

FACULTY OF ENGINEERING

Newsletter for first-year Engineering students 2023

Dean's message

Welcome to all our first-year engineering students in what should be our first complete Covid-free year for all of us. We anticipate that this year we will return to our normal mode of teaching and learning, while retaining some of the lessons we learned the last



three years. We trust that your time at Stellenbosch will be fruitful and stimulating and result in a well-deserved engineering degree.

With your engineering studies you will have a very full programme that will often require sacrifice of time and pleasure in order to be successful. We trust that you will exercise sound judgement to know when to study and when to relax, because the latter is also necessary! We would like to draw your attention to the [University's Calendar](#) (parts [1](#) and [11](#)) regarding a wide variety of

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aspects applicable to your studies. These documents contain the main rules applicable to all our programmes. Additional documents can be found on the [Faculty's website](#) including the [Assessment Rules](#).

Do not hesitate to contact your lecturers when experiencing problems of any nature. In fact, we would like to encourage you to feel free to approach your lecturers with any problem that has a negative effect on your academic work. You are also welcome to contact Ms Natalie White (natalies@sun.ac.za) and Mr August Engelbrecht (august@sun.ac.za) with any concerns that you may have, be that academic, personal or financial.

We care about your welfare, and first-year students are therefore most welcome to make an appointment with me regarding any aspect concerning their studies. (Departmental Chairpersons handle the problems of our senior students.) Appointments can be made at my office with my personal assistant, Ms Marilie Oberholzer (marilie@sun.ac.za).

It is in all our interest that you are successful, let's work together as a team, supporting each other and openly sharing our problems so that they can be addressed.

We wish you a very successful first year!



Appointments with the Dean
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Who can help?



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Student retention and support
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First-semester lecturers of first-year modules 2023

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Engineering Drawings 123



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Intercultural Communication 113



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Help for first-year students with academic challenges

>> Where can I find the online SU enrolment program for prospective first-year students?

An exciting new [Welcoming Guide](#) has been launched online. It will orientate first-year students in their Faculty as well as help them prepare for their studies and the unique student experience that awaits on our campus.

>> Attend all lectures and tutorials, and prepare well for tutorials

The normal lectures and tutorials are designed to help students master the work. Make the best use of these sessions as your first priority.

>> Make an appointment to see your lecturer

If you have tried to master some aspects, but did not succeed, ask your lecturer for an appointment to see him/her. Although fellow and senior students can help you too, by speaking to the lecturer, you are assured of getting the best advice.

>> Group learning sessions

On most weekday afternoons directly after the regular tutorials, come to A503 to prepare for the next day's tutorial. There you can work with other students in a group and teaching assistants will be available to guide and help the groups.

>> Dean's periods

During the weekly periods in the first semester when the Dean or Vice-Dean speaks to each class group, you will receive advice on study methods, how to gauge your progress and where you can get help. Make the best use of these periods by paying attention and doing the assignments.

>> Individual tutoring

The Faculty does NOT support one-on-one tutoring, since it will hinder the development of your independent learning ability. Developing this ability is crucial for completing the BEng programme. The support opportunities mentioned above are designed to not only help you pass the modules, but also develop the abilities you will need in later years of study.

>> Anxiety, stress and study methods

Do not be surprised if you are feeling stressed and a bit overwhelmed. That is normal for first-year students in the BEng programmes. However, if you find you are falling behind more and more, or you are so stressed that you cannot work effectively, contact Ms Natalie White for an appointment to see one of the Faculty's educational psychologists. They will advise you on how to handle the stress better and on adapting your study methods to become more productive.

Health and Safety Rules at Engineering

>> No coffee or snacking in lecture rooms

Snacks and cooldrinks are NOT ALLOWED in lecture rooms and it is prohibited to eat and drink in class. The rooms are used so intensively that they can only be cleaned after hours. Only unsweetened water may be taken into the lecture halls.

>> Ring-ring in classroom a no-no

Be considerate towards your lecturers and classmates and switch off your cell phone before you enter a classroom, laboratory or tutorial.

>> Beware of bare feet

Students are not allowed to walk barefoot in the Engineering complex due to the risk of foot injuries caused by sharp objects that, for example, come from the workshops or laboratories. Slip-ons or sandals with thick, firm soles are acceptable for attending class in general lecture rooms. However, according to the Occupational Health and Safety Act, bare feet, slip-ons or sandals are under no circumstances allowed in the laboratories or workshops of the Faculty. Carefully consider the safety requirements in the laboratory practical's instructions before you enter a laboratory.

>> Skateboards are not allowed in buildings/passages

Students are not allowed to ride on skateboards in the building complex or passages. It is disrupting, it damages the floor surface and it endangers other students, personnel and visitors.

>> No smoking inside buildings or near entrances

Students, personnel and visitors are not allowed to smoke in the Engineering complex. This includes classrooms, offices, laboratories and workshops. At Engineering, smokers are also by law prohibited to smoke within 20 metres of entrances or windows of buildings. The only authorised smoking area at the Faculty is near Banhoek Road on the lawn in front of the General Engineering Building.

Educational psychologists



Annette du Plessis



Inez Saunders

>> **Contact** Ms Natalie White (natalies@sun.ac.za) for an appointment to see one of the Faculty's educational psychologists.

The ESC at your service



Matthew Tate
ESC Chairperson

>> The **Engineering Students' Council** (ESC) is the managing body of the Society of Stellenbosch Engineering Students (SSES). Members are elected annually. The ESC represents the students at various higher bodies and organises social events for engineering students.

