



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY  
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA  
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT  
**POTCHEFSTROOMKAMPUS**

®

12 Maart 2015

Uit die / From the

*Rector / Rector's*  
se kantoor / office

Beste kollegas,

Na aanleiding van gebeure die afgelope tyd, wat ons Universiteit direk raak, ag ek dit noodsaaklik om op hierdie wyse met u te kommunikeer.

In die onlangse verlede was daar heelwat berigte in die media rondom die strategiese proses wat die NWU tans deurloop. Die jongste voorbeeld daarvan was die afgelope naweek in Beeld (7 Maart). Die twee hoofemas van die naweek se berigte, wat ook 'n samevatting is van die mediaberigte, is:

- Dat daar spanning is rondom die strategiese proses en veral tussen die NWU-bestuur en die Potchefstroomkampus, en dat dié spanning sleg is vir die land.
- Bydraend tot hierdie spanning, word die verhouding tussen die Visekanselier en my as motivering gegee.

Gekoppel aan hierdie twee temas, het Beeld ook die indruk geskep dat ek nie op hul navrae wou reageer nie. Sulke foutiewe bewerings in die openbaar kan nie onbeantwoord gelaat word sonder dat die NWU benadeel word nie.

Die debat is verder versterk deur 'n mediakonferensie wat die Institusionele Studenteraad Maandag 9 Maart gehou het, sonder dat die Potchefstroomkampus se SR betrek is.

Ek is bewus daarvan dat hierdie berigte onsekerheid by personeel, studente en

Dear colleagues,

Following the recent events which have had a direct bearing on our University, I considered it essential to communicate with you via this letter.

In the recent past there have been a lot of reports in the media about the strategic process that the NWU is presently engaged in. The latest example of that was the report this past weekend in Beeld (7 March). The two main themes of the weekend's reports, which are also in a real sense a summary of the media reports, are:

- That there is tension surrounding the strategic process and especially between the NWU management and the Potchefstroom Campus, and that this tension is bad for the country;
- Contributing to this tension it is contended that the relationship between myself and the vice-chancellor is the underlying reason for this tension.

Linked to these two themes, Beeld also created the impression that I did not want to respond to their enquiries. Such inaccurate statements cannot be left unanswered in the public domain without the NWU being damaged in the process.

The debate has been further exacerbated through a media conference held by the Institutional Students' Representative Council held on Monday 9 March without the presence of the Potchefstroom Campus SRC.

I am very aware of the fact that these reports inculcate a sense of insecurity among

ander belanghebbendes skep en dat daar 'n behoefte vir meer inligting is. Daarom het ek dit goedgevind om met u te kommunikeer. Ek hoop dat dit sal bydra dat u die debat sal kan volg, konstruktief daartoe sal kan toetree en dat dit meer perspektief sal gee en só rustigheid sal skep. Ongelukkig was die kampusbestuur vir 'n lang periode verhoed om inligting oor die proses te kommunikeer.

## **Dat daar spanning is tussen die NWU-bestuur en die Potchefstroomkampus, en dat dit sleg is vir die land**

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Die Universiteit is in 'n strategiese beplanningsproses wat potensieel ook implikasies vir die bestuursmodel en struktuur van die NWU inhou. Daarom is dit belangrik dat daar 'n debat onder interne en eksterne belangegroepes gevoer word. So 'n debat kan tog nie sleg wees vir die land nie en moet eintlik aangemoedig word.

Goeie universiteite sal tydens 'n strategiese herposisioneringsproses daarop fokus en dit sy hooftema maak om sy kernbesigheid te versterk. Suid-Afrika sal ook baie daarby kan baat as meer van sy universiteite met die bestes in die wêreld kan skouer skuur.

Enige strategiese proses verloop makliker wanneer daar gemeenskaplike gronde is. Dit beteken dat daar 'n gemeenskaplike visie of droom moet wees waaroor saamgestem word. Dit geld ook vir waarheen ons op pad is en die gevolge wat dit vir die Universiteit inhou. Indien dit in plek is, is dit makliker om by die droom uit te kom en is die interne en eksterne debat makliker te bestuur, want dan gaan dit net oor verskillende maniere om daarby uit te kom.

Alhoewel daar op 'n suksesmodel vir die NWU vir die toekoms besluit is, neem die debatvoering ons telkens terug na transformasie en 'n ander bestuurstruktuur. Dit word dan die nuwe einddoel.

