



MULTI-FACETED STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION'S FRAMEWORK



The ability of the College to contribute to the university achieving its goals as outlined within the strategic plan of the university is largely dependent on the contribution that all staff and students make as individuals, and as members of the teams in which they operate.

How we work together as members of a team, and how we ensure that all individuals can contribute to our collective outcomes to their fullest potential, has been identified as a key constraint for us to alleviate. If we can facilitate and promote joint participation, and enable full engagement and

contribution, I believe that we can affect step change in how we deliver on our core mandates of Research and Teaching and Learning. We need to improve the social environment in which we operate, and shift the culture of how we interact with each other, i.e. heighten social inclusion and social cohesion. We need to work together with a shared vision and common purpose.

A critical aspect for achieving this is multi-way communication to promote consultation, participation, shared understanding, and commitment. Most importantly, we need to ensure learning about each other, about our various roles and responsibilities, our contributions, and opportunities and potential to contribute more strongly, as well as about constraints and barriers to participation and engagement. Information, understanding, opportunity, ideas and solutions need to be shared.

We recognize that we have not been effective in this regard, and that there is much work to be done to achieve an "ideal" state. As such, the College has identified the development and implementation of a Multi-Faceted Strategic Communication's Framework (MFSCF) as one of the key areas of focus for 2014. Improved communication is often identified as a concern, spoken about, and not achieved. College management have defined a strategy as to what we want to achieve, and an implementation plan of activities for 2014 which will promote this. We believe that a concerted effort should be made to improve communication (in a broad sense) between: management and staff; management and CHS major stakeholders; staff members in various offices, Disciplines/Departments and Schools as well; as management and students. This framework puts in place a commitment from College

Management to promote inclusion and cohesion, and unlock our collective potential. This is a novel approach, which involves all of us working collectively across portfolios.

Various communication tools will be used to enhance communication activities such as social media platforms, the website, blogs, etC. Some of the planned activities are:

- **Regular 'Communiqués from the DVC, Deans and Director: College Professional Services,** highlighting current developments in the College and matters of concern which will be communicated to all staff and students.
- **The Creation of Social Spaces on all campuses:** The social areas will allow staff and students to meet informally or formally to engage on academic and non academic matters relevant to the CHS. Within these areas the introduction of 'Social Lunches' and other activities to create an opportunity for communication between College Management, Academic staff, Postgraduate Students and Undergraduate Students will assist to inculcate a culture of interactive communication.
- **College Workshops on Communication:** In the complex staffing structure of a University; there is a continuous need to stimulate communication between management, academic staff and professional services staff per se. The College has hence decided to implement a **Communications Workshop on the 8th August (8h00-15h30)** for all its staff. Please diarise this date. In order to ensure that a culture of optimal communication is inculcated in the CHS, it is further envisaged that additional courses and workshops on etiquette, professionalism, time management, social media platforms and public engagement will be introduced.
- **College Chat Room:** The communication of policy and guidance documents will be facilitated by 'College Chats', during which members of management will be invited to host a web based 'College Chat Room' to discuss matters of concern to staff and students. These 'College Chats' will be facilitated by the Public Relations Office of the CHS and all information relevant to the topic will be published on the Web prior to the specific chat.
- **Student Body Communication Forum:** In line with having a student centric approach, it is important to create opportunities for communication with students. To facilitate this, there will be two student body meetings per annum. These meetings will be attended by all members of College Management and students from all four Schools will be afforded the opportunity to submit matters for discussion at these meetings.
- **Stakeholder Group Discussions:** Specific group discussions will be organized to afford particular sets of stakeholders the opportunity for direct interaction around important broad issues, which may involve both information sharing and explanation, but also inputs to enrich developments. Stakeholders in this context may include the various Hospitals at which training is taking place, the proposed Clinical Training Platform

Hospitals, Clinics and Community Centres, the Research Institutes affiliated to the CHS and UKZN, the DOH (both KZN and National), the DHET, Professional Bodies, etc.

- **REACH Campaign:** All staff and students will be made aware of UKZN's Reach principles through various activities that will be recorded and posted on UKZN's Youtube account. The REACH campaign will enhance communication in a manner that promotes the REACH principles of Respect, Excellence, Accountability, Client Orientation and Honesty.

The College has made significant advances in launching its own Facebook and Twitter accounts and in introducing various activities that enhance collegiality and improve communication. However, due to technological advancements and changing needs of relevant role-players and stakeholders, a strategic drive for optimal communication is essential.

I want to encourage all staff and students to participate in the planned activities, as regularly posted on the College Notice system and the [College website](#). As the MFSCF is an interactive initiative, please feel free to send your suggestions to MaryAnn, francism@ukzn.ac.za.

Multi-faceted Communication's strategy for social cohesion and inclusion is really a bit clumsy to write or say every time! Let's come up with a "tagline" that labels our approach in a simple, streamlined way, and that we can trumpet loudly and regularly! MaryAnn will run a competition for a tagline, which should be a maximum of 4 words, creative and really punchy and we will recognize the staff member or student that comes up with the best phrase that pulls us together! The winner will get a prize, so please send MaryAnn your entries by **20 June 2014**.

Let's work together to build a successful organization with a shared understanding and vision of our collective goals. I want to inspire you to realize your true potential by using various communication platforms to enhance and shape the outcomes we are tasked to deliver on. Through this process, I believe that we will enhance social cohesion through providing opportunity for social inclusion.

Let's make this a year when we reaffirm ourselves as an Institution of Excellence; not only in the delivery of our academic tasks but in how we engage with each other and within our community.

Kind Regards

Professor Rob Slotow