

10 February 2014

## MEDIA STATEMENT - STUDENT PROTESTS AT THE WESTVILLE AND EDGEWOOD CAMPUSES

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Two campuses were disrupted this morning following protest action by students on the Westville and Edgewood campuses. Access to the Westville campus was disrupted by a small group of students. The students proceeded to disrupt lectures. A number of lectures were cancelled. Four students were arrested by SAPS for, amongst others, contravening the Regulation of Gatherings Act and the High Court interdict.

Approximately 200 students have embarked on illegal protest action at the Edgewood campus disrupting lectures. Lectures have been cancelled. SAPS and the University's Risk Management Services are monitoring the situation.

We are unaware of the reasons for the protests as these students have not raised their concerns through the correct channels.

Students are reminded that the University obtained a High Court interdict and restraining order last week protecting the University against unlawful protests, disruptive gatherings, demonstrations, mass action, intimidation or any violent act to persons or property at the entrance and premises of the University of KwaZulu-Natal's campuses. We wish to reiterate that the University reserves the right to take appropriate action on any student or person who is in breach of the interdict. Offenders will be charged for contempt of court and the University will not be in a position to withdraw any charges.

University Management has been engaged in discussions with the Central SRC and SRCs of all campuses, on various issues aimed at finding solutions to the challenges that confront us, including the nation-wide problem of student funding. A number of agreements have been reached and discussions are continuing on some of the outstanding matters pertaining to the announcement by the Minister of Higher Education and Training last week.

As illustrated by the Vice-Chancellor's communiqué regarding the assistance to 100 first year students, the University Management is committed to assist students in as far as it possibly can. We urge students to follow established protocols and raise any issue of concern with their respective SRC representatives. Management is committed to a process of ongoing consultation and dialogue with students to address concerns.

Management thanks all students and staff that were inconvenienced by the protest action this morning for their patience. We reassure all students that every effort will be made to ensure that the campus is conducive to academic teaching and learning. **Lectures will continue tomorrow as scheduled.**

**Issued by:**

**Lesiba Seshoka**  
**Executive Director : Corporate Relations Division**

**For further queries contact:**

Sejal Desai  
Media Liaison Officer  
031 260 7829  
083 284 9333  
[desaisej@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:desaisej@ukzn.ac.za)