

Verwelkoming van nuwelingstudente en hul ouers

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Danie Craven-stadion, Coetzenburg, 20 Januarie 2011

Dankie, dr MacMaster. Goeie more, almal! Geagte raadslede, kollegas, studenteraadslede, dames en here, baie welkom hier.

Dit is my werk om baie welkom te sê aan ons eregaste vandag – al ons nuwelingstudente, d.w.s. ons eerstejaars, en hul ouers. 'n Universiteit draai om sy studente, en julle sal baie hoor ons is 'n student-gesentreerde universiteit. Dit is baie belangrik want julle het 'n groot besluit geneem om Maties te word, en ons wil seker maak elke Matie het die volle ondersteuning van die Universiteit.

Glo my, julle gaan nie spyt wees nie. Daar lê vir ons nuwe studente 'n fantastiese ervaring voor, 'n dinamiese studentelewe, die geleentheid om van die beste vriende te maak, en om jou horisonne uit te brei vir die toekoms. *To each of our new students, welcome to Matie Land! You may not have realised it, but you are now members of our First-year Academy. This unique initiative has a single overarching goal: student success. The national drop-out rate for first-year students across all higher education institutions is as high as 30%, which is unacceptable.*

We have managed to lift the number of students who go on to their second year to 87%. And we have done so through various support mechanisms. These include:

- *excellent teaching staff who go out of their way to assist students;*
- *mentor and tutor programmes (please ensure you know your mentor and work with him or her closely);*
- *coordination points for effective learning and teaching;*
- *integrated residence education programmes (which will touch the life of each first-year student, whether you live in res or not); as well as*
- *early assessment in all first-year modules.*

This is very serious. Your academic progress will be measured within the first six weeks of this academic year. This means you will be writing tests so that we and you and your parents can get a clear picture of your academic standing, and so that we can begin to look at the right support for your future success.

Parents, you must please ensure we have your postal address so that we can keep you informed about the first six weeks' assessment. We need you to help us help your child succeed. Yes, this is university, no longer school, and we do expect our students to show initiative and study independently. But making the transition can be difficult, and the First-year Academy is there to assist every student to make that transition successfully.

New Maties, the Welcoming Programme has been designed specifically to facilitate your adjustment to campus life. Take part in the social activities, but please do not

miss the faculty sessions, library tours and other opportunities that will enable you to function fully as a student once classes commence.

Maar moenie so bekommerd lyk nie! So tussen die geleerdery deur gaan julle darem kans kry om te ontspan ook. Stellenbosch het 'n lekker sosiale lewe. Hier is sport en kultuur in oorvloed, en 'n magdom studenteverenigings waaraan julle kan deelneem. Leef gerus jou belangstellings uit en neem deel aan studenteverkiesings want hier by die universiteit doen julle eintlik die groot oefening om deel te wees van 'n demokrasie.

So af en toe spoel die sosiale lewe oor na die dorp se strate en winkels en kuiersplekke. Dis reg so, maar ek vra mooi, wees veiligheidsbewus en tree verantwoordelik op.

- Beweeg maar altyd saam met 'n maat of twee rond, veral saans, en gebruik die Groen Roete op kampus, wat deur ons personeel gepatrolleer word vir julle veiligheid.
- Please be aware of your surroundings and be safety conscious. Look after your possessions.
- Be aware of the bus service we provide until the early hours of the morning.
- Also be aware of the access control we provide at the hostels to protect you.

As they say in the classics, now for something completely different. You will be hearing a lot about Stellenbosch University's HOPE Project. This initiative is our new, long-term strategic plan that will impact your life and will leave the strongest imprint in the time that you are here at this university. This initiative will also ensure that you get the opportunity to work within a 21st century university context.

The HOPE Project allows us to be of service to the people of our country and continent by using our research and academic excellence to tackle various problems in society. And it allows us to be the best university we can possibly be for a new generation of young people by equipping them with the skills and inclination they will need to meet the challenges of the future.

Our vision for our country and continent is a future free from poverty, where the human dignity of all people is protected, where our social and ecological systems are healthy, and where peace, security and democracy are safeguarded. The HOPE Project is the vehicle we are using to get us all there.

Ook hier op kampus werk ons hard daaraan om die foute van die verlede reg te stel en 'n nuwe, meer regverdige bedeling tot stand te bring. Hoe meer ons studente diversiteit hier ervaar en leer hanteer, hoe beter sal hulle toegerus wees vir die werklikhede van die 21ste eeu en om leiers te wees van hierdie wonderlike land. Ons probeer hier 'n nuwe gemeenskap bou waarin almal trots Maties is, almal saamwerk om 'n beter toekoms te skep en almal vir mekaar ruimte gee.

We live in a heterogeneous society with people from different backgrounds and cultures, and important part of the work we do is to secure that when a person leaves

this university with a Stellenbosch degree, they have had the opportunity to come in contact with cultures of other people, and also that they have become multilingual people in our society.

Ons is dus verbind tot die bevordering van Afrikaans as akademiese en wetenskapstaal in 'n meertalige konteks. Die instel van parallelmedium-onderrig in van die fakulteite is 'n belangrike deel van ons poging om te verseker dis moontlik om voorgraads in Afrikaans óf Engels te studeer, met blootstelling aan die ander taal.

In conclusion, ladies and gentlemen, let me assure that you have made the right choice in coming here. Stellenbosch University is the most productive research university in the country; our student success rate is among the highest; and through our science-for-society approach, we are ensuring that higher education becomes more relevant to the actual needs of our people and that when you leave here your will be regarded as one of those who make a relevant contribution.

Weereens, baie welkom hier, en onthou, eenmaal 'n Matie, altyd 'n Matie!