STUDENTS CHRISTIAN ORGANISATION

UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE ALICE BRANCH MANIFESTO

2024

Students' Christian Organisation

University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

SEPTEMBER 19

SCO FORTE ALICE

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SCO BACKGROUND

In 1896, the Students Christian Association (SCA) was formed. In 1965, it was divided into four racially distinct groups by order of the Apartheid regime, these being SCA for people racially classified as "English speaking Whites", Afrikaans Christeleke Studente Vereeniging (ACSV) for people racially classified as "Afrikaans speaking Whites", Christeleke Studente Vereeniging (CSV) for people racially classified as "Coloureds", while people racially classified as "Black" ascribed to the Students' Christian Movement (SCM).

In 1992 talks between the various organisations took place in Stellenbosch, each acknowledging and declaring a unified stand on ministerial involvement in both schools and tertiary institutions. By 1995, talks of reconciliation between SCA and SCM were underway at the University of Transkei, thus leading to a joint conference the following year at the modern-day, Durban University of Technology (DUT) Indumiso campus in Pietermaritzburg where the proposition of merger was first adopted.

On July 5, 1997, the Students' Christian Organisation (SCO) was officially formed by the merger of SCA & SCM at Fort Hare University, Alice.

SCO VISION

"Our vision is to build students in South Africa into communities of disciples transformed by Jesus Christ, impacting the School, the University, the Church and society for the glory of God".

#Phatha_Scaka

SCO POLITICAL IDEOLOGY: PROGRESSIVISM

SCO's political approach will be inclined toward progressive politics. Progressivism is a broad philosophy based on the idea of progress. Progressive politics are founded on the belief that technology, economic development, and social organization are vital to improving the human condition in this earthly life. Progressivism is a problem-solving method, a philosophy founded on a pragmatic search for solutions that work, grounded in a healthy skepticism. The progressive method transcends ideology; it is more of a pragmatic search for solutions that work. In a nutshell, it is less concerned about what you call and label things, it is more concerned about the feasibility of policies consequently it is critical and analytical. Progressivism can be universal not boxed in ideology, it is an adaptable approach across political divides.

Post-apartheid South Africa has been exciting, desperate, and challenging. It is exciting because human dignity is restored. It is desperate because there is no quick delivery for a better life for all, corruption is rampant and threatening the gains of our freedom. Challenging because our country has become a values vacuum at the moment, statesmen figures are acting dishonestly without restraint, more than 7 million people are infected with HIV, countless are in jail for crimes of every description, families are largely dysfunctional, suffering in poverty, inequality and unemployment, racism and xenophobic attitudes are bubbling in the surface, just to mention a few of the challenges.

Many people put their hopes in government to address the above social ills however South Africa like many countries where one party is dominating is increasingly plagued by corruption, sloppiness, arrogance, and unaccountability. History shows us that strong civil movements, preferably the ones that are not challenging power, are a vital part of a democratic system. SCO by its civil political activism, is that vital solution in this complex South African challenge. Along the wide spectrum of other civil movements, it is undeniable that we are making a difference, civil movements such as the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) while not contesting state power it has made a

difference in ensuring the accessibility of HIV/AIDS treatment to all South Africans, Section 27 has made a difference in ensuring textbooks and learning material is available to students, the Alliance Against Urban Tolling (AAUTO), Corruption Watch and so on.

The advantage of such civil movements is that they can attract a wide range of people from different political persuasions, uniting people from parties in government and opposition formations. The position of SCO must always be in such a manner that we put God and the country first before political parties and ideologies.

Embracing progressivism, in a democratic centralism manner SCO shall navigate the political space. Key to pragmatic solutions is the debate and dialogue on contemporary issues, being a Christian organization our creed is tabulated in our basic statement of faith. SCO shall continue with tolerance, comfortable with diverse opinions and differences, where it matters most it shall discuss a position and rally its members behind a practical progressive solution.

The positioning of SCO on policies such as Affirmative Action, Broad-Based on Black Economic Empowerment, and other policies that seek to address inequality is such that anything that seeks to address inequality and wrongs

of the past is much appreciated however it is also true that the current form of these policies mentioned above

do not meet the desired intent, therefore, a very robust progressive engagement is needed on how best can the country deal with inequality and wrongs of the past, SCO shall not be loyal neither shall it be against the mentioned policies but we shall embrace a progressive dialogue which will culminate to a better version to realize the desired goal of equal and just community.

SCO agrees that higher education is a public good. Having well-trained doctors, lawyers, teachers, accountants, managers, engineers, journalists, and civil servants around benefits us all. The critical reasoning skills cultivated by humanities subjects such as theology, economics, political studies, and philosophy enhance civil society's ability to hold government to account. Thus the campaign for free education in our lifetime is a sensible call,

The sticking point of discussion is how this one aspect of free education contributes to the sum of the whole. Free education for all might not level the playing field, the rich and poor are clubbed together. Spending on high-earners looks regressive. The consequences of fees must fall and need to be examined further so that, if implemented they fit well to total economic inclusion and prosperity for all.

