



#UFSLearnOn:

ASSESS THE CURRENT REALITY AND BREATHE

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Inspiring excellence. Transforming lives.

UNIVERSITY OF THE
FREE STATE
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE
VRYSTAAT
YUNIVESITHI YA
FREISTATA



UFS
CENTRE FOR TEACHING
AND LEARNING (CTL)



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Coming to terms WITH THE current realities

Dear Kowsie,

With the spread of Covid19, we have recently learnt of the 21 day national lockdown which the President announced on Monday 23 March 2020. Just when you were starting to settle and gather your thoughts.

Well, we hope you haven't stopped gathering your thoughts because the academic project will need to resume as soon as the spread of the virus settles. This is 1 of 4 editions of the #UFSLearnOn transition series which will be shared weekly to ensure that you stay abreast of the developments and are ready for the learning and teaching methods that will support you to successfully complete the academic year when term 2 resumes on 20 April 2020

This first edition is aimed at helping you transition to our current reality and give you a heads up on what is to come. It is critical during this time that you remain connected and are able to assess what needs to be done.

Some of you left campus with the understanding that when you return it's business as usual. You expected classes to resume on 1 April for term 2, but now they will only resume on 20 April. So, we, as the UFS, are ready to help you prepare for the learning and teaching when term 2 resumes.

So as you read through these editions of #UFSLearnOn,

1. Assess and get in touch with your current reality until 20 April;
2. Stay connected with national news, UFS news as well as friends and family; and
3. Remain focused and understand what needs to be done to successfully complete this academic semester.

Stay safe and let us remember those who are currently infected and affected by this virus.

Only a Kowsie knows the feeling!



What can
I do now ?

**Here are simple tips/measurements
to survive the temporary suspension
of academic activities at the UFS**

1. Stay engaged & Communicate often

- o Check your UFS4life email account
- o Check your Blackboard announcements (use the Blackboard App)
- o Reach out to official institutional (UFS) communication channels (i.e. Facebook, Instagram and Twitter)
- o Don't forget to call, text and message friends, family and classmates.

2. Stay organized

- o Take the time to put together a summary of where your academics are for term 1 of semester 1

3. Take care of yourself.

- o Stay healthy by getting adequate rest, nutrition and exercise. Be proactive and positive
- o Keep a growth mindset as you adapt to new circumstances. Your success has as much to do with your effort as it has to do with your ability to adapt.

4. Ask for help

- o If you are uncertain about the developments, email any [support](#) service or even your faculty/department for help
- o Don't suffer in silence, the UFS staff is available to help you.

Keeping my ear on the ground

With situations constantly shifting, and Covid19 news being released throughout the day, it is essential that you keep your ear on the ground and stay abreast of changes and announcements globally, nationally and most importantly the UFS and its various divisions and your faculty. The UFS and its divisions will continuously communicate with you through not only email, but also official social media pages. Refrain from believing fake news and use the following channels to stay in touch with reliable information.



UFS

[Click here](#) to visit the UFS webpage dedicated to updates regarding how the COVID-19 global pandemic influences your studies.
[Click here](#) to connect to the University of the Free State Facebook Page.



Economic and Management Sciences

[Click here](#) to visit the faculty webpage.
[Click here](#) to connect with the faculty on Facebook.
[Click here](#) (Bfn) or [click here](#) (QwaQwa) to send an email to the faculty for academic advice.
[Click here](#) to connect with the Teaching and Learning Coordinator, Mr Sivuyile Nzimeni, for queries regarding tutorials.



Education

[Click here](#) to visit the faculty webpage.
[Click here](#) to connect with the faculty on Facebook.
To check in with your faculty academic advisor:
QwaQwa - [Click here](#) to send an email
Foundation Phase (Bfn): [Click here](#) to send an email to Mr Teko Malefane
Intermediate Phase (Bfn): [Click here](#) to send an email to Ms Ruth Tshehisi
Senior & FET Phase (Bfn): [Click here](#) to send an email to Ms Puleng Letloenyane
[Click here](#) to connect with the Teaching and Learning Coordinator, Ms Zaynab Mobara, for queries regarding tutorials.