Dat transformasie belangrik is, word deur die kampusbestuur onderskryf. Ons doen dit in ooreenstemming met die transformasiedoelwitte wat die Raad van die NWU in 2012 goedgekeur het, naamlik: Diversiteit, Toegang, Belyning, Herstel, Gelykheid, Hulpbrontoewysing, Verhoogde eenheid, Studente-ervaring, Sukses en Kwaliteit. Ons is besig om ons strategieë tot uitvoer te bring om in ál hierdie opsigte te transformeer, en nie eensydig net ten opsigte van gelykheid nie.

Bewys hiervan is dat ongeveer 66% van die NWU se studente swart is (kontak en afstand). Wat kontakstudente betref, is 54% van alle studente swart. Wat personeel betref, is 37% swart. Wat die Potchefstroomkampus betref, is 65,3% van alle studente oor al ons programme (kontak en afstand) swart, terwyl 26% van die kontakstudente swart is, en 25% van ons personeel. Hierdie statistiek vergelyk goed met die amptelike data van die ander universiteite, wat onder die top sewe in Suid-Afrika tel. Vergelykende statistiek ten opsigte van transformasie en ander sukses-indikatore

personnel, students and other stakeholders, and that there is a need for more information. For that reason I decided to communicate in this way. I hope that this will contribute to your being able to follow the debate, engage with it constructively, that it will give perspective and that it will lead to a greater sense of calm among colleagues. Unfortunately the campus management has for quite some time been prevented from communicating information about the process.

## **That there is tension between the NWU management and the Potchefstroom Campus, and that this is detrimental to the country**

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The University is engaged in a strategic planning process that potentially also has implications for the management model and structure of the NWU. For that reason it is important that a debate be engaged in among internal and external stakeholder groupings. Such a debate surely cannot be bad for the country, and should in reality be encouraged.

Good universities will in the course of a strategic repositioning process focus on making the main theme the strengthening of its core business. South Africa will also benefit if more of its universities are able to stand along the best in the world.

Any strategic process runs more smoothly if there are common grounds for the process. This means that there should be a shared vision or dream about which people agree. This is also true for the direction in which we are moving and the direction that this implies for the University. If this should be firmly in place, it would be easier to achieve that dream. As a result, the internal and external debates will become that much easier to manage, because the concern will only be about the best way to achieve this objective.

Although there had been a decision about a success model for the NWU for the future, the debate constantly takes us back to transformation and another management structure. This then becomes the new final objectives.

That transformation is important is of course supported and confirmed by the campus management. We do this in support of the transformation objectives that the Council of the NWU approved in 2012, viz.: Diversity, Access, Alignment, Recovery, Equality, Resource allocation, Increased unity, Student experience, Success and Quality. We are busy implementing strategies to transform with respect to all of these, without being biased towards equality.

Proof of this is that about 66% of the NWU students are black (contact and distance). With regard to contact students, 54% of all students are black. With regard to staff, 37% are black. With regard to the Potchefstroom Campus, 65,3% of all students enrolled in our programmes (contact and distance) are black, while 26% of the con-

verskyn hieronder.

Dit is dan ook gepas om almal te bedank wat bygedra het tot die sukses en die algemene status van die Universiteit oor die afgelope paar jaar, soos die tabel wys (sien bl. 5).

Teen hierdie agtergrond is dit verstaanbaar dat spanning sal ontstaan wanneer die ervaring is dat getalle-transformasie nagestreef word, in plaas van wel oorwoë transformasie-doelwitte met die oog op die verbetering van die kernbesigheid van die Universiteit. Wat die bestuur van die Potchefstroomkampus bekommer, is dat die voorgestelde “een fakulteit een dekaan oor kampusgrense heen” -model potensieel groot implikasies vir die kampus se toekomstige kliënte kan inhou. Dit mag veroorsaak dat ons groot getalle studente verloor.

Voorts vind die beplanningsproses stuksgewys plaas wat mag veroorsaak dat daar tot iets ingestem kan word, sonder dat die geheel of einddoel bekend is. Later – wanneer die gevolge duideliker word – is jy klaar gekompromitteer.

Belyning van die NWU se akademiese aanbod word gebruik as motivering vir die “een fakulteit een dekaan model”. Belyning en effektiewe bestuur word heelhartig deur die Potchefstroomkampus-bestuur gesteun. Dit is egter nie nodig om die bestuursmodel radikaal te verander en só potensieel nuwe probleme te veroorsaak nie. Ons is van mening dat daar baie alternatiewe metodes is om die probleem aan te spreek, maar dan moet dit eers behoorlik geïdentifiseer en verstaan word.

