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Meet UCT's first Chief Operating Officer

The University of Cape Town (UCT) has appointed its first Chief Operating Officer (COO), Dr Reno Morar, who is currently dividing his time between the new position and his job as deputy dean for Health Services in the Faculty of Health Sciences, until he takes on the COO position exclusively in February 2019.

Dr Morar has a medical degree (MBChB) from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and has added to his credentials throughout his career. In management, his qualifications include a Postgraduate Diploma in Health Management, Economics and Financial Planning, and a Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Coaching Practice.

His career includes 20 years of experience in policy development and implementation, operational management, monitoring and evaluation, people and human resource management, administration with non-governmental organisations, and in both private and public sectors.

His role is to oversee relevant responsibilities – previously distributed among the deputy vice-chancellors – of the finance, human resources, information and communication technology services, and properties and services departments at UCT.

"I have four fantastic and competent people who I rely on to do their jobs. It is my responsibility to coordinate efforts and make sure that everything is executed properly across the departments. If I do that well, then the vice-chancellor will be liberated to do what the academic project requires of her," he said.

Dr Morar believes in the concept of enabling others, he says he learnt the importance of the related ethos of "lifting others as you rise" from his friend and colleague, the late Professor Bongani Mayosi. It's a philosophy that Morar believes is critical to his role as COO.

He also has several qualifications in public health, including an MMed Public Health Medicine (UCT) and a Fellowship of the College of Public Health Medicine of South Africa.

“Public health is best described as a systems discipline, which requires understanding the systems of diseases, health services and health policies. It allows you to think in a systemic way, which has always interested and motivated me, and suited my journey in management,” he explained.

“My job is about oiling the engine room so that the project runs smoothly, which will free and enable everyone in the chain to be most effective in their roles.

“But, above all, if I can be part of the team that closes the gap between UCT’s professional, administrative, support and service (PASS) staff and our academic staff, then I will feel that I have achieved a most important thing.”



Dr Reno Morar, UCT’s first chief operating officer.

PIC: Robyn Walker

ENDS

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