Health Sciences

[Click here](#) to visit the faculty webpage.
[Click here](#) to connect with the faculty on Facebook.
[Click here](#) to send an email to the faculty.
[Click here](#) to connect with the Teaching and Learning Coordinator, Ms Rolien van der Merwe, for queries regarding tutorials.



Humanities

[Click here](#) to visit the faculty webpage.
[Click here](#) to connect with the faculty on Facebook.
[Click here](#) (Bfn) or [click here](#) (QwaQwa) to send an email to the faculty for academic advice.
[Click here](#) to connect with the Teaching and Learning Coordinator, Mr Cebelihle Sokhela, for queries regarding tutorials.



Law

[Click here](#) to visit the faculty webpage.
[Click here](#) to connect with the faculty on Facebook.
[Click here](#) to send an email to the faculty for academic advice.
[Click here](#) to connect with the Teaching and Learning Coordinator, Ms Dineo Khoase, for queries regarding tutorials.



Natural and Agricultural Sciences

[Click here](#) to visit the faculty webpage.
[Click here](#) to connect with the faculty on Facebook.
[Click here](#) (Bfn) or [click here](#) (QwaQwa) to send an email to the faculty for academic advice.
[Click here](#) to connect with the Teaching and Learning Coordinator, Mr Lubabalo Saba, for queries regarding tutorials.



Theology and Religion

[Click here](#) to visit the faculty webpage.
[Click here](#) to connect with the faculty on Facebook.
[Click here](#) to send an email to the faculty for academic advice.
[Click here](#) to connect with the Teaching and Learning Coordinator, Ms Rolien Van Der Merwe, for queries regarding tutorials.

Keeping my ear on the ground



CTL

CTL has various focus areas and resources to help you succeed in your studies:
Student Success Portal - [Click here](#) to access resources for success on Blackboard
Central Academic Advising - [Click here](#) (Bfn) or [here](#) (QwaQwa) to send an email or [click here](#) to connect on Facebook
Write Site - [Click here](#) (Bfn) or [here](#) (QwaQwa) to connect for help with your writing assignments

Student Counselling and Development

Students of the UFS can make use of free counselling services to ensure overall wellbeing. [Click here](#) for information and contact details for all three campuses. There is also the Student Toolkit that you can access for additional resources, [click here](#).

Health and Wellness Centre

For information on the medical practice, campus clinic, or sports and exercise medicine clinic, [click here](#).

CUADS

The Centre for Universal Access and Disability Support (CUADS) provides support services to persons with disabilities. [Click here](#) to connect with the centre.

Student Finances

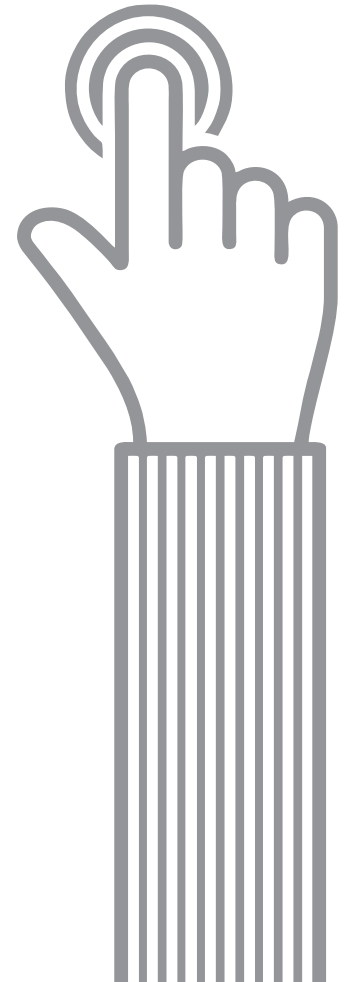
For financial information, [click here](#) to visit the webpage.

