

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Academics Union held on 10 October 2016, 13h00-14h00 in Classroom 3C, Hoerikwaggo Building (Upper Campus)**

**Present:** Sarah Blyth, Tony Carr, Jenni Case, Brandon Collier-Reed, Tracy Craig, Melissa Densmore, Mqhele Dlodlo, Peter Dunsby, David Erwin, Sean Field, Nico Fischer, KA Folly, Fadia Gamiendien, Shane Godfrey, Charles Hellaby, Simon Hull, Cathy Hutchings, Salma Ismail, Zukile Jama, Philip Janney, A Jardine, Ian Jay, Maria Keet, Michelle Kuttell, Johannes John-Langba, Henri Lauri, K Le Jeune, Tim Low, Mark Massyn, Helen MacDonald, Shaheen Mowla, Maanda Mulaudzi, Gideon Nomdo, Peter Ouwehand, Laura Roden, Jonathan Shock, Alastair Sloan, Hussein Suleman, Christine Swart, Dale Taylor, Thomas van Heerden and Harro von Blottnitz

**Apologies:** Claire Blackman, Helen Buchanan, Pam Christie, Bette Davidowitz, Sheila Clow, Paula Ensor, Carren Field, Elisa Galgut, Terri Grant, Michal Harty, John Higgins, Vicki Lambert, Andrew Lilley, Rashida Manjoo, David Marais, Tom Moultrie, Sophie Oldfield, Amrita Pande, Fiona Ross, Andrea Rother, Karen Smith, Nien-Tsu Tuan, Chris von Klemperer, Digby Warner, Jenny Whittal, Lauren Wild and Nigel Worden

**In Attendance**

Shirifa Hellaby (AU Administrator)

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

Maanda Mulaudzi (President of the AU) extended a welcome to everyone present.

**Agenda**

Maanda requested if point 6 on the agenda could be brought forward to point 5, as some members had to leave well before the close of the meeting. This request was approved by the meeting.

**2. Confirmation of the 2015 AGM Minutes**

As there were no comments on the minutes, members can send amendments of it via email.

**Matters Arising**

From the AU Executive side, the matters which will be discussed today are mainly in the President's report.

**3. President's Report**

A full copy of the President's and committee reports have been distributed via email prior to the meeting and is mainly a list of activities that the Academics Union Executive were involved in during the year.

**In Summary:**

Maanda informed the meeting that currently there are many challenges facing the Academics Union, but not only for the Union, but for the entire University.

Over the past year, the Union continued its representation in a number of UCT structures and committees, ranging from the Academic Freedom Committee to the Naming of Buildings Committee.

a.) Participation in University structures

i. Institutional Forum (IF):

As described previously, the IF remains a somewhat dysfunctional though important body in the University. The Union participates in the IF and is clearly stated in the University Act this forum is mandatory for the University to operate. Over this past year, the main issue in the IF was the chairing process. The decision was to appoint one of the Deputy Vice-Chancellors and Student bodies to act as co-chairs. Other substantive matters were put on hold until the chairing of the IF was finalised.

ii. Relationship with University Management:

In terms of the Union's relationship with the University Management, Maanda indicated there has been no change from the previous year. Further that it has been a challenging process for the Union trying to navigate its position at the University without having to be reduced to a spectator and being largely marginalised. The Union has had to remind Management that it had to be included in discussions but the assumption from the last-mentioned was if Deans participate in meetings, academics are represented. The Union strongly rejected this perception, as it sees its role as a constructive one, independent and its priority its members.

## **ACTIVITIES OVER THE YEAR**

In addition to our participation in formal structures within the university, the Union has been involved in a number of other activities.

### **Student protests**

Unlike the previous year, the Union has very little contact in a formal sense with the main protagonists of students, which is in part as a result of its experiences where it felt it had been played by both Management and the students.

