

RHODES UNIVERSITY

SRC FACULTY & CLASS REPRESENTATIVES POLICY

Approved by the SRC 22/02/2010

1) Policy Declaration

The motto of Rhodes University (the University) is “Where Leaders Learn”. The Faculty and Class Representative Structure of the Student Representative Council (the SRC) provides the University with a unique opportunity to promote an environment for fostering qualities of leadership. Learning is the means by which we gain an understanding of the world we live in and how we can responsibly shape and influence its history. Academic freedom is a fundamental right that should always be cultivated and preserved. It is vital that a conducive learning environment which encourages students to achieve academic excellence is established.

2) Policy Objectives

This policy endeavours to ensure that:

- i) the Faculty and Class Representatives Structure (the Structure) is clearly and unambiguously defined;
- ii) the roles, duties and functions of the Faculty and Class Representatives are defined in a practical and unambiguous manner; and
- iii) the Faculty and Class Representatives are aware of the academic rights which are held by all students.

3) Definitions

- i) University Student:

Any student who is registered to study at the University for a full academic year.

- ii) Class Representative:

A University student who is duly elected by his/her respective class to act as their representative and liaison with the class’s respective Department and the SRC.

- iii) Faculty Representative:

A University student who is a Class Representative and who has been duly elected by his/her fellow Class Representatives to act as their representative and liaison with their respective faculty, at the faculty level, and the SRC.

4) Class Representatives Electoral Process

- i) Every class shall elect at minimum of one Class Representative.
- ii) A Class Representative is to be elected within the first two weeks after the commencement of the course.
- iii) The electoral process is to be conducted by the Head of Department or his/her nominee.
- iv) Any University student is eligible to run as a Class Representative.
- v) The electoral process shall run as follows:
 - (1) the floor shall be opened for nominations;
 - (2) a nominee shall either accept or deny the nomination;
 - (3) the nominees shall be afforded the opportunity to present a short motivational speech to the class;
 - (4) the nominees are to leave the room while the class casts their votes by a show of hands.
- vi) A Class Representative's tenure is for the period an academic year.
- vii) The SRC Academic Councillor shall allow students a period of a week after the elections in which to lodge any complaints with regards to any procedural irregularities pertaining to the elections.
- viii) In the event of a vacancy the SRC Academic Councillor shall facilitate a by-election until the vacancy is filled.

5) Faculty Representatives Electoral Process

- i) Two Faculty Representatives for each faculty shall be elected from among the Class Representatives.
- ii) The Faculty Representatives are to be elected at the first meeting of the Class Representatives.
- iii) The electoral process is to be conducted by the SRC Academic Councillor in conjunction with the SRC Electoral Officer.
- iv) Any Class Representative is eligible to run for the position of Faculty Representative for their respective faculty.

- v) The electoral process shall run as follows:
 - (1) the floor shall be opened for nominations;
 - (2) a nominee shall either accept or deny the nomination;
 - (3) the nominees shall be afforded the opportunity to present a short motivational speech to the class;
 - (4) the nominees are to leave the room while the Class Representatives cast their votes by a show of hands.
- vi) A Faculty Representative's tenure is to be for a period of two years.
- vii) The SRC Academic Councillor shall allow Class Representatives a period of a week after the elections in which to lodge any complaints with regards to any procedural irregularities pertaining to the elections.
- viii) In the event of a vacancy the SRC Academic Councillor shall facilitate a by-election until the vacancy is filled.

6) General and Special Meetings

- i) The SRC Academic Councillor shall facilitate a general meeting of the Class Representatives once a semester.
- ii) The SRC Academic Councillor shall facilitate a general meeting of the Faculty Representatives once a term.
- iii) The SRC Academic Councillor may call a special meeting of the Faculty or Class Representatives, where necessary.
- iv) Any member of the SRC may attend any meeting of the Faculty or Class Representatives in observance.
- v) The following records are to be kept:
 - (1) all general and special meetings shall have an agenda;
 - (2) minutes of all general and special meetings are to be taken by an elected member of the meeting; and,
 - (3) copies of these records are to be held by the SRC Academic Councillor and the SRC Vice-President Internal.
- vi) Quorum for a general or special meeting of the Faculty or Class Representatives shall be 50%. In the event of quorum not being reached the draft minutes of the meeting shall be circulated to all the Faculty or Class Representatives, who shall be given the opportunity to object to decisions taken by those present, where after the minutes and decisions shall be taken as confirmed.

