



Scribbling for Success

Penned by the Deanery

Welcome Note

Welcome to the February Issue of the newsletter. Unfortunately, international relations have become more charged in the last few weeks, with major tensions developing between South Africa and the USA, which may or may not be escalated by how a certain billionaire was treated as a kid at Pretoria Boys' High. As these political dynamics unfold, we remain vigilant regarding their potential implications. One indirect benefit has been the renewed support for the Country from the EU, which potentially opens up new opportunities for accessing research funds and new export markets for the country. For this, our fledgling Biosecurity Centre has every chance of being a major game changer for the Faculty. We also recently met with members of the Belgium Embassy and they are committed to seeing the new MSc Global One Health degree being successful. Nonetheless, amid these global changes, we are proud to announce the inauguration of our new Vice-Chancellor, Prof F Petersen. His leadership is expected to usher in a new direction for our university and Faculty. We are excited about the forthcoming opportunities that this new chapter will bring.

Our Faculty

- ❖ Sr Bev Olivier: retires after 45yrs
- ❖ Ranked: 5th of 20 schools in the RVVC and AVBC system (Shanghai)
- ❖ HH now a UP research centre



Within the Box

★ **Biosecurity Initiatives:** The Department of Agriculture and UP Biosecurity Hub will be hosting an important [Summit scheduled for June](#) with the Minister. We anticipate that this will provide a platform for robust discussion and a new framework for government with supportive research funding benefiting our Faculty significantly.

★ **SAVC Updates:** The South African Veterinary Council is evolving its fee structure for facility inspections. They will now implement an annual fee, which will be the responsibility of each practice primary.

★ **Rankings:** We are proud to share that the latest QS rankings have once again placed our veterinary science program within the top 60 globally. Additionally, we were ranked 41 in the Shanghai Ranking, securing a [5th position amongst the 20 institutions](#) accredited by the RCVS and AVBC.

★ **Successful Open Days:** Our Faculty recently held our annual open day with good attendance. We also participated in the inaugural NAS/EBIT open day at Hatfield, showcasing our programs and attracting potential transfer students. [Many thanks to Lesego and our army of volunteers](#) for already making our new recruitment initiatives a success.

"Even when life places you on a short leash, let your determination lead you to boundless opportunities. Like a dog who greets every challenge with unwavering loyalty and courage, face life's obstacles head-on, knowing they're just markers on the trail to your dreams."

**Faculty of
Veterinary Science**

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- ★ **Extended Hospital Hours:** Thanks to our interns, the operating hours for outpatients will be extended. [We will now be open until 23:00](#). While this does not fully restore all our after-hours services, we view this as a positive step toward better servicing our community's needs.
- ★ **OTAU:** We recently had an unscheduled visit, albeit expected, from the [SPCA to evaluate the horses and sheep](#) in this round. [We are happy to report that no concerns were raised](#). Many thanks to our OTAU staff for their efforts. We would also like to assure the Faculty that the Deanery and the OTAU Management Committee will continue to work on improving our facilities to the benefit of our animals and training.
- ★ **Staff Recruitment:** We continue to have [new staff join us at the Faculty](#) as we fill our vacant positions, and we [wish them a happy stay with us](#). While recruitment still remains a challenge due to the scarcity in the field of veterinary science, DHET-mandated austerity, SAVC regulations and VISA requirements, we will continue to move forward positively. Our real areas of concern nonetheless still remain in production animals which is thus far proving to be very difficult to manage. Management will also continue to work with Alumni to see how we make use of their assistance, together with working towards better CCS support for the OVAH.

Outside the Box

- ★ **Focused Student Recruitment:** We are revamping our student recruitment strategy, particularly for rural areas. Through [collaborations with the Department of Agriculture and the HWSETA](#), we seek to improve our marketing in rural areas, including the effectiveness of our main initiative, the Wanna Bee Weekend. 🐝
- ★ **QQR Preparation:** The Faculty's Quinquennial Quality Review (QQR) is [scheduled for October 2025](#). As mentioned in the last edition Prof Penzhorn will lead the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) preparation, while the Faculty has now been asked to nominate senior academics from outside the country to be on the evaluation panel.



Imploding the Box

- ★ **Enhancing Communication:** The Deanery continually [seeks ways to improve communication within our community](#). We would like your input on how we can foster an environment where everyone's voice is heard and valued, perhaps even attending smaller section meetings. We also look forward to strong discussions with [professional staff at the upcoming forum on the 26th March](#).
- ★ **Partnership Decisions:** After careful consideration, [we have decided against partnering with Black Ink](#), the NPO which has the aim of building a new animal welfare shelter. This decision revolved around fundraising implications and potentially diverting our goals of teaching excellence.
- ★ **AI Developments:** The growth of artificial intelligence is profoundly transforming our industry. The University is committed to adapting to these changes with a newly introduced AI policy that will be regularly updated. Academics will need to decide on the appropriate level of AI integration into their activities. As a Faculty, we would, however, like our staff to explore how they can take maximum advantage of AI.

Questions

Drop The One (aka 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: neo.mashitisho@up.ac.za

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