As a result of the above, the Union resolved to remain a representative body for academics not students. The Union might share certain issues with students, but it has to be clear what its priorities are. The Union continues ongoing contacts with the current SRC, whose term is nearly over. Prior to the current impasse, the Union met with the SRC president to shift the discussion away from fees to that of the general funding crisis. The aim of this meeting was to form a collective approach which would involve students and academics. However, due to the current situation, these discussions did not continue.

### **Austerity measures and retrenchments**

Maanda informed the meeting that over the past year, the Union spent a great deal of time with Management on the matter of austerity measures. The second phase of voluntary retrenchments (VR) and incentivised early retirements (IER) were to be have completed by early October but this did not occur. Contrary to Management's earlier confidence, that they would meet their targets of austerity measures through VR and IER, this was not realised. Further, with the input of the Employees Union (EU), the Union have unsuccessfully urged Management to explore alternative and creative ways to contain costs without the reduction of the staff complement. In addition, the two Unions felt the reduction of the staff complement was not justified while the current Vice-Chancellor's office has grown considerably when austerity measures are in place.

### **Grievances**

Maanda reported to the meeting that the Union has had to deal with many grievances this year. The Union reflected on whether there were other ways grievances could be handled, other than through the

University's Human Resources Department (HR) and contacted the Ombud Office to explore the possibilities for its interventions where necessary.

Maanda expressed his thanks and appreciation to Catherine Hutchings who has coordinated the grievance process in the AU Executive. On behalf of the Union, Maanda also acknowledges the excellent and invaluable contributions of Ulrike Rivett and Tom Moultrie who, although no longer serving on the Executive, continue to provide their services in solving some of the grievances.

Maanda informed the meeting that grievances take up a great deal of the Union's time, something Tim Low can attest to. Maanda indicated that by mentioning the length of time grievances take is not intended to avoid representing members, but rather to convey that there seem to be a flaw in the institutional mechanisms in the way these are resolved.

## **CONCLUSION**

Maanda conveyed his thanks to the current members of the Executive for their time and commitment; to Shirifa, the Administrator and lastly thank the members, for bearing with the Union.

Maanda informed the meeting that the Union is facing a challenging time and the Executive reflected on the following: how it could continue to be relevant in the current situation; how the Union could define its position on a number of issues over which it does not share a single or common view. One of the ways the Union considered it could be relevant and meets this challenge, was to link up with other staff bodies nationally with an intention of opening a dialogue on matters of common interest such as the funding crisis for the tertiary sector, ongoing student protests and in ensuring that our voices as academics are heard.

The meeting acknowledged Maanda's report and contribution to the Union activities with applause.

---

## **4. Draft 2015 Audited Financial Statement and 2015-2016 Income and expenses report**

### **a. Draft 2015 audited financial statement**

A copy of the draft 2015 audited financial statement produced by Nolands (Mowbray branch) was made available to members via email. Mark Massyn (Treasurer) provided an overview.

Income and expenditure Summary:

- The total income for the 2015 period was derived from three sources, namely investment income, a grant from the university, and membership fees.
- The university's grant contribution was 32% of the total money received.
- The purpose of the grant is to fund the operational costs of the Union and the University has continued to contribute this.
- If the University decide to withdraw their contribution towards the Union, it would have to build up enough reserves to function at its current level for at least 1 to 2 years.
- The income from membership fees in 2015 increased by 24% and this is mainly attributed to the change implemented in calculating the membership fee.
- In December 2015 the investment fund stood at R2 366 039, which is up from R1.8 million in 2014.
- The expenses in 2015 increased by 12%, due to the following reasons: additional meetings occurred during the unrests, which had to be off-campus; the salary of the Administrator, which is linked to what is negotiated with the University; increase of legal fees from R11 000 to R22 254 where three of the cases were handled by the CCMA. Two of these cases continued into this year.

The Executive made a decision to make available the maximum amount of R15 000 towards the legal fees of the member. The Union intend to increase the legal fee costs from R45 000 in 2016 to R60 000 for 2017.

