



UVPERSU ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021

1. Who or what is UVPERSU?

1.1 UVPERSU as union

UVPERSU's logo says it all: ***Achieve together.*** UVPERSU is unique in that it is the majority and representative union in the workplace and can look unrestrained after the interests of its members. UVPERSU is a registered union, but not affiliated with any federation of unions. UVPERSU is multi-cultural and non-racial and has a diverse group of members. UVPERSU and NEHAWU are the only recognised unions on the UFS campus and following discussions with the UFS Management, agreed on a minimum number of members for other unions before the UFS will recognise such union/s.

UVPERSU's vision

To be the most influential and leading union in higher education.

UVPERSU's mission

As a professional and non-political union, UVPERSU strives to serve the interests of members, collectively and within the framework of existing labour legislation and promote positive attitudes towards the preservation and growth of the University as an institution.

UVPERSU's motto

"We listen to truly hear, we care through action and so we add value to the working environment."

UVPERSU's values

Accountability, respect, integrity, equity, equality and devotion.

1.2 UVPERSU's Management Committee (MC) 2020-2023

Dr H Potgieter (Chairperson)

In alphabetical order:

Mr D Alexander (co-opted)

Ms L Coetzee (co-opted)
Mr D Johannes (retired)
Ms R Johnson (Vice-chair)
Ms A Lombard (CEO)
Dr G Magaiza (Vice-chair) (Qwaqwa chair)
Dr SZ Matebesi (Left the service of the UFS)
Mr P Plekker (South Campus - retired)
Ms J Pretorius (Treasurer)
Mr TT Theletsane
Ms GM Tsolo
Mr F van der Watt
Ms A van der Westhuizen
Dr AJ van Niekerk

1.3 UVPERSU support personnel

Ms S Crous	(Administrative, recruitment)
Ms A Tjamela	(Maintenance)

Policy regarding the handling of matters on the QwaQwa campus was approved by the UVPERSU management committee and recognition of members' interests has been clarified with the UFS and QwaQwa managements, as well as on the South Campus.

1.4 UVPERSU in a new online working environment

In March 2020, in the wink of an eye, our lives on the three campuses of the UFS changed drastically, due to a deadly and highly contagious virus, which attacked almost the whole world and is still spreading and causing death, havoc and major economic downfalls. Due to national lockdowns, most staff members started to work from home. Suddenly, we had to adapt to a "new normal" and we had to learn new and exciting technology to communicate. UVPERSU was and still is there for members and we are constantly in contact with the rectorate and we are part of strategic planning to combat the spread of the virus at the UFS.

UVPERSU will always strive to stay relevant in a changing environment and to stay relevant, careful strategic planning is now very necessary. Salary negotiations are part of serious strategic planning. UVPERSU acts as watch dog over important employment aspects in a modern workplace. Networking is also important and liaison with members

and non-members is high on the agenda. There is currently a new marketing strategy in operation and our recruitment manager, Ms Sarien Crous, oversees this strategy.

The MC calls on all our members to achieve together and assist in recruiting new members, in order to strengthen our stance as majority union in the workplace. In these very difficult economic circumstances caused by the virus and its illness, Covid-19, membership of a good trade union has become more relevant than ever. At the UFS, UVPERSU is that union! Help us recruit more members to strengthen our negotiating powers. Contact Ms Crous at scrous@ufs.ac.za if you are aware of new appointments.

2. UVPERSU's role on the UFS campuses

Ms Anita Lombard is the full-time chief executive officer, assisted by a management committee under the chairmanship of Dr Henk Potgieter. Ms Sarien Crous oversees administration and recruitment.

UVPERSU, as majority union, has a collective agreement with the UFS Council and imposes agency fees according to labour legislation.

UVPERSU is thus fully recognised as an important role player on all three UFS campuses.

3. UVPERSU's representation in UFS committees

UVPERSU is officially represented on university committees, sub-committees, task groups, as well as on the Institutional Forum, the Executive Management of the University, Transformation Committees (ITP), Institutional Multi-stakeholder group and the Executive of Senate. UVPERSU always acts pro-actively in the interest of members and fulfil our watchdog function in accordance with labour legislation.

3.1 University Management Committee, Executive of Senate and Senior Leadership group

Ms A Lombard (UVPERSU has advisor status)

3.2 Institutional Forum

Ms A Lombard

3.3 Health Care Committee

Ms R Johnson (Ms A Lombard – secundus)

3.4 Disability and group insurance

Ms A Lombard

3.5 Skills Development

Ms A Lombard

3.6 Central Equity Committee

Ms A Lombard

3.7 Health and Wellness

UVPERSU supports wellness activities.

3.8 Transformation and Institutional Multi-stakeholder Group

Ms A Lombard and Dr Potgieter are involved. UVPERSU is also part of various sub-committees regarding staff matters.

3.9 Covid and Wellness

Ms Lombard, Dr Magaiza and Ms Johnson are involved.

