

CHRONICLE ONLINE



Cornell University

Sept. 29, 2011

South African students visit CU for leadership program

By [Krishna Ramanujan](#)

Eight first-year students from the University of the Free State (UFS) in Bloemfontein, South Africa, are visiting Cornell Sept. 25-Oct. 6 in an "experience-based seminar" as part of a leadership training and cultural awareness program.

The students are among some 150 students in the UFS Leadership for Change program who are visiting foreign universities in the United States, Japan, Belgium, the Netherlands and France to gain new perspectives on issues related to multiculturalism and to develop leadership skills. When they return to South Africa, the students are expected to form a "cohort of change" and establish international networks with colleagues and programs worldwide. Their experiences living in diverse cultures and their new international connections with colleagues and institutions will assist in this task.



Provided

UFS students visit Cornell with their faculty mentor, Dr. W.P. Wahl, top left.

In turn, Cornellians will have opportunities to discuss South Africa's past and present social and political climates with the UFS students to gain better understanding of how South Africa has so quickly emerged from the apartheid era and the challenges that have arisen since.

"I am delighted that students from UFS have returned this year to Cornell. Having them in Ithaca for 11 days, 24/7, in what amounts to a 'super seminar' provides Cornell students an opportunity to gain a much better understanding of South Africa, while the UFS students experience American culture firsthand," said Alice Pell, Cornell's vice provost for international relations.

Professor Jonathan Jansen, M.S. '87, the first black rector and vice chancellor of UFS, will join the students at Cornell. As part of his return to Cornell, Jansen will give a seminar on "The Politics of Intimacy and the Problem of Change," in the Guerlac Room at the A.D. White House Oct. 6 at 12:20 p.m. This event is open to the public.

The UFS students, three men and five women, are staying in Keeton, Bethe and Becker houses. Included on their busy schedule: attending the 10th annual Iscol Family Program for Leadership Development in Public Service lecture, which was delivered Sept. 26 by Josh Tetric '04, CEO of 33needs, who discussed his social entrepreneurial and public service experiences in Africa, Argentina and elsewhere; attending a Sept. 30 performance by Ordinary People, a student theater troupe aimed at stimulating discussion about diversity; and an

Oct. 5 meeting with students at the Cornell Africana Studies and Research Center. They also will sit in on other lectures and discussions on race, ethnicity, gender, culture and social change by faculty from various Cornell departments.

The students are Chad Kyle de Freitas (majoring in communications and marketing); Jacqueline Mary Hawker (physiotherapy); Lesego Success Majebe (accounting); Hlengeleri Olivia Mpapele (accounting); Joshua Müller (social science and industrial psychology); Phumlani Sipunzi (human molecular biology); Yohnivéve L'Roxanne Steenkamp (human movement science); and Charné Viljoen (law).

<http://www.news.cornell.edu/stories/Oct11/HumEcBuilding.html>