- In 2015, the total income was R900 052 and the operating costs were R357 748.
- To ensure its funds are independent from the University's HR account, the Union opened separate fund numbers, a process that took nearly six months to finalise.

Mark suggested that members email him if they require clarity on the reports and proposed the Union re-appoint Nolands as auditor, which was approved by the meeting.

## 5. Election of the new Executive Committee for 2016-2017

Maanda informed the meeting that the current Executive committee members have made themselves available to serve another term, with the exception of Emma Fergus and Michal Harty, who are standing down. Over the past year, the Union Executive had three other resignations, namely Kathryn Stinson, Christine Rogers and Shadreck Chirikure.

In its communication, the Executive requested members to either nominate themselves or to nominate others to join the Executive of the Union. The Union received three (3) nominations, namely: Fadia Gamiendien (Division of Occupational Therapy), Shaheen Mowla (Division of Haematology) and Johannes John-Langba (Department of Social Development).

There were no further nominations for the AU Executive from the floor.

Name	Position	Faculty	Years serving on AU	Standing for Re-election
Maanda Mulaudzi	President	Humanities	4	Yes
Kelley Moul	Vice-President	Law	2	Yes
Mark Massyn	Treasurer	EBE	1	Yes
Bette Davidowitz	Elected	CHED	7	Yes
Nico Fischer	Elected	EBE	1	Yes
Catherine Hutchings	Elected	CHED	6	Yes
Andrew Lilley	Elected	Humanities	9 months	Yes
Tim Low	Elected	CHED	2	Yes
Hussein Suleman	Elected	Science	1	Yes
Christine Swart	Elected	Science	2	Yes

The following members stood for election from 10 October 2016

Name	Position	Faculty

Fadia Gamieldien	<b>Elected</b>	<b>Health Sciences</b>
Shaheen Mowla	<b>Elected</b>	<b>Health Sciences</b>
Johannes John-Langba	<b>Elected</b>	<b>Humanities</b>

The majority members of this meeting accepted those nominated as new members and those standing for re-election.

## 6. Proposal raised at the 2014 AGM

Maanda indicated to the meeting that at the 2014 AGM, a decision to charge membership fees at 0.1 percentage of the CoE had occurred. This decision was largely argued on the grounds that such a fee would attract more junior staff members and also to build the Union's reserves to make it sustainable should the University decide they would not contribute towards the operating costs of the Union. The recommendation at the 2014 AGM was that members discuss it this year with the view of continuing or changing it.

Maanda reported to the meeting that the Union has achieved financial stability and through all the meetings on austerity measures, the University has not indicated it would withdraw its financial support.

One of the conditions approving this shift in membership fee structure is that it would be reviewed at the 2016 AGM.

The following questions or recommendations were raised made by members:

- a. Harro von Blottnitz indicated that on the one hand there is evidence that the coffers of the Union have increased, but has this model had the desired effect of attracting greater members of junior staff? Harro requested the Executive to provide figures or indicate how this has changed and how it recruits junior staff into the Union?

In response to the above question, Mark indicated that as the result of austerity measures, there was an increase in membership. The Executive has this past year noted there has been a huge staff turn-over at UCT and that the Union has retained the 50 percent membership that we require to negotiate on behalf of all staff bands.

- b. Sarah Blyth enquired if the Union had any recruitment plans, as she was never recruited. Sarah indicated that only way she could find information on events during the October 2015 student protests was at the meetings the Unions convened. She attended the open meeting the Union had arranged for all staff and found it useful, as she was made aware what her colleagues from other Faculties discussed and thought.

In response to the above question, Nico Fischer informed the meeting that included in staff appointment contracts, was many brochures, including that of the Union. The Executive has consulted on ways to recruit staff; met with HR but an effective method has yet to be found on recruiting new members of staff.