International Affairs

[Click here](#) to connect with Ms Jeanne Niemann regarding all international student affairs.

Student Academic Services

[Click here](#) for enquiries regarding application, admission, registration and student documentation (academic record and proof of registration)
[Click here](#) for enquiries regarding graduations



Using my current realities to remain productive

8 Ways to help you stay motivated and productive

Whether you planned to stay on campus during the recess, or catch up on your academics at home, you probably had things planned differently. And of course, staying productive at home is always more difficult than in an academic environment such as the library or study areas on campus. The workload and expectation is the same, however, although your environment might look completely different.

The key is to create an environment that allows you to focus on your academics. Here are some tips to help you create a functional and productive study area at home:

1 Plan your days: Plan what you would like to achieve on each day. Make a list, and work out a schedule of what you need and when you need to do it by. Plan your daily schedule. Establish what time you will start each day, when you will take breaks, and what time you will clock out for the day. This will help you keep track of your workload.

2 Communicate your needs to those around you: Having most of your family members at home, can be distracting, but communicating your needs may help them understand and accommodate your academic schedule.

3 Find a space that accommodates your needs: Think about the tasks you need to complete, and what kind of space you will need.

4 Get yourself in the right mindset: Duplicate your morning routine when on campus. Get up and get dressed, as if you would study on campus. Hanging around in your pj's will make you feel like you are on vacation (Vrabel, J., 2016).

5 Stay connected and keep track of dates: Making sure you stay on track with your dates, and know what is going on will help motivate you to work hard, and try your best (MyCampusMag, 2014; Vrable, 2016).

6 Reward yourself for completing tasks. Once you have completed a task, reward yourself with a nice cup of coffee, or some well-deserved time off.

7 Set up long-term and short-term goals. Constantly remind yourself of what it is that you would like to achieve in your studies (MyCampusMag, 2014). Creating a vision board can help you turn your dreams into something tangible reminding you of where you are heading. Knowing what it is that you want to achieve each day will direct your behavior towards achieving your daily goals. If you need more help with setting long-and short-term goals, click on this link:

https://rise.articulate.com/share/tDxOSJ7trdu_SfgJ0es4fzMRf4Xr_5CY#/

8 Also plan for the things you love: Keeping up with your studies is important, but making time to relax and do what you love might be just as important during the recess. Plan activities that you can do at home such as painting, drawing, coloring, or listening to music. Just be careful not to get into procrastination mode.

Sources:

Vrable, J. (2016). The truth about working from home. Success, 15 March, 2016. Retrieved from: <https://www.success.com/the-truth-about-working-from-home/>
MyCampusMag., (2014). 7 Ways to stay motivated when studying during the holiday.

Getting myself ready for the current times

Knowing what to expect, when to expect what, and what to do...

Sometimes, things change unexpectedly and because of that, you might miss your academic deadlines. To stay on track, you need to adapt to the current times and adjust your approach to your studies. You are probably not sure of where to start, what to do to get your academic workload planned and sorted again.

As you would have had in your planning for this semester, before the suspension of the UFS academic programme, classes were due to commence 1 April and some faculties would have been going into their test weeks. The suspension has since altered this plan and as a result, you need to reflect on what activities would have been happening in your own faculty from the **1 April - 20 April**. Here are some pointers to help you reflect and come to terms with the current times...

List all your first semester modules (i.e. module code with its credits)

Step 1: Make sure you consistently check your student/preferred email address and blackboard for important announcements (at least twice a week)

Step 2: Familiarize yourself with online learning platforms (eg. Blackboard, TurnIt In, Google Scholar etc.)

Step 3: Visit the university website, for the latest updates on Covid-19

Manage your time (notional hours)

Calculate the time you have, if a module amounts to 16 credits, this means it requires at least 160 notional hours of study, which translates to 12 - 13 hours of study per week for the 14 weeks of the first semester. Check how much time has already been spent on each module and plan ahead how you will spend the remaining hours (time management) when academic activities resume.

