



**SOUTH AFRICAN
STUDENTS CONGRESS**

**SASCO UNISA
EASTERN CAPE
MANIFESTO 2021**

MANIFESTO OF SASCO UNISA EC REGION 2021

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UNISA EC REGION

Umtata Regional Centre, East London
Regional Hub, Port Elizabeth Centre
29 January 2021

Introduction

South African Students Congress (SASCO) is the biggest student movement in Africa that drives the transformation and fight for free quality education in institutions of higher learning. The aim of SASCO is creating a non-sexist, non-racial, working class biased and democratic education system. UNISA is an open distance learning institution and SASCO in UNISA strives for creating an equal society that has equal opportunity and resources.

The goal of SASCO in governance remains championing the interests of students, ensuring equal access, building success in UNISA and fighting for better conditions of learning within UNISA regional centres in the Eastern Cape Region. The aim of SASCO UNISA EC is having a vision of a UNISA that owns its own building in Umtata, East London and Port Elizabeth. This vision comes with a UNISA that has learning areas, with Wi-Fi, with access to online resources as well as have access to an area where students can engage, collaborate, network and continue learning through various technologies offered by UNISA. The vision of SASCO UNISA EASTERN CAPE includes every UNISA student having a laptop getting monthly access to data and being able to access library resources within EL, PE and UMTATA.

The vision of SASCO UNISA EASTERN CAPE includes fighting for competent, professional and excellent frontline services where calls, emails, reception duties are done by UNISA staff with effectiveness and efficiency. SASCO UNISA EASTERN CAPE understands the principle "we are members of the community before we are students". Therefore, the struggles of society are the main interests of SASCO this includes fighting for increased spaces to learning, walk-in applications, NSFAS support with higher allowance pay-outs as well as NSFAS living allowance paid no matter the number of modules registered. SASCO UNISA EASTERN CAPE is committed to fighting against all forms of discrimination, rejection and exploitation of UNISA Students. This includes fighting for the reversal of the rejection of 20 000 first time entering students by UNISA and reversing the exclusion of thousands higher certificate completing students. SASCO will continue putting students First knowing that the Voice of Students Matters.

There are many challenges facing the UNISA EASTERN CAPE REGION namely:

1. Poor State of Buildings
2. Poor Service in responding to Phones, Emails.
3. Low levels of support in tutorials

4. Not enough space in Labs, Study areas
5. Poor implementation of decisions taken with student leadership.
6. Delays in NSFAS allowances, bursary pay-outs, registration and applications
7. Poor Wi-Fi connectivity and challenges of online exams
8. Lack of support for students where there is no data, or consideration of student's needs.
9. The centres in EL, PE and Umtata are not equally resourced and do not offer the same resources or capacity. This is a serious challenge for students paying the same amount for the same courses.
10. The delays in study material and failures to resolve ICT problems on time.
11. No support for students with disabilities in regional centres

There are many challenges however we have mentioned a few, that we seek an urgent change and resolution to improve the academic environment for UNISA students in the Eastern Cape Region.

Challenges and Programme of Action to be implemented by the SRC.

1. UNISA BUILDINGS EASTERN CAPE

In East London UNISA owns the building however, the building has limited space for study areas. The students of EL UNISA have been struggling for years seeking additional space. We require the building next to UNISA to be purchased to create more study space for students. In PE UNISA there is two floors however, there is limited study space for students. The challenge also becomes the eating area for students is 1 metre away from the toilet creating a bad odour for students. These challenges require students to move out and have their own building with more space. The building must also not be rented next to businesses it must be an academic institution that can be welcoming to students and registration services. Umtata has a land project that has not been implemented. The demand is that the biggest UNISA Hub must be built in Umtata to ensure students coming from rural Eastern Cape will have an African institution that can serve them as humanity. The building project in Umtata must be built in 2021.

2. Establishment of improved Communication Centres and improved frontline services in the EC UNISA Region

All the offices in the Eastern Cape must respond to calls, emails on time. The students must experience good services and quick service during registration. The support must be provided during application and registration. Students must be employed and skilled to assist during these periods. It is UNISA students that must be identified and given experience to develop employment experience.

3. ONE STUDENT, ONE LAPTOP REALISATION, DATA MONTHLY

“With UNISA being a distance learning institution that offers online support. SASCO has always been clear, that having a device is an integral part of student learning material. SASCO led NSRC made one student laptop a realisation and SASCO EC will grow on this with the call that all UNISA students must have laptop and students with disabilities must have devices supporting them. The reality is that Covid-19 means that the ownership of a laptop or device, as well as access to data become very important. Therefore, SASCO calls for data for students every month, as well as having regional centres that will have space where it is needed for students to study in a conducive learning environment. The needs of UNISA students vary as a result SASCO seeks an institution that will cater for both young and old, working and full-time Unisa students.

4. DECENTRALIZATION OF FUNCTIONS AS WELL AS DECENTRALIZATION OF NSFAS FUNCTIONS

The functions of applications and registrations are limited in the centres of EL, Umtata, PE as a result UNISA is centralised with a system fully depended on Pretoria Main Office. The call by SASCO UNISA EASTERN CAPE is that functions must be available in the region and student funding admins must be able to execute functions to speed up payments of allowances, as well as improve resolution of registration and application challenges. Book allowances, living allowances, refunds and other services must be offered on time.