SCO CALLS FOR:

- **FEES**
  - The university should create concession for students who have graduated but are unable to get their certificate because of debt, for example students who owe from 50000 and less must receive their certificates.
  - An audit in the use of the accommodation fees in resolving the issues of infrastructure and residence renovations.
  - The Finance Department, at the end of each academic year and the SRC at the end of their term must publicize their expenditure to ensure accountability in the use of student levies.
  - Students with outstanding debts to be allowed to register as long they have a funding.
  - Post-grads and under-grads who were previously funded in the previous year, must be allowed to register even before funding is confirmed.

- **ACCOMODATION**
  - Consistently stable Wi-Fi in all in all residences.
  - Plugged working washing machines, microwaves and fridges.
  - Working stoves
  - Proper cubing to plug machines
  - More disability friendly residences and buildings
  - Non-residence students' allowance be increased, equivalent to the money paid for residences
  - Decrease of accommodation until all residences meet NSAFS standards
  - Proper maintenance and transportation of students living off campus
  - Provision of sanitary towels in all female residences
  - Better fumigation and pest control to all residences

- Renovation of residences, fix the cold showers, and boiler machines.
- Installation of glass windows.
- Working printing machines in all residences with print papers
- The provision of a prolonged temporary accommodation for the students who are writing supplementary examination.
- Provision for pregnant students
- The allocation of residences for returning students be done at the end of each academic year.

- **ACADEMICS**
  - The prioritization of Fort Hare students for post graduate studies admission
  - Early distribution of laptops
  - 24/7 operation of library
  - Increase of bursaries for post-grads
  - Increase in salaries for SI leaders
  - Proper provision of information regarding possible opportunities to study abroad
  - Increase of operating hours in computer labs
  - Provision of disabled people friendly laptops
  - Association of SCU and SI Leaders to make sure that the underperforming students are counselled and assisted academically.
  - Effective administration replies to study applications be done on time.
  - The upgrading of lecture halls to meet the 4th Industrial Revolution standards.
  - Addition and renovation of lecture halls
  - Proper training of the tutors and SI leaders
  - An update of the library books and addition of computers be made in all computer labs.
  - The university must get new equipment and renovate the science laboratories.
  - The issuing of degree confirmation letters on time for graduates to be able to pursue further studies and job hunting.
  - The university should find ways to attract more bursary sponsors for post-graduate studies.
  - On time awarding of Fee Waivers to deserving students
  - Extended hours for library

- **HEALTH**
  - A functional clinic with a doctor and at least 2 professional nurses in each campus
  - A clinic that will accommodate all students with sickness/ illness
  - An on-camps ambulance
  - Provision of medication to assist students
  - A proper clinic
  - Employment of qualified sport specialists/ psychologists
  - Proper maintenance of sewages
  - Proper draining systems

- Extension of operating hours in clinic
- Employment of at least 3 doctors and 6 professional nurses
- Provision so sanatory towels dispensers in all residences
- Employment of qualified staff for driving ambulances
- on time medication
- A provision of sanitary towels
- Addition of ambulances, so that the is a quick response when the students are not feeling well

- **SOCIAL**

  - The establishment of the university owned grocery stores and the profit be used in assisting the students.
  - Propre maintenance of sports field / basketball
  - Renovation of the pool
  - Entrepreneurship hub
  - Park establishment
  - Fixing of the main gate and vandalized buildings
  - Calling for the amendment of the policy that prohibits student to do business on campus
  - The provision of permanent venues for the religious societies that are having daily services.
  - Wi-Fi coverage in the whole campus not only inside residences
  - A provision of at least one meal for needy students during the registration period and before the loading of food allowances
  - Shuttle must be provided in the evening hours for students that are studying in the library.
  - Addition of ATMs on campus for other banks

- **SAFETY**
  - Increase of the security personal
  - Fixing of potholes
  - Securities in male residences
  - Cameras at cricket field
  - Lights around areas like cricket field, Kuwait and Phycology
  - Training of securities
  - Employment of more securities
  - Appointment of new security company
  - Patrol cars
  - Increased motorisation of who comes through the small gate close to Kuwait
  - Securities be held accountable for missing sniffs
  - Proper maintained infrastructure like road

  - Provision of functioning emergency radios to every security personnel

- Installation of functioning security cameras in each and every corridor of our residences and in the streets around the campus
- Installation of additional functioning street lights all around the campus

Retail and Commercial facilities

SCO calls for the university to have the following facilities on campus;

- The university should have a bar shop on campus to avoid students going to town for beverage and that make students to be unsafe
- Pharmacy
- Hair salon
- Coffee shop
- Restaurant
- Stationery shop

Leisure and recreational facilities

- Licensed bar on campus
- Student centre for East London campus
- Cinema
- Gaming arcade

REACHING STUDENTS FOR CHRIST