Maanda informed the meeting that the Executive relies on members encouraging their colleagues to join the Union.

- c. Harro von Blottnitz enquired if those members present had recruited their colleagues into the Union this past year and used the new fee structure to attract junior staff?

- d. Shaheen Mowla indicated that she has informed colleagues about the Union and can only further encourage them to join. Shaheen suggested that one method to advertise the work the Union does is to recruit people through emailing staff at the Faculty level. This method could be utilized on a quarterly basis.

In response to the above suggestion from Shaheen, Maanda indicated that two years ago, the Executive had advertised the work of the Union at the various Faculty Board meetings and also identified those staff who were not members.

- e. Helen MacDonald enquired what the total income is that was added to the Union funds.

In response to the above enquiry, Mark indicated that membership fees increased by just over R90 000 between 2014 and 2015. As a result of the new free structure, there was a substantial increase in income between 2015 and 2016 but this can also be attributed to more members joining the Union.

- f. Helen MacDonald enquired if there were tax implications if the Union moved from a non-profit organisation to that of a profit making entity?

In response to Helen's question, Mark explained that there is no tax implication for the Union as it is a tax exempt entity.

- g. A member suggested that the Union could include brochures in the packs for new staff who attend the New Academics Practitioner's Programme (NAPP).

In response to the above suggestion, Catherine Hutchings indicated that the convenor of NAPP had already received information brochures from the Union.

- h. Salma Ismail enquired if the Executive had any knowledge whether staff would rather join the Black Academic Caucus (BAC) or the Academics Union and if the latter had any relations with the former?

In response to the query by Salma, Maanda explained that the Union Executive has ongoing relations with the BAC. Further, earlier this year, the Union received a number of enrolments from members of the BAC. The Union, as an organisation is not aware of the membership of the BAC and whether this has taken away Union members.

- i. Charles Hellaby commented that in terms of the decision of how to charge membership fees, it is an interesting discussion but feel the AGM can make a resolution on whatever basis they feel is appropriate. Charles indicated that the AGM should not be limited by how many staff joined or those who did not. These explanations are highly informative and it appears that there is no strong indication. On the issue of fairness, recommends that the Union continues with the current fee structure.
- j. Shane Godfrey indicated that there is a huge reserve and now increased income and recommended that the Union employs someone else with a different skill to work with Shirifa. This arrangement should further increase income if the person assists the organiser. The additional person could relieve some of the pressure of those handling grievances, particularly if people are working 200 plus hours on a case. This is too much to be asking of an individual. Shane further indicated if more members are recruited, potentially more grievances will be handled and the Union should perhaps think of gearing up towards this.

Mark informed the meeting that members did not resign as a result of the change in fee structure and enquired if anyone was opposed to continue this?

No one opposed the fee structure and the meeting unanimously accepted the proposal to continue charging fees at 0.1 percent of members' CoE.

## **7. Feedback on Salary Negotiations**

Maanda informed the meeting that in terms of past bargaining cycles, the Union should have had an agreement, but it does not, as the team (Ulrike Rivett, Maanda Mulaudzi, Christine Swart, Shane Godfrey, Kelley Moulton and Mark Massyn) have not met with Management. The reason for this is as a result of austerity measures.

Members' opinions have been canvassed via two polls to establish what they felt were a fair set of salary and non-salary demands to table with the Management of the University.

Shane Godfrey informed the meeting that the team has the results of the two polls from Survey Monkey, which was sent to members and will decide on the final set of demands, which it will submit to Management.

Maanda informed the meeting that the Pay Policy the Union has had with the University expired, but through mutual agreement, the policy was rolled over and demands will be tabled according to this policy.

Shane informed the meeting that according to the results of the survey, the majority of members were in favour of an 8% salary increase.

Maanda explained that the salary of UCT academics dropped below that of its comparator institutions and the 8% increase will bring salaries back to where it was the previous year.

