



Stellenbosch

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Research Policy



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forward together
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Research Policy

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¹ Rules Owner: Head(s) of Responsibility Centre(s) in which the rules functions.

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RESEARCH POLICY

OF STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

Stellenbosch University has chosen to be a research-driven university.

In the Strategic Framework, which was accepted in 1999, a decision to prioritize research was taken. Research features prominently in the University's five-point vision statement, which outlines the University's objectives.

By adopting the motto "your knowledge partner" as an outcome of the strategic planning exercise in 1999, the University chose to pursue specific values, particularly with regard to research.

1. By adopting a research policy Stellenbosch University wishes

- 1.1 to emphasize the importance placed on research as a significant and integral part of our academic task;
- 1.2 to express its commitment to
 - a) making a contribution to the National System of Innovation and to be knowledgeable about the relevant state policies;
 - b) playing a role in South Africa and internationally by making such a contribution;
 - c) building capacity in areas where there is a high level of research-based expertise;
 - d) meeting international requirements and quality for research, with reference to the particular opportunities and limitations of the South African situation; and
 - e) ensuring that all research at the University meets the requirements of generally accepted good governance;
- 1.3 to establish a framework that encourages, coordinates and manages the planning and execution of research activities on the level of central management as well as within individual faculties, departments, centres and institutions;
- 1.4 to adhere to the basic principles of research ethics as they apply to the different disciplines, to continually adapt them to new circumstances and to ensure that they are applied consistently;
- 1.5 to ensure the importance of academic integrity and the pursuit of quality in all research; and
- 1.6 to emphasize the need to focus the University's research activities on chosen themes within faculties, departments and institutions, amongst other things.

2. For the purpose of this policy, Stellenbosch University understands the term "research" as all endeavours based on clearly formulated problems and the methodical gathering and systematic processing of data

- 2.1 to gain insights
 - a) that will extend the body of scientific knowledge; and/or
 - b) that will further the implementation of this knowledge; and

- 2.2 that represents an active involvement in finding solutions based on scientific knowledge in both the broader Natural Sciences and the Human and Social Sciences.

3. Stellenbosch University expects that goals are set for all academic staff

- 3.1 to give research a high priority as part of their academic work;
- 3.2 to undertake research activities, deliver quality research outputs and to be involved in service to the community to which their research relates;
- 3.3 to pursue the necessary interaction between research and tuition continuously;
- 3.4 to stay informed about new research techniques, the state of research results and research topics of relevance to their various specialities or fields of study;
- 3.5 to take cognisance of the research policies and programmes of
 - a) the various statutory research boards and other extra-university institutions in South Africa; and
 - b) international institutions (of specific countries, of a bilateral nature or of multi-national bodies) that are relevant to South Africa and/or the chosen focus areas of the University, and to make use of the opportunities that are provided by such plans and programmes;
- 3.6 to seek and maintain connections and cooperation with other researchers in South Africa and internationally by creating and participating in research networks;
- 3.7 to obtain funds for research at the University in order to establish a sustainable financial basis for research;
- 3.8 to provide effective study assistance in accordance with the University's rules and guidelines for postgraduate study;
- 3.9 to defer to the University's policy on contract research, and to fulfil the accompanying contractual obligations conscientiously;
- 3.10 to handle intellectual property and expertise according to the University's policy and to take advantage of opportunities for the commercialisation of research;
- 3.11 to participate in appropriate mentoring programmes to strengthen the capacity of other researchers;
- 3.12 to publicise research results by means of lectures at national and international subject conferences, and as publications in scientific journals or other media (e.g. the publication of books); and
- 3.13 to enhance the reputation of Stellenbosch University by the quality of their research work and publication.

4. Stellenbosch University expects faculties, departments and institutes/centres

- 4.1 to take the necessary organisational measures to simplify the planning, execution and management of research activities, in order to lay a firm and justifiable foundation for controlling such activities, including maintaining standards of performance;
- 4.2 to continuously encourage academic staff to initiate and develop individual and /or team research activities;

- 4.3 to pay special attention to the possibilities and opportunities that multi-, inter- and transdisciplinary research present;
- 4.4 to organise and present under- and postgraduate courses in a way that fosters interest in research;
- 4.5 to record current and past research projects and new research qualifications on a regular basis, in collaboration with the Division of Research Development, in order to acquire a clear picture of the University's research profile;
- 4.6 to ensure the optimal coordination of research by eliminating unnecessary overlap and duplication of research activities between local and other researchers in South Africa and internationally as far as possible;
- 4.7 to give researchers the opportunity to convey their knowledge to students in lectures and individually; and
- 4.8 to pursue connections with organisations that could help to identify relevant research problems, generate possible financial support for research, make practical use of research results, and/or exploit them commercially in accordance with the policy of SU.

5. Stellenbosch University undertakes

- 5.1 to place a high premium on research initiative, status and capability when appointments are made, aside from other abilities, such as teaching abilities;
- 5.2 to have in place (either on central or on faculty level) mechanisms that make provision for all relevant possibilities and limitations,
 - a) to supply academic staff with the required laboratory facilities, research assistance and other infrastructure necessary for the execution of their research;
 - b) to give special attention to the needs of subject disciplines that are totally dependent on written sources for their research;
 - c) to make bursaries or other financial support available to students at the master's and doctoral levels, and to post-doctoral fellows;
 - d) to give academic staff the opportunity of improving their research capabilities and increasing the impact of their research by granting research leave and providing financial support for the purpose of attending local or international subject meetings and strengthening research connections;
 - e) to enable eminent researchers from elsewhere to pay the University shorter or longer visits with the purpose of promoting research at the University;
 - f) to provide suitable support services (especially by the Division of Research Development);
 - g) to make special efforts to provide sources for the optimal development of the capacity of its academic staff, particularly young researchers, through suitable funding, training and mentoring programmes;
 - h) to develop the diversity profile of the University's lecturers/researchers; and
 - i) to further the research profile of the University and to promote research at the institution;

- 5.3 to give suitable acknowledgement to staff who conduct research work of a high quality on a continuous basis;
- 5.4 to promote the establishment of research institutes, units and groups as the need for such entities develops;
- 5.5 to ensure, via the Research Committee of the Senate and its various subcommittees, that
 - a) available funds are awarded and managed in a discerning manner;
 - b) research projects that are considered for financial support meet the relevant criteria of quality and feasibility;
 - c) policy and management plans for research are revised and adapted regularly;
 - d) central analytical facilities are managed effectively;
 - e) research at the University is evaluated regularly in terms of its extent, quality and impact; and
 - f) an account is given of research on a regular basis;
- 5.6 to maintain effective connections with the statutory research councils and other organisations (nationally and internationally) that are important for the promotion of research at the University;
- 5.7 to make available sufficient funds, as feasible, to relevant agreed upon research fields/themes; and
- 5.8 to encourage and nurture a research culture in which the academic freedom of all researchers is respected and protected, and in which research work and results are safeguarded against any form of ideological expediency.

Approved, Senate 15 August 2008