5. STUDY MATERIAL ON TIME AND OVER THE COUNTER SERVICES

The call by SASCO UNISA EASTERN CAPE region includes having study material delivered within 10 days after registering. The service to ensure that study material is given within over the counter in EL, UMTATA, PE must become a permanent reality.

6. ONLINE CLASSES & ONLINE TUTORS

SASCO UNISA EASTERN CAPE realises the lack of support in tutorial classes. This contributes to challenges and the failure rate in challenging courses or challenging modules. SASCO calls for online tutorials for all task modules and it calls for monthly data for students to navigate online learning without struggling for needed resources for academic success. SASCO UNISA EC calls for a hybrid system of teaching and learning.

7. STUDENT ECONOMY & STUDENT CAMPUS LIFE

SASCO UNISA EASTERN CAPE introduces the vision of a student economy, that will aim at empowering students where one day in a month, there will be a platform where students showcase their work. This call is in line with having a campus life which is not just virtual but envisioning a University where students exchange books, knowledge, have poetry sessions and can meet for prayer. This is the building of a cultural economy where education builds a network that can be an economy that can propel students to collaborate and support each other in their UNISA journey. This vision also includes students showcasing their products, their creations and they can be able to purchase. There is a call for international students exchange programme, free basic African languages workshops, Heritage Day events for students, social activities, community outreach programmes, sports and science to enhance natural talent and identifying of talent in student lectures. The building of a living ODEL institution that has programmes that bring students together for development.

8. SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

SASCO UNISA EASTERN CAPE calls for the end of discrimination against students that are differently abled. The region must employ students with disabilities and the region must ensure these students have support and their concerns are addressed with the seriousness and urgency required.

9. NFAS ALLOWANCES AND NSFAS SUPPORT

SASCO UNISA EASTERN CAPE calls for equal allowances for UNISA students. There are cases where UNISA allowances legitimately require support, living allowance, device allowance, book allowance, transport allowance and accommodation allowance. For example, students leave Mount Frere to live near Umtata or EL, these costs are unknown by NSFAS and they cause an additional burden. There must be an immediate review of UNISA allowances that are low. UNISA NSFAS allowances must be equal and students must qualify for the living allowances no matter the number of modules registered. Refunds must be paid on time as well as all allowances. The students of NSFAS walk in PE whose applications were lost, UNISA must pay for all those students that have unjustly disadvantaged. All NSFAS walk-in applications students whose applications were lost must be registered.

Allowances must be paid directly into the bank account of students. There is no room for Intellimali because "Intellimali usityela imalli" that we do not have.

10. Reversal of the rejection of 20 000 students and the reopening of UNISA Campuses (Labs & Library)

SASCO UNISA EASTERN CAPE condemns the rejection of 20000 students and calls for an immediate reversal of this decision. SASCO UNISA EC calls for NSFAS walk in applications and calls for UNISA to consider ACCESS and SUCCESS for all qualifying and deserving students. SASCO UNISA EASTERN CAPE calls for demand that all higher certificate students must be offered every year spaces in courses they qualify as part of continuous lifelong learning policy that must be passed by management.

12. FEES MUST FALL & CLEAR HISTORICAL DEBT

SASCO UNISA EC does not support an increase of fees during a pandemic. It is a pandemic to pay high fees while dealing with unemployment, retrenchment and a declining economy. We call for 0 percent increase as well as AODs must be released on time for qualifying students and the Merit and Postgraduate bursaries must be made available annually to UNISA students. SASCO UNISA EC calls for the immediate clearance of historic debt and the release of academic records to students that need it for employment and advancement of education.

13. Functional, Accountable and Transparent SRC

SASCO UNISA EASTERN CAPE calls for SRCs to consult, to be transparent, to be visible, to be active, and to be accountable to students for all their actions. SASCO UNISAS EASTERN CAPE calls for regular student meetings between SRCs and UNISA students through a website where students can interact and engage with student leadership.

14. EFFECTIVE SECURITY CONTROL & EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

SASCO UNISA EC calls for safe campuses and campuses that have effective management to deal with safety concerns of students.

15. EXAMINATION ONLINE

SASCO UNISA EC calls for a discussion on the decision of online exams. We do not support the decision without resources and data support for all students and students with disabilities. SASCO UNISA EC calls for immediate concessions to CTA accounting students and immediate withdrawal of 0 percent given to students unfairly. The disciplinary warnings must be withdrawn, and students given an apology for the unfair disciplinary procedure by the examination department. We call for an immediate review of the safety and effectiveness of the online learning exam system.

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VOTE FOR SASCO EC

VOTE FOR TRANSFORMATION

VOTE FOR JUSTICE

VOTE FOR FREE QUALITY EDUCATION

VOTE ONLINE FOR REGIONAL AND NATIONAL



VOTE SOUTH AFRICAN STUDENTS CONGRESS!!!

Compiled by:

SASCO UNISA EASTERN CAPE REGION

Submitted by: **Cde Pelokazi Gibeni**

29 January 2021

Regional Executive Secretary

The Voice of Eastern Cape Students Matters

VOTE SASCO!

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