In response to the above report, Ian Jay enquired if the RFJ agreement is still valid, as he understood it kept academics on the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile.

In response to the above question, Shane and Maanda explained that this refers to the Pay Policy the Union has and it still stands.

Maanda informed the meeting that on the issue of Interest Arbitration, Management has not raised it with the Union this time, so negotiations will mainly occur in terms of the Pay Policy; informed the meeting that salary negotiations will be more challenging this year as a result of the current issues occurring in the institution.

## **8. General Discussion**

- a. Helen MacDonald queried the following: due to all the cuts staff were requested to make the previous year and that there is a possibility that negotiations could become heated and nasty, do we know if Management ever took a cut in their own salaries? Does anyone know? We all assuming that they possibly did, but have not seen anything.

In response to the above question, Maanda and Mark made the following comments:

They are aware that Management made a symbolic gesture and that Dr Price took a zero percent increase while the next level down in Management took a smaller cut, which they informed staff about. In its meetings with Management over austerity measures, the Unions informed the afore-mentioned that it should not only be academics or PASS taking reductions in their salaries. However, this was not readily accepted, as it took Management a while before they could be convinced on this issue. The Unions insisted on a similar plan that academics and PASS had, but Management indicated they did not have such a plan, but agreed to introduce one.

- b. A member queried if the Union Executive knows of any plans to continue the year?

The response by Maanda is that he does not know where things stand and the only communication received are from the Vice-Chancellor's emails, in which he reports they are talking with important stakeholders, but these do not include the Union Executive.

- c. Maria Keet enquired if the Union had meetings with the Executive?

Maanda indicated that he has a problem with the way the Management of this institution views the term consultation. They consider consultation to be one where they take a decision, call the Union for a meeting then convey their resolution. This occurred in September when the students first occupied the Steve Biko Building. One of the Union Executive members discovered Management had convened a meeting, to which the Union was excluded. The Union communicated to them that they had to participate in this forum. The response received from Management was the Deans were present, but the Union insisted on being part of the discussions. The following day the Union was invited for a de-briefing. However, since this forum, the Union was not included in another meeting of this sort.

- d. Michelle Kuttell indicated the following: "I may sound emotive here, but I know that many of us are feeling extremely traumatised by this, extremely upset, frustrated and feel this is an employment issue. I am appalled that they do not engage with academics. I cannot believe this happens. How does one force them to pay attention to us?"
- e. Jenni Case made the following comments: That this is important in this vibe and Michelle is exactly right. I wish to thank you for your report and for everything you have done to lead us this year. I know many of us know how incredibly difficult this has been and it is clear the AU has not been consulted in the manner they should have been. Michelle is absolutely right to put employment condition issues on the table, particularly for what people have been asked to do in the last round. I just wish to record this as information that there has been a call for an emergency Senate meeting. For the record, Senate has the function of organising and controlling the teaching, the Curricula, syllabus and the Exams in the University. What has been happening in the last while is that a message has been coming out from the Executive, suggesting changes that are going to be made to the delivery of our 2016 courses and the possibility of dropping the last four weeks of teaching and take-home exams, etc. There has been a call from a sizeable group of Senate members to request an emergency meeting in an attempt to assert that Senate is the body that decides the way forward for the 2016 teaching learning programme. If I could get a view across tomorrow, is that we are getting caught up in the security discussion and then we all want to discuss is no-security and war-mongering, which leaves things open for very expedient decisions to be made about our academic professional responsibility. My hope for Senate tomorrow is that its main focus is on taking a stand round the courses that were set up with a certain amount of teaching and a certain set of assessments. I would hope that Senate would hold a view that we cannot compromise on that. Everything else is secondary to that. What the time is...what security there is, or isn't, etc. or we say at the same time,



there is an on-line fantasy. I would like to think we can come back and finish our teaching. Currently as we speak, we are not a University. We are sitting in a University building, a bunch of academics, but there is no teaching and there is very little research happening here today. We need to re-establish ourselves in the University and the first thing we do to re-establish ourselves is we teach. No one here paid for money to do their course through UNISA. We have to teach face-to face. We need to use a lot of our resources around blended type-cast to make a lot of resources available to our students. Some of you will take a while to come back onto campus and others might take a long while to come back at all. I trust that people who were been given that responsibility to be on the Senate will apply their minds to this. I will not tell them what to say but I am hoping they will.