## Beweerde weiering van kommentaar op media-navrae

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In die Beeld van 7 Maart is daar in twee berigte beweer dat ek nie kommentaar wou lewer nie. Die eerste navraag het gehandel oor die verlenging van my termyn en die interne ondersoek wat teen my geloods is. U sal begrip hê dat ek regtens hierop nie kommentaar kon lewer nie, en dat ek die versoek daarom na die Institusionele Kantoor verwys het.

Op die tweede navraag (oor onder andere die strategiese proses) het ek wel kommentaar gelewer. Beeld het egter verkies om dit as “geen kommentaar” aan te bied. My formele en enigste kommentaar was: “My ervaring van Beeld se beriggewing die afgelope tyd oor my en die Potchefstroomkampus was dat dit nie objektief of gebalanseerd en dus regverdig was nie.”

Ek het intussen by Beeld beswaar gemaak oor die foutiewe aanhaling. In ’n interne proses by die Nasionale Persgroep, is my beswaar gehandhaaf, soos in die briewekolom van Beeld op 11 Maart verskyn het.

My frustrasie met die betrokke koerant en daarom ook my antwoord op hul navrae, kom oor ’n lang tyd.

tact students are black, with 25% black staff. These statistics compare well with the official data of the other universities among the top seven in South Africa. Comparative statistics with regard to transformation and other success indicators are shown below.

It is then also appropriate to thank everybody who has contributed to the success and the general status of the University over the last few years, as indicated in the table (see p. 5).

Against this background it is understandable that tension will develop when the experience is that transformation of numbers is the main goal, rather than the considered transformation objectives aimed at the improvement of the core business of the University. What is worrying to the campus management of the Potchefstroom Campus, is that the proposed “one faculty one dean across campuses” model has potentially grave implications for the future clients of the Campus – it might mean that we will lose large numbers of students.

The planning process is also taking place in piecemeal fashion, and this might later result in things that are approved without the whole or the final purpose being known. Later – when the results emerge more clearly – one is already irrevocably committed.

Alignment of the academic offering of the NWU is being used as a motivation for the “one faculty one dean model”. Alignment and effective management are fully and wholeheartedly supported by the management of the Potchefstroom Campus. It is not necessary, however, to change the management model radically and to cause potentially new problems. We are of the opinion that there are many alternative methods through which the problem can be addressed, but then the problem must first be properly identified and understood in context.

## Alleged refusal to comment on media enquiries

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In the Beeld of 7 March allegations were made in two reports that I refused to comment when approached. The first enquiry dealt with the extension of my term of office, and the internal investigation involving me. You will understand that legally, these matters being sub judice, I could not comment on these queries and that I referred the issue to the Institutional Office.

In the second instance (about, among others, the strategic process) I did comment. Beeld, however, chose to present this as “no comment”. My formal and only comment had been: “My experience of the reporting by Beeld in the recent past about myself and the Potchefstroom Campus has unfortunately been that it has not been objective or balanced and therefore not fair.”

I have in the meantime raised an objection to Beeld about the erroneous quote, and in an internal process at the Nasionale Pers group my objection was sustained as

Sonder om u met detail te bemoei, het dié frustrasie verlede jaar daartoe aanleiding gegee dat ons 'n formele klag, met die medewete van dr Theuns Eloff as visekanselier, by die Persombudsman ingedien het. Na dr Theuns se bedanking, is hierdie klag egter téén ons advies teruggetrek.

## Die verhouding tussen my en die Visekanselier

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Anders as die indruk wat in koerante geskep word, is die spanning tussen my en die Visekanselier nié persoonlik van aard nie. Die verskille handel oor sake van kernbelang vir die NWU soos die vertrekpunte, verloop en uitkomste van die strategiese beplanningsproses. Hieronder tel die *de facto* implementering van 'n nuwe bestuursmodel wat nog nie aan die Senaat of die Raad voorgelê en goedgekeur is nie. Dit het onder andere veroorsaak dat die Potchefstroomkampus een van sy hoogs aangeskrewe viserektore verloor het.

## Die pad vorentoe

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Die Bestuur van die Potchefstroomkampus bly verbind daartoe om konstruktief deel te neem aan die beplannings- en visioeneringsproses. Dit is jammer dat ons insette en goedgesemotiverde deelname om die NWU na 'n nog hoër vlak te neem en skade te verhoed of te beperk, gesien word asof dit onnodige spanning veroorsaak. Die feit dat daar aanvanklik nie behoorlik gekommunikeer kon word oor die proses nie, is dalk bydraend tot dié persepsie.