3.10 Shortlists and interviews

Ms Anita Lombard, as full-time official, is UVPERSU's main representative in the compilation of shortlists and interviews. UVPERSU's involvement and inputs regarding labour legislation ensure that candidates' and members' interests in terms of employment equity are protected. At the QwaQwa Campus this function is fulfilled by our representatives on the QwaQwa campus.

Mr Conrad Taljaard and Ms Lizelle Eksteen from time to time represent UVPERSU in shortlist meetings and interviews on the South Campus.

Approximately 20 to 35 shortlist meetings and interviews are handled monthly. UVPERSU plays a vital role as observer and gives advice regarding UFS policies as well as legal issues.

3.11 Salary negotiations and service benefits

UVPERSU and NEHAWU participate as a joint forum in the yearly salary negotiations. It remains one of the most important tasks of the unions.

4. Other UVPERSU activities

4.1 Liaising with Human Resources, including Employment Relations Management

Regular collaboration and liaison take place between Ms Lombard and the said divisions. In this way, UVPERSU ensures that members' interests are continuously catered for.

4.2 Communication – Quick mail, UVPERSU website, Facebook and Twitter

Good and effective communication with members has been identified as a priority by the UVPERSU MC. The UVPERSU office communicates with members by means of the UVPERSU website, Facebook and Quick mail. This communication is invaluable and positive feedback is constantly received.

4.3 Community Service– contributions on campus

UVPERSU, in collaboration with the Wellness Committee, regularly donates food and clothing to staff members in need. Every year an amount of money is donated to all Protection Services staff members who work during the festive season in December. In winter, soup is supplied to Protection Services staff members on very cold days and nights.

4.4 Study Bursaries

In 2001, the Executive Management of the UFS approved that UVPERSU awards study bursaries. The reaction to invitations to apply for these book bursaries is overwhelming. A bursary committee considers every application and makes the awards. Several bursaries were awarded over the years.

4.5 Liaison with other unions

A good relationship is maintained in the workplace and a formal co-operation agreement regarding workplace benefits was concluded with NEHAWU.

4.6 Liaison with the Management of the University

The UVPERSU Management Committee meets quarterly with the management of the University and any member of UVPERSU may submit matters for discussion to the chief executive officer.

4.7 Protection of Personal Information Act

UVPERSU has put measures in place to comply and Ms Lombard is working with a Johannesburg lawyer to make sure that UVPERSU will comply with the POPI Act. Compliance policies must be in place and Ms Lombard will be registered with the Information Regulator as UVPERSU's compliance officer.

5. Personnel affairs, grievance procedures and disciplinary matters

The office deals with enquiries from members about a large variety of matters daily. Approximately 40 to 60 calls (WhatsApp, Skype and telephone) and hundreds of e-mails are handled per month. UVPERSU is committed to confidentiality in dealing with members' problems and complaints. Labour-legislative enquiries are also handled by Ms Lombard and in the case of disciplinary issues, members' interests are protected in a rational manner. In cases where UVPERSU cannot provide the necessary expertise, external consultants are consulted.

UVPERSU constantly strives towards settling disputes peacefully and to the advantage of all parties involved (win-win situation). UVPERSU succeeds in settling most of all problems, disciplinary cases and grievances to the advantage of our members. Several corrective counselling issues are handled from time to time and in the past year several grievances and disciplinary hearings were handled successfully.

6. Membership numbers

The number of members remains relatively constant and UVPERSU is proud of the diverse composition of its members. UVPERSU is still, with a considerable margin, the majority and representative union at the UFS. As majority union, UVPERSU also enjoys various privileges under labour legislation. Membership numbers are influenced by staff members going on pension and leaving the service of the UFS.

7. Finances

Under the capable supervision of the treasurer, Ms Janine Pretorius, we can report that UVPERSU is financially sound. Ms Pretorius is assisted by a financial sub-committee consisting of Dr Henk Potgieter, Ms Janine Pretorius, Dr Grey Magaiza, Ms Riana Johnson, Mr Tello Theletsane and Ms Anita Lombard. This committee meets regularly to discuss UVPERSU's finances and budgets.

8. Attendance of online courses and webinars

Courses are attended regularly in order to stay abreast with matters pertaining to the workplace, as well as to improve skills and Ms Lombard also regularly attends courses and webinars in Labour Law.

In 2020, Ms Lombard attended an international online conference of the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), hosted by a world-class Indian University. She is also a member of the ACU HR Community.

As part of the 2021 Social Justice Week, the Gender, Sexual Equity and Anti-Discrimination Office (GEADO) of the Unit for Institutional Change and Social Justice hosted a national virtual discussion with Unions on two critical issues in relation to the Charter for Care and Ethical Conduct. UVPERSU was represented by its CEO, Ms Anita Lombard.

9. An expression of thanks

You, the members, are UVPERSU and we thank you for your support, co-operation and loyalty. The Union and MC can only be as strong as your support and nothing more. We have no other choice than to be involved and it is everyone's social duty to participate and make contributions. We also thank you for the regular letters of support and thanks - it makes our task worthwhile. You should guard the privilege with all you have to ensure that you do not ever have to fulfil your duty without empowerment and remember:

“We achieve together”.

