluwalia (CEO)



Higher Education & Training: Health, Wellness and Development Centre

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T: +27 (012) 030 0113 www.higherhealth.ac.za

28 July 2020

Dear Vice-Chancellor

Re: HIGHER HEALTH 24 HOUR TOLLFREE MENTAL HEALTH HELPLINE

HIGHER HEALTH, as the national agency of the Department of Higher Education and Training, dedicated to student and staff wellbeing, has led a comprehensive post-schooling education sector response to COVID-19. Its latest intervention addresses the mental health needs of over two-million students and staff who make up our sector.

As stated by the United Nations, the World Health Organization and local experts, the mental health and wellbeing of whole societies have been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and is an urgent priority.

Physical and psychological health go hand in hand together. COVID-19 has further exacerbated anxiety, depression, feelings of loneliness and fear due to economic and academic uncertainties. Hence it is imperative that the mental and psychosocial wellbeing of our students and staff be emphasised as a critical enabler for the achievement of our skills development and education goals across all our universities, TVET colleges, CET colleges, skill and work-based learning centres, as well as our private higher education institutions.

Under the guidance of the Department of Higher Education and Training and in support with the SA Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG), HIGHER HEALTH has mapped the mental health and substance abuse priorities related to COVID-19 within the post-schooling sector. A tailor-made three-tier programme considers why and how students and staff may be impacted and how to assist individuals who experience problems.

At the intervention's primary level, HIGHER HEALTH's student-led peer-to-peer programme plays a key role in creating awareness and introducing initiatives to increase psychological resilience, recognise and reduce anxiety, stress and depression and prevent suicide. Peer-to-peer counselling is enhanced through mental health self-risk assessments and various communication initiatives. Notably, addressing factors and detrimental psychosocial and physical effects of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) – as a recognised challenge to the post-schooling sector – are part of the same conversations and interventions.

The secondary level entails a HIGHER HEALTH 24-hour toll-free student and staff helpline, in alliance with SADAG which enables the provision of help when needed in 11 official languages. The service will provide free telephonic – or SMS – counselling, crisis intervention and support, and referrals to mental health professionals and other psychosocial resources to students and staff across all campuses. Where needed, HIGHER HEALTH will assist individual institutions with capacity building and implementation.

At a tertiary level, HIGHER HEALTH is appointing 10 clinical psychologists, across all our provinces, who will provide counselling and refer relevant cases to the appropriate professionals.

The mental health initiative for the HIGHER HEALTH 24-hour student and staff helpline can be accessed as follows:

- Toll-free call 0800 36 36 36
- SMS 43336

We are confident that the mental health service will go a long way to helping students and staff cope with the heightened complexities of this academic year, but it is also a valuable investment in the future health and wellness of our students and staff.

I would appreciate your assistance in helping us spread the information, widely to all our students, staff, and stakeholders, on this important initiative within our sector.

Kind Regards

Dr Ramneek Ahluwalia Chief Executive Officer

Directors: W de Villiers (Chairperson), A Bawa, M Mabizela, T Mayekiso, SJ Mlotshwa, N Phaswana-Mafuya, A Singh, D Tromp, B Madalane, R Ahluwalia (CEO)



STUDENT SUPPORT DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC



CENTRE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHING AND LEARNING (CHETL), STUDENT COUNSELLING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT (SCCDU) AND DISABILITY UNITS (DU)

During this time of lockdown, when you are required to self-isolate and not engage in needed social contact, you may be inclined to feeling alone, uncertain and stressed. That might be worse for those already experiencing mental health struggles of sorts. These struggles may be exacerbated by the inability to attend face-to-face psychotherapy sessions. Added to these issues are the worry, stress and anxiety associated with all the "fake" news flooding the social media. Lockdown, social distancing, social isolation and quarantine do not necessarily mean that all social contact must cease.

Student Counselling and Career Development Unit (SCCDU) is available to you during the lockdown period and beyond.

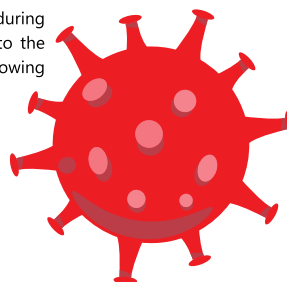
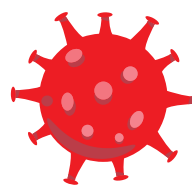
Students can continue and maintain access with therapists for counselling sessions via telephone or WhatsApp during normal working hours.

Telephone counselling is available.
Please contact Dr L V Mathye @ 082 782 2041
and/or Dr GN Dama @ 073 902 0585.

STUDENTS LIVING WITH DISABILITIES

The Disabled Student Unit (DSU) understands the Lockdown as announced by the President of the country and the Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Venda. As a country we are hoping that we will overcome this pandemic and go back to our normal life. DSU requests all students to use their assistive devices to enhance learning during this difficult time. DSU staff is available to assist you during this tough time. For queries pertaining to the use of assistive devices contact the following staff members:

Mr Gadisi at +27824823083
or Mr Sirwali at 0793640334
or Mr Macheque at +7780203429.
For Counselling contact
Dr Mbuva at 083 444 7475 and
Mrs Matodzi at 071 308 9723



We would like to hear from you!

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channel.

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University of Venda

We urge all those who are returning to campus to adhere to the University of Venda COVID -19 rules and regulations.

If you spot anything out of the ordinary on campus - contact the University Hotline by calling toll free number **0800 212 755** or email: **univenhotline@tip-offs.com**

**Improper
conduct
includes
the
following...**

- 1. Financial misconduct,**
- 2. Misuse or misappropriation of University assets,**
- 3. Health and safety risks,**
- 4. Plagiarism,**
- 5. Fraud and corruption.**