There was applause from the meeting after the comments from the above member.

- f. Shane shared the following views: the health and safety of academic staff is clearly an employment issue. In terms of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, the employer has certain obligations in respect to staff to ensure a healthier and safe working environment in the workplace. I think we have the right to demand meetings with Management about the conditions at the University and if necessary, we should be pursuing these via the Health and Safety Committee, where you have a set of rights in legislation supporting you and what you can demand from them. I certainly agree with the expedient decision because it was left fairly vague about staff having to be expected in lecture theatres delivering lectures and it is unclear what sort of protection they will have and this is completely unacceptable. If they say on our side they will enforce your contract with you, to do your work, be in class and teach, we are not ensuring that these conditions are safe, this is unacceptable. They must step back from that and say we will leave it up to your discretion to say whether you think it would be safe to appear in class. I suggest that we should be meeting with them and putting Management in terms of their obligation.

Maanda informed the meeting that in response to a member's questions around the very issues raised above, the Union wrote to the Registrar pointing out to him that working conditions are affected. The Union is still waiting on a response from the Registrar, who indicated he would take the concerns to Management. This is a matter the EU and the Academics Union were also concerned about and the aforementioned intends declaring a dispute on it.

- g. Harro von Blottnitz indicated that he wished to provide clarity on the point citing the Occupational Health and Safety Act being the primary obligation of the employer and is doubtful if it extends to the kind of situation we face now where people may feel to be unsafe. The Act itself pertains more to machinery, the physical hazards and queried whether the Executive of the Union may wish to seek legal advice on what other Acts may be protecting our workplace and to what the extent the occupational health can be invoked when we approach Management.
- h. Alistair Sloan indicated that regardless of the legislative framework there is certainly more of a strong case for the Union to stand up for its members, as a number of lecturers had been threatened with physical harm and then being asked to continue lecturing in those situations. Aware that the Executive raised this with Management and wished to obtain the exact demands the Union made.

In response to the above query, Maanda responded that one of the demands by the Union was for Management to provide clarity on what they expect from staff in the situations facing them currently. The guidelines evidently showed that Management did not have a plan in place to ensure the safety of staff.

- i. Alistair Sloan queried what kind of mood would make the situation safe and indicated that at this point one cannot expect lecturers to continue lecturing without providing more security than has been made

available. Reported that he had heard people being told they would be hospitalised if they lecture. Today we heard that people who send their children to the crèche was threatened too. Should the Union not be demanding better security?

- j. A member indicated that there are lecturers present who refuse to lecture in the presence of security.

Nico Fischer indicated to the meeting that this was exactly the point that Maanda alluded to earlier. The Union and Executive is such a diverse group and obtaining unanimity on the issue of security, for instance will be difficult. An example given by Nico is the recent draft statement the Union Executive was requested to do by members at a meeting and some of the reactions to it was varied and even hostile.

- k. Michelle Kuttell indicated that there will never be agreement, but request that the Union Executive engage with members.
- l. Fadia Gamieldien suggests that the above discussions link to the mental health of staff and how everyone is affected. Suggest that a healing space be created to focus on this. Indicated that the Faculty of Health Sciences created spaces for final year students to engage with staff. Fadia reported that she had participated in these spaces and felt it was quite painful to hear the experiences of students and feel it might be as painful to hear the experiences of staff. Fadia recommends that the Union create a space for staff to engage how they have experienced being unable to teach with or without security.
- m. Helen MacDonald expressed the view that she has not experienced a break this year, as she felt 2015 had not ended. Indicated her trepidation that she was about to undergo the same experience as the previous year, irrespective of the issue of security. Indicates that teaching is only one part of the portfolio of an academic. Enquired what academic staff members are doing to protect their mental spaces in going forward. Expressed concern that the University Management expects staff to continue carrying out its duties, for instance invigilating exams in January, without creating a space or time with family.

