



# Scribbling for Success

Penned by the Deanery

## Welcome Note

In our busy schedules, be it keeping the Faculty running in the broader sense, teaching, assessment, clinics or research, ***we all sometimes lose focus that we're a veterinary science family and that we need to care about each other.*** While this has different meaning to different people, we are of the belief that this should be our willingness to support each other as we move the Faculty forward in our continuous strides in being veterinary leaders. It is also important to us to come to the realisation that WE are the Faculty, as otherwise the Faculty is just a bunch of empty buildings. ***In recent discussions with staff one aspect identified has been the feeling of being isolated from the management decisions of the Faculty, in that no one understands what is happening around the Faculty.*** In an attempt to address this, we are launching a series of activities to address it. This newsletter is a start of this process, and we'll simply pass on discussions on the bigger aspects around the Faculty.

### Our Faculty

- ❖ 65 Hectare campus
- ❖ 60 000m<sup>2</sup> floor space
- ❖ Five Departments
- ❖ 400 staff
- ❖ 1500 students
- ❖ Two satellite facilities

## Within the Box

- ★ **Growing the income:** Every year the Faculty receives significant funding from the Department of Higher Education (DHET) to support our training, which accounts to 60% of our R400 million running costs. Unfortunately, the cost of operating the Faculty is starting to exceed what our subsidy supports. As a result, we're looking at being more self-sustainable. ***We would love to hear your thoughts on OTAU being a commercial stud farm and for our laboratories to pulled into a new business model that runs in a similar manner to the OVAH or private clinical pathology laboratories.***

- ★ **Hans Hoheisen Wildlife Research Station (HHWRS):** It took a few years of hard negotiation but we're were finally successful in renewing our MOU with Mpumalanga province for a further 15 years. We're looking forward to HH now being developed into a transdisciplinary centre under the stewardship of Prof Bastos.

- ★ **Renovations:** As most would know, many of our facilities are close to 35 years old. Using a combination of donor funds and some reserves we're looking forward to getting the hospital floors improved, and to give our lecture halls some care and attention.

Drop us a note with your thoughts and ideas!



"Even in the confinement of life's limitations, let your spirit soar like a vulture breaking free from its box. Embrace the challenges within, for they are but stepping stones to the limitless skies of your dreams."

**Faculty of  
Veterinary Science**

Fakulteit Veeartsenykunde  
Lefapha la Disaense tša Bongakadiruiwa

## Outside the Box

★ Section 20: Yes, that word. Unfortunately, despite our every effort including complaints to two Ministers, Industry and Universities South Africa (USAf), we've not managed to get DALRRD to be less draconian in managing animal research. Unfortunately, until we find any way forward, we'll need to stick to the rules.

★ SETA Funding: 2024 unfortunately see a decline in our funding from the SETA's, with the result that some of our Work integrated learning (WIL) and Postgrad funding will be restricted. Please rest assured that we're giving this our every attention to ensure that our students receive adequate support.

★ We want our power: As you're probably acutely aware, the Faculty has a number of standby generators. As with any piece of equipment taking a heavy load, they are not as reliable as we would like. ***We have received numerous questions on plans to move towards renewable energy. The University is actively looking at this, but unfortunately our demand for power far outstrips the ability of batteries to support the power draw. As a result, the generators will still be needed, which does not alleviate our aim to be greener.... but things are looking hopeful for a the OVAH to get its own solar panels!***



## Imploding the Box

★ Accreditation: Two major visits happened recently. For the first a delegation for the SAVC, AVBC and RCVS undertook a mid-term accreditation visit; while a number of laboratories went through their SANAS accreditation. In our opinion we fared well in our BVSc accreditation, with only the necropsy halls being flagged as needing attention. We were, however, commended for our teaching animal facilities and the feedlot challenge. ***Well done to our OTAU and PAS staff for shining on the day.***

★ Funding Model for the Faculty: With the full support from our interim VC, the Faculty has entered into discussion with the DHET and Minister to look at the future funding model of veterinary science. If the country wants to open more veterinary schools, as per the rumours we've all heard, then it is incumbent on government to make sure that this centurion receives the proper attention.

★ Biosecurity: Following numerous discussions, our broader vision for the Faculty is to lead in the biosecurity sphere with focus on farmer education, vaccine development, disease diagnostics and farm-specific control strategies. We are actively engaging with various partners to established strategic partnerships that can bring funding into the Faculty to support research, postgraduate funding and locum staff.

★ Black-ink Signatures: Discussions with Black-ink signatures, a private donor, is progressing well. For those that may not be aware, Black-ink which has a passion for animal welfare, is looking into setting up a new animal shelter next to the Faculty with the aim of supporting our undergraduate training in animal ethology and supporting fund raising to support the welfare cases attended to by the Faculty.



## Questions

Drop Neo a question and we'll make sure we answer.

Don't be afraid to challenge us, give us direction or suggest strategies to take the Faculty forward:  
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