

COMBATING CORRUPTION IN SOUTH AFRICA

UFS Student Essay Writing Competition

Corruption is now widespread in South Africa, and if not addressed, it presents the biggest challenge to the country's socio-economic development. Due to the ravages of state capture, prosecutors and the police (SAPS) lack the required capacity to counter the corrupt efficiently and effectively. The current circumstances in South Africa dictate that reform is urgently required in order to bolster the country's vulnerable culture of respect for human rights and to boost confidence in its governance and economic prospects. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, to which South Africa subscribes, require strong institutions of government. The United Nations points out that "conflict, insecurity, weak institutions and limited access to justice remain a great threat to sustainable development".

Currently, the SAPS and the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) are constitutionally mandated to deal with corruption. The police, via the post-Scorpions Hawks unit, must investigate all forms of corruption. The NPA must prosecute those identified as corrupt in the SAPS or the Investigating Directorate. Because it lacks independence and is under executive control, it is questionable whether the ID passes constitutional muster. The SAPS has been identified by the Institute for Security Studies and by Corruption Watch as the most corrupt of state institutions.

The University of the Free State stands against corruption. It recognises that corruption erodes the social fabric, misdirects and misuses limited resources, and ultimately limits national development. In short, corruption has negative consequences for the development agenda. In view of this, the Vice-Chancellor, Prof Francis Petersen, calls for essays that offer unique thoughts on corruption and how it can be combated.

Theme

The main theme of the competition is 'Combating corruption in South Africa'. Possible issues may include, but are not limited to

1. understanding of corruption;
2. why corruption is a challenge in South Africa;
3. possible responses to corruption nationally, e.g., the establishment of a Chapter Nine Integrity Commission; and
4. how universities, in particular the UFS, could respond effectively to corruption.

Competition Question

Why is corruption a challenge in South Africa and how can it be effectively combated?

Eligibility

The competition is open to all registered postgraduate and final-year undergraduate UFS students in all disciplines and faculties. The postgraduate division includes students registered for honours degrees, master's degrees, postgraduate diplomas, MBA, or PhD. The undergraduate division includes registered students in the final year of any undergraduate programme.

Technical and Submission Guidelines

- The essay must be written in English.
- The length of the essay must not exceed 3 000 words for the postgraduate category and 2 000 words for the undergraduate category.
- The font must be size 12 and 1.5 spacing using Times New Roman.
- The essay topic must be at the top of page one.
- The following information must be provided on the cover page:
 - o Name and surname
 - o Student number
 - o Faculty/school and department
 - o Contact details (email and cellphone number)
 - o Year of study
 - o Whether the submission is for the undergraduate or postgraduate category of the competition
- The essay must be entirely the work of the entrant. The entry must be original and must not previously have been published professionally or commercially in any language, must not infringe upon the copyright or any other intellectual property right, must not defame or invade the privacy rights of any third party or infringe on any other legal rights, regulations, or laws. Any evidence to the contrary will result in immediate disqualification. The anti-plagiarism tool Turnitin will be used to determine the originality of the submission.
- Essay submissions must be sent to SizepheXK@ufs.ac.za
- **Deadline for submission – on or before 30 April 2022.**

Rewards

Undergraduate and postgraduate prizes:

1. **Cash reward:** Cash rewards will be as follows:

Postgraduate prizes:

- First-prize winner will be awarded a cash prize of R30 000.
- Second-prize winner will be awarded a cash prize of R15 000.
- Third-prize winner will be awarded a cash prize of R10 000.

Undergraduate prizes:

- First-prize winner will be awarded a cash prize of R20 000.
 - Second-prize winner will be awarded a cash prize of R10 000.
 - Third-prize winner will be awarded a cash prize of R5 000.
2. **Publication reward:** The essays of all the winners will be published on the UFS website and other social media.
 3. **Recognition reward:** The winners' names and photographs will be displayed on the UFS website and other social media.

Adjudication

- A panel of UFS academics will adjudicate the essays.
- An external panel of experts, together with identified partners, will oversee the adjudication.
- The adjudication process involves the initial scanning of applications.
- After debate and mutual consent, the adjudication panel will select three winners in each category.

Presentation

The two first-prize-winning essays (postgraduate and undergraduate) will be presented by the writers at the awards ceremony.

Partnerships/Collaboration

This essay competition is organised in partnership with the following anti-corruption organisations:

- Corruption Watch
- Accountability Now
- Organisation Undoing Tax Abuse (OUTA)
- Council for the Advancement of the South African Constitution (CASAC)

Further information is available from: SizepheXK@ufs.ac.za.

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