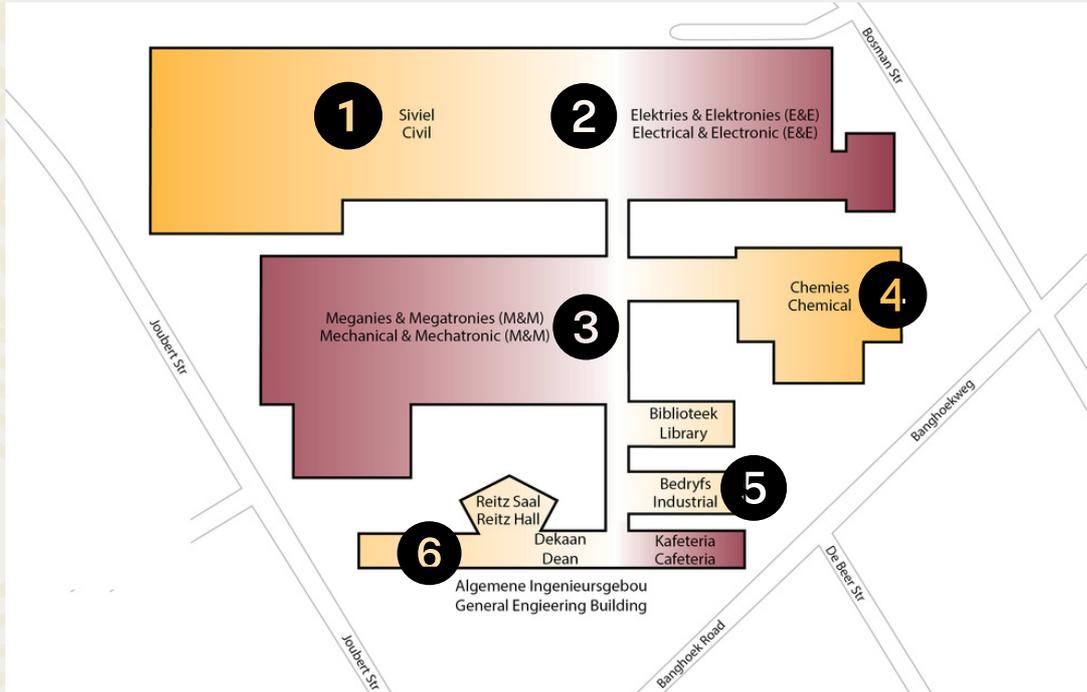
The first term is extremely demanding. In addition to this, students must also

become accustomed to a high academic workload. The ESC therefore encourages you to communicate with them if you should encounter any problems.

Contact them at isr@sun.ac.za.

Engineering building complex

Where to find the Dean, Departmental Chairpersons and Student Support



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Typical questions of first-year students

>> I would like to obtain a bursary. Where will I hear about it?

The Faculty believes in equal opportunities for all and therefore the Faculty has the policy that companies must advertise ALL bursaries on the notice boards. In some cases, a company will need a graduate from a specific field, e.g. Civil Engineering. Such notices will appear on the notice board of the specific Department. In other cases, notices will be placed on the notice boards of the General Engineering Building. You can also ask for advice at the Bursary and Loans Division in Admin A. Unfortunately, no information about bursaries are available at the Dean or the Departments.

>> Who can give me advice if I am not happy with my performance and I am not sure if I should continue my studies?

Make an appointment with Ms Natalie White, and discuss the situation with her. If necessary, she will refer you to the Dean. However, remember that from your second year you have to discuss your academic problems with your Departmental Chairperson..

>> Whom must I talk to when I feel tense as a result of my studies and need to discuss it with someone?

Contact Ms Natalie White, who will schedule an appointment for you with the Faculty's educational psychologists.

>> I was sick. Must I submit a medical certificate?

You need not submit a medical certificate. If you missed lectures, it is your responsibility to find out from fellow students what work you have to catch up on. If you missed a small test in a tutorial, you will be given zero for that test, but the two lowest tutorial test marks are ignored when your semester mark is calculated. If you missed a main assessment (A1 or A2), then you must write A3. For the submission of major assignments, such as Intercultural Communication's reports or Computer Programming's projects, speak to your lecturer as soon as possible.

>> Yesterday I forgot my wallet and umbrella in class. Where can I look for it now?

Lost property found in the General Engineering Building is handed in to Ms Portia Adonis in the office of the Dean room A209A.

>> The timetables refer to A203 on K302. How are the numbers of the lecture rooms organised?

The letter indicates the building, the first number the floor and the last two or three numbers the room number. The lecture rooms in the General Engineering Building (closest to the Banhoek Road/Joubert Street intersection) start with the letter A. The other buildings, in order behind the General Engineering Building, are: B for Industrial, K for the Knowledge Centre (with the Library on floors 1 and 2, and lecture rooms K302 and K303 on the third floor), M for Mechanical & Mechatronic, C for Process (that offers chemical engineering), E for Electrical & Electronic, and S for Civil.

>> What is the "Dean's Period"?

The "Dean's Period" is incorporated in the module Intercultural Communication 113 and will take place during the first semester on Mondays. During this period the Dean and Vice-Dean will convey very important information to first-year students. Please note that this is a credit-bearing module and you must attend it.

>> Where do I buy my first semester textbook(s)?

You can order and buy your textbooks at the Faculty during the time slots indicated on the welcoming programme. The cost is placed directly on your student account. These (new) books are not available from local bookstores. However, the Faculty gets discount because it purchases these books on a large scale. You are free to buy second-hand books directly from bookstores or senior students.

>> Who can help me if my student card does not give me access to the Study Centre?

Ask Mr Ulrich Smith at A211 to activate your card access for that door.

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COVID-19 Stellenbosch University updates and information

Stay informed of the latest developments communicated via our official channels, [here](#).