Ons gaan voort om die Potchefstroomkampus se saak op die tafel te sit. Ons onderneem egter om die gesprek voortaan na 'n breër basis te neem om sodoende te sorg dat ons die standpunt van die Potchefstroomkampus effektief oordra.

Die NWU bevind hom in 'n stroomversnellingstyd. Ons Universiteit het diep wortels en ons weet waar ons krag vandaan kom. Daarom gaan ons die toekoms met hoop en verwagting tegemoet.

Ek gee om; ek weet jy gee om. Saam sal ons die NWU na hoër hoogtes neem.

Vriendelike groete

*Herman van Schalkwyk*

could be seen in the letters column of Beeld on 11 March.

My frustration with the relevant paper and therefore also my response to their enquiries has been coming a long time. Without going into too much detail, last year, this frustration led to us submitting a formal complaint, with the knowledge of Dr Theuns Eloff as vice-chancellor, being submitted to the Press Ombudsman. However, following Dr Theuns' resignation, this complaint was withdrawn against our advice.

The relationship between myself and the Vice-chancellor

Contrary to the impression that is being created in the newspapers, the tension between myself and the VC is not personal in nature. The differences have to do with issues of core interest for the NWU, such as points of departure, the course of events, and the outcomes of the strategic planning process. Among these is the *de facto* implementation of a new management model which has not been submitted to either the Senate or the Council and has not been approved by either. This has led to the Potchefstroom Campus losing one of its most highly regarded vice-rectors.

## The way forward

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The management of the Potchefstroom Campus remains bound to being constructively involved in the planning and visioning process. It is a pity that our inputs and well-motivated participation in the process aimed at taking the NWU to an even higher level, and to limit or prevent damage, are being seen as incurring unnecessary tensions. The fact that communication of the process did not take place from the outset might well have contributed to this perception of tension.

We are going forward with the process of putting the case of the Potchefstroom Campus on the table. We undertake, however, to take the discussion to a broader base in order to see to it that the views of the Potchefstroom Campus are communicated effectively.

The NWU virtually finds itself in a river with treacherous rapids. But our University has deep roots and we know where our strength comes from. For that reason we are going into the future with hope and good expectations.

I care, and I know that you care. Together we will take the NWU to ever greater heights.

