

Welcome message from the vice-chancellor, Dr. Saleem Badat

Welcome to Rhodes University and in particular to Orientation Week.

Your university education is the beginning of an exciting new phase in your intellectual and personal development and life. You have made an excellent choice in choosing Rhodes, given our record of commitment to academic excellence and producing high quality graduates who are equipped to contribute to a changing South Africa, African continent and world.

You join Rhodes as the most intellectually talented women and men of our society. Your enrolment is the beginning of a partnership between yourself and Rhodes of mutual commitment to learning, research and community engagement, and the pursuit of knowledge that promotes understanding of our natural and social worlds, and also informs interventions to advance social equity, social justice and social, cultural and economic development.

Our responsibility is to provide you with a stimulating and enabling environment that cultivates your intellect, and supports you to graduate as a knowledgeable and skilled professional, a critical intellectual, and a caring and compassionate person. Your responsibility is to grasp the opportunities that Rhodes provides and to develop your talents and promise to the full.

Our academics, administrators and support staff work hard to create an environment that helps you to realize your potential. This is demonstrated by the fact that Rhodes has the best undergraduate pass and graduation rates in South Africa, outstanding postgraduate success rates, and the best research output per academic staff member. Given that we also have the lowest academic staff to student ratio of all South African universities means that you are assured of easy access to academics and are able to have close supervision for your projects and research, even at undergraduate level.

Orientation Week provides you an opportunity to discover the various academic disciplines that we offer and to make an informed choice about your academic programme. Choose the courses that excite *you* and are appropriate to *your* interests and abilities. Familiarise yourself with the range of extra-academic activities that are available through our numerous clubs and societies – they are an important means of acquiring various skills and are an integral part of your overall education at Rhodes. Discover also our beautiful campus and enchanting town, which will be your home for the coming years.

Reading for a Rhodes University degree is an exacting challenge, and I urge you to take seriously the considerable demands that your academic programme will make on your mind and time. It is vital that you strike a good balance between the requirements of your academic studies and the many

temptations and distractions of campus life. Students that do not meet our academic requirements are inevitably excluded, and it is my sincere hope that I will not have to read your appeal against exclusion arising from your failure to give due attention to your academic studies.

The Rhodes University slogan is *Where Leaders Learn!* Having been selected from thousands of applications to attend Rhodes, you are one of the fortunate few with the opportunity to learn and develop and graduate as a leader. Your future is in your hands.

With very best wishes

Dr Saleem Badat
Vice-Chancellor