In response to the above concerns expressed, Maanda recommended that members provide a list of demands the Union could present to Management.

- n. Jenni Case made the following comments: suggests that the Executive does not obtain a line around the issue of security or absence of it as it is a red herring distraction and indicates that it is a proxy for all sorts of ideological positioning and do not think it is in the domain of staff...Urges that the Union pull together as a community as the security issue is dividing us in a problematic way and it is giving a route for a terrible thing that will occur on our watch...I am with you, Helen. That we will get up and do it. Despite being exhausted from this past year's events, my connections are with junior colleagues who are horrified by the thought of dropping four weeks of teaching. It is those staff members higher up who are cavalier about matters—this is my niche of view on the matter, as we are invested here... At the end of the day, we have a contract to teach. I would suggest that we support our colleagues here. I want to congratulate the AU for the space they created and I know you are vilified each time you write an email. The Union created a space from early on last year where academics could discuss what it means to be an academic and how it affects their basic work. I wish to state that we should really treasure this space here. I am aware there are other fora, but this space is quite an interesting one on campus.
- o. Member informed the meeting that there will be an announcement of a new schedule by the University and it is the hope that the Academics Union would be part of the process and able to scrutinise it.

In response to the above concern on the schedule, Maanda indicated that on the issue of deferred exams, he and Kelley Moulton met with the Registrar to engage with him on this matter, but as of yet, there was no definite plan by the University.

- p. Sarah Blyth enquired what the Union's responsibility is in respect of transformation and the decolonisation of the curriculum. Is it a Union that exists to negotiate conditions of service with Management or is it more than that? If this body represents the academics, what is the responsibility of the Academics Union?

In response to the above query, Catherine Hutchings indicated that the role of the Academics Union has changed over the years, and quoting Tom Moultrie, we are attempting to move away from the gentrification of academia. For instance, Hussein Suleman initiated a discussion group, in an attempt for members to discuss issues, rather than the Union solely negotiating salary matters.

Maanda informed the meeting that the Union is in transition and the Executive is attempting to redefine its role. There is no universal unanimity on the role of the Union, whether it should remain on a narrow approach or a broader one.

- q. Shane Godfrey informed the meeting if the Union goes beyond a forum to discuss issues with the intention of engaging with Management on transformation, for instance, the Executive requires the constituency to support it. Unlike salary negotiations for instance, broader issues are more challenging, as members tend to unify around an 8% salary increase.
- r. Harro von Blottnitz enquired how the academics position its pay demands relative to the other two unions particularly with other constituencies on campus.

In response to the above query, the response from Nico Fischer is that prior to the events of October 2015, the Academics Union had an agreement with the University and it was the only Union who acknowledged the financial constraints the University faced and accepted a lower salary offer.

Shane Godfrey agreed that such discussions with other Unions should take place so that more alignment can be obtained. In the non-salary demands with Management, academics requested the establishment of a workplace forum in which all three Unions can be representative, including other stakeholders. Through such a forum, Management will be compelled to consult with staff and hopefully it would also encourage the three Unions to work closely together.

Maanda indicated agreement with the above suggestion of broadening these discussions; informed the meeting that the Union has worked amicably with the EU Union whereas NEHAWU is currently involved with broader organisational issues. Suggests if the Academics Union intends to push a demand, for example, on withdrawing labour by implementing work to rule instead of a full strike members should support it.

## **Closure**

Maanda thanked everyone for taking the risk to attend the meeting and for their involvement and engagement with the Union.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 14h25