With sincere greetings

*Herman van Schalkwyk*



COMPARTIVE STATISTICS/VERGELYKENDE STATISTIEK*																								
Institution	RESEARCH-DIRECTED										TEACHING AND LEARNING				EQUITY ***									
	2013										2013	2013		2012	2013	2012								
	Permanent Academic Staff (PAS)	Publication Units	Publication Units per Permanent Academic Staff	Research Output Units	% NRF Rated Permanent Academic Staff	Research output Units per Permanent Academic Staff	% Permanent Academic Staff with Doctorates	Student Headcount Enrolments	% Postgraduate student enrolments (**)	% UG degree success rate	% Graduates	% Permanent black staff	% Permanent Black Academic staff	% Black VE students contact & distance	% Black VE students contact									
NWU	1288	1169.54	(6)	0.91	(7)	1844.54	(6)	11%	(11)	1.43	(7)	50%	(7)	60975	22%	(7)	85%	(4)	25%	(4)	37.1%	26.8%	64.4%	52.0%
USTELL	1006	1477.01	(4)	1.47	(1)	2542.01	(2)	35%	(2)	2.53	(1)	61%	(2)	27418	36%	(2)	85%	(4)	27%	(2)	41.3%	19.1%	29.3%	29.3%
UCT	1093	1549.12	(3)	1.42	(2)	2396.12	(4)	41%	(1)	2.19	(2)	66%	(1)	26118	33%	(3)	87%	(2)	27%	(2)	59.0%	30.5%	64.3%	64.3%
RHODESU	351	454.35	(10)	1.29	(3)	734.35	(11)	22%	(5)	2.09	(3)	56%	(4)	7485	31%	(4)	86%	(3)	32%	(1)	61.3%	23.2%	58.7%	58.7%
UPRET	1300	1615.34	(2)	1.24	(4)	2635.34	(1)	29%	(3)	2.03	(4)	51%	(6)	57553	37%	(1)	82%	(9)	25%	(4)	41.3%	21.3%	51.5%	44.9%
UWITS	1093	1300.29	(5)	1.19	(5)	2090.29	(5)	25%	(4)	1.91	(5)	58%	(3)	31134	31%	(4)	83%	(8)	23%	(12)	61.9%	34.6%	75.6%	75.6%
UKZN	1376	1627.21	(1)	1.18	(6)	2448.21	(3)	16%	(7)	1.78	(6)	50%	(7)	44002	25%	(6)	81%	(12)	23%	(13)	79.7%	66.3%	93.1%	92.8%
WESTCAPU	574	406.37	(11)	0.71	(10)	784.37	(10)	18%	(6)	1.37	(8)	52%	(5)	20383	22%	(8)	80%	(14)	21%	(16)	82.5%	63.7%	95.3%	95.3%
UJHB	1024	897.42	(8)	0.88	(8)	1311.42	(8)	12%	(9)	1.28	(9)	44%	(9)	48386	14%	(12)	82%	(10)	24%	(9)	60.7%	41.4%	86.5%	86.5%
UFORT-H	327	234.93	(14)	0.72	(9)	389.93	(15)	6%	(13)	1.19	(10)	38%	(13)	12315	21%	(9)	78%	(19)	22%	(14)	82.1%	72.7%	97.4%	97.4%
NMMU	606	342.09	(12)	0.56	(13)	692.09	(12)	12%	(9)	1.14	(11)	43%	(10)	26361	14%	(13)	78%	(18)	24%	(9)	47.5%	26.2%	74.6%	73.6%
UOFS	962	668.63	(9)	0.7	(11)	1037.63	(9)	13%	(8)	1.08	(12)	42%	(11)	31877	21%	(10)	75%	(22)	21%	(15)	37.6%	21.2%	68.8%	66.7%
UNISA	1631	1030.04	(7)	0.63	(12)	1545.04	(7)	9%	(12)	0.95	(13)	39%	(12)	355240	13%	(14)	99%	(1)	10%	(23)	63.9%	48.0%	82.9%	88.9%
UVENDA	337	148.77	(16)	0.44	(14)	187.77	(18)	4%	(15)	0.56	(14)	34%	(14)	11818	11%	(15)	85%	(4)	15%	(22)	96.4%	92.7%	100.0%	100.0%
ULIMPOPO	884	227.02	(15)	0.26	(17)	451.02	(14)	1%	(21)	0.51	(15)	16%	(20)	22914	14%	(11)	84%	(7)	21%	(17)	85.4%	82.5%	98.9%	98.9%
TUT	917	278.21	(13)	0.30	(15)	462.21	(13)	5%	(14)	0.5	(16)	21%	(17)	54159	4%	(20)	75%	(21)	20%	(19)	67.8%	55.1%	93.7%	93.6%
UZULU	299	89.08	(19)	0.30	(15)	131.08	(19)	4%	(15)	0.44	(17)	31%	(15)	16591	10%	(16)	82%	(11)	24%	(11)	89.9%	80.9%	99.8%	99.8%
CUT	291	68.48	(21)	0.24	(18)	117.48	(21)	2%	(18)	0.4	(18)	30%	(16)	13303	7%	(17)	77%	(20)	24%	(8)	59.1%	42.3%	90.6%	90.5%
CPUT	768	147.31	(17)	0.19	(21)	275.31	(16)	3%	(17)	0.36	(19)	17%	(18)	33477	5%	(18)	78%	(17)	24%	(7)	74.5%	58.7%	85.7%	85.9%
DUT	579	128.15	(18)	0.22	(20)	194.15	(17)	2%	(18)	0.34	(20)	17%	(18)	26059	3%	(21)	80%	(13)	24%	(6)	84.5%	73.5%	96.6%	96.6%
VUT	361	82.89	(20)	0.23	(19)	118.89	(20)	2%	(18)	0.33	(21)	13%	(22)	20633	2%	(22)	73%	(23)	20%	(18)	73.7%	58.7%	97.9%	97.9%
WSUTSEC	576	48.41	(22)	0.08	(23)	63.41	(22)	1%	(21)	0.11	(22)	14%	(21)	24122	5%	(19)	79%	(16)	20%	(20)	93.0%	87.7%	99.8%	99.8%
MANGOSTK	195	18.01	(23)	0.09	(22)	18.01	(23)	1%	(21)	0.09	(23)	9%	(23)	11375	0%	(23)	79%	(15)	20%	(21)	93.7%	87.7%	100.0%	100.0%
SECTOR AVERAGE	609	0.66	977	11.9%	1.07	37.0%								16.5%	81.3%	22.5%				68.4%	52.8%	82.8%	82.1%	

\* HEMIS: Department of Higher Education and Training

\*\* Post graduate enrollments including postgraduate diplomas, honours, masters and doctoral enrollments

\*\*\* The equity information was extracted from the Department of Higher Education and Training - Annual Report 2012

( ) Ranking indicator in category