7) Roles, Powers and Duties of a Class Representative

- i) A Class Representative must be afforded the respect and value which comes from being a democratically elected representative.
- ii) Class Representatives must:
 - (1) facilitate the efficient communication of their respective classes concerns to the lecturer, or the Head of Department;
 - (2) actively participate in dispute resolutions between their class and the Department;
 - (3) effectively communicate, to their class, any information from the SRC as directed by the SRC Academic Councillor;
 - (4) meet with their current lecturer regularly to maintain lines of communication and to convey any class related issues or concerns;
 - (5) patiently and equitably listen to any complaints or concerns relayed to them by their class;
 - (6) serve as an first-class role model for their fellow classmates and thus must uphold the highest level of studiousness and behaviour; and
 - (7) follow all reasonable directives promulgated by the SRC Academic Councillor.
- iii) Class Representatives may:
 - (1) put forward suggestions as to the conduct and structure of their lectures and courses;
 - (2) submit class objections, complaints and suggestions regarding academic resource material; and
 - (3) call a meeting of their classmates to facilitate discussion regarding class, course or academic matters.

8) Roles, Powers and Duties of a Faculty Representative

- i) A Faculty Representative must be afforded the respect and value which comes from being a democratically elected representative.
- ii) Faculty Representatives must:
 - (1) conduct themselves in accordance with section 7(ii) of this policy;
 - (2) facilitate a meeting of the Class Representatives in their respective faculties once a term;

- (3) patiently and equitably listen to any complaints or concerns relayed to them by the Class Representatives;
 - (4) effectively communicate the any concerns, complaints and suggestions, from the Class Representatives, to the faculty; and
 - (5) facilitate the efficient communication of their respective classes concerns to the Dean of Faculty.
- iii) A Faculty Representative is a full sitting member of the Faculty Board of their respective faculty.

9) Removal From Office

- i) A Faculty or Class Representative may be removed from office in the event that they have failed to uphold their duties and responsibilities as defined in this policy or have acted in a manner which brings the SRC or the University's name into disrepute.
- ii) A Faculty or Class Representative shall be removed from office by a two-thirds majority vote by the Class Representatives.
- iii) In the event that a Faculty or Class Representative has been removed from office, the SRC Academic Councillor shall facilitate a by-election, as defined in sections 4(viii) and 5(viii) of this policy.

10) Academic Rights

Academic rights are the rights which a student registered to study at the University enjoys and are fundamental to the promotion of an open, democratic and stable society.

- i) Students have the right:
 - (1) to state divergent opinions, challenge ideals and take reasoned exception to the data or views offered, within the scope of their course of study;
 - (2) to be notified of the standards of academic performance established and required for each course for which they are enrolled;
 - (3) to be evaluated solely on an academic basis, without regard to issues of diversity, opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards;
 - (4) to a classroom environment that is free from safety and security hazards;
 - (5) to pursue their education without disruption or interference and to expect enforcement of norms for classroom behaviour that prevents disruption of the teaching or learning process;

- (6) to learn in a classroom environment in which diversity is respected;
 - (7) to protection against improper disclosure of information concerning academic performance and personal characteristics such as values, beliefs, organisational affiliations, and health;
 - (8) to access all facilities that will aid their learning process in the University;
 - (9) to fair hearings and appeals concerning all academic issues;
 - (10) to a lecturer who has the necessary skills in order to uphold the highest standards in all faculties of the University;
 - (11) to be treated with the respect that should be afforded to them when dealing with the administrative branch of the University; and
 - (12) to an environment conducive to adding to the learning process.
- ii) The relationship between lecturer and student should be founded on mutual respect and understanding, together with shared dedication to the educational process.
 - iii) A graduate student has the right to be protected from personal exploitation and to receive recognition for scholarly assistance to a faculty.
 - iv) All students enrolled at the University shall be regarded as peers.
 - v) Students should uphold the rights of others to intellectual property.

11) Policy Amendment

- i) This policy may be recommended for amendment by the SRC Academic Councillor after consultation with the SRC Vice-President Internal.
- ii) Upon ratification by the SRC Council, the amendments must serve before Senate and Council of the University to be ratified.