



Governance failures and student protests in the case of #FeesMustFall

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*Theme: Involving students effectively – what happens and how it improves
universities: International perspectives.*

#FeesMustFall 2015-2021

Student demands:

- Decolonized institutional cultures and university curriculum.
- 2015 (Wits): 0% university fee increment.
- 2015/16: Free higher education for poor and working class students
- 2021: Clear historical student debt.
- Related protests: #FeesMustFall2.0 / #FeesMustFall_reloaded #National Shutdown #Asinamali #RhodesMustFall #OpenStellenbosch #RhodesSoWhite #Sizofundangekani #RUReferencelist



#FeesMustFall Timeline 2015-2021

2015

12-23 October:

- 10.5% fee hike sparks protest at WITS university.
- Protest Action across SA Universities.
- March to the Union Buildings.

2017

16 December.

- Former President JG Zuma announced the provision of free higher education to students from households earning R350,000 per annum starting in 2018.

2021

10 -16 March.

- The South African Union of Students (SAUS) sent a list of (15) demands to Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation Dr Blade Nzimande.

10 August- 22 October.

- Continuation of the 2015#FMF protests.
- The Commission of Inquiry into Higher Education and Training announced the continuation of fee increment into 2017.
- Minister of Higher Education announced a fee increment for 2017 that would be capped at 8%.

2016

February.

- University students held demonstrations calling for free accommodation for students affected by historical debt.

2019

The cost of protest

- Personal cost to students:

Trauma, PTSD; academic exclusion, stigmatisation, criminalisation.

- Academic disruption:

Time lost, expulsions; exams rescheduling.

- Infrastructure costs (repairs):

R500 million (\$40 million) damage to university properties between October 2015 & July 2016.

- Security costs:

Surveillance equipment and private security companies on campuses.



#FeesMustFall forecast for Monday: Shutdown in some parts of the country continues

University's view of the outcomes

Positive Outcomes:

- Free HE for poor and working class students (grant system)
- Protests drove transformation(racism and language policy).
- Insourcing of support staff.
- Change in enrollment patterns(as teaching methods and university fees adjusted).

Negative Outcomes:

- Psychological trauma and the need for intensive mental health support.
- Prolonged protests nearly resulting in the loss of the academic year.
- Declined income for universities.



Lack of responsiveness as governance failures

- **Institutional level**

- Student Representative Councils.
- Student Political Organizations.
- Student Movements.

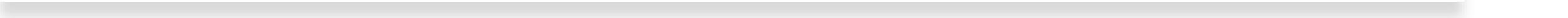
- **National Level**

- National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) Crisis.
- Neo-liberal education policies.
- Corporatization of public universities.
- Annual fee increments=financial and academic exclusion.
- Flawed university funding model.



Thank you

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- Comments and questions most welcome.
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