Resources to help you plan your current times:

- Click on the [time management articulate course link](#) (available on the student success portal) to assist with determining how much study time you will need to prepare for each module
- Practice study skills such as skimming information, summarizing and using past question papers. Click on the [study strategies articulate course link](#) to assist you with a study approach for theory modules and, Click on [note-taking skills articulate course link](#) to assist you with effective skills to take notes.



Getting resourced

You may be feeling uncertain in terms of what this global pandemic means of what resources you need to succeed with your academics now that there may be a few changes. Don't fear; the UFS is here to help you. There are a few essential tools and technologies that you should have access to in order to stay abreast of changes along the way.

Tools mean data access so also ensure that you are able to get connected. University South Africa (USAf) is currently negotiating zero-rating some academic sites but in the meantime, try load at least 2GB of data to ensure you stay connected and can access resources during this period.


So which platforms are essential for all UFS students (i.e. undergraduates and postgraduates):

Email

Check your preferred email address and/or your ufs4life email address regularly to stay up to date with what is happening. [Click here](#) for access to your ufs4life email address. You can also download the Gmail App on Google Play Store or Apple store for easy access on your phone.

Blackboard

You will need access to Blackboard to check for announcements and resources from your lecturers. [Click here](#) to access Blackboard. Get the Blackboard App from the Google Play Store, Apple App Store as well as the Microsoft Store for quick access, and push notifications on your phone. If you have any queries related to Blackboard, email: ehelpdesk@ufs.ac.za or call 051 401 9452



Debriefing and strategies to keep calm

Just as the academic year was beginning to settle; you were finally finding your way and coming to terms with the direction the year was about to take....life happened.

This time it happened a little differently to the norm, because it happened to all of us. The frustration of not knowing what will happen next with your studies, can get anyone in a frenzy. And for that reason the CTL with its various student support teams are here to connect with you and see you through this challenging time.

To continue providing support we have come up with 5 simple strategies to ensure that, though in these trying times, the journey continues:

1. Keep calm and contact an academic advisor

Don't panic. Ask questions instead. A compassionate ear is here to listen. The support provided by the advisors at CTL has not discontinued during these times. The means may be a little different but advising stays true to seeing you through. Get your reliable institutional information from these reliable sources.

2. Keep on keeping on - stick to your routine and plan ahead

Once the academic year resumes again, you will have to hit the ground running so to ensure you don't fall behind with your studies, try to keep to your daily schedule. In the time you would have had a lecture, tutorial or practical find a comfortable space to engage with your module content. Make notes, summaries, catch up with work that's fallen behind and if possible try to work ahead of the class schedule.

3. Stay connected to your academic support network

As you go through your work and find that you have difficulty understanding, note that down. Then find creative ways to connect with your support structures, for example create a WhatsApp group with your fellow classmates/friends where you can discuss module content or consult your lecturers and tutors. Your module guide also has information to contact your academic support structures via email.

4. Find the positive in the negative

For some of you, your transition might have been challenging so look at this time as a chance to start over, knowing what to expect this time around. Realize that it's in situations such as these that we really discover our strengths and persist, therefore making us stronger and more resilient. Set goals if you missed that.

5. Focus on your focus

Despite the status quo, remember your goal is still your goal, your vision still to obtain that qualification (even if it's virtually) and your tasks still there to be completed with efficiency and effectively, so the ultimate goal can be achieved.

In the midst of it all...

KEEP

- CALM
- KEEPING ON
- POSITIVE
- FOCUSED

DOWNLOAD THE



UFS KovsieApp

The **KovsieApp** is available to download from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store for your iOS or Android mobile device. Just search "KovsieApp" (**one word, note capitalisation**). The **KovsieApp** will enable you to access information from the UFS website on your mobile phone at no cost while connected to the on-campus Wi-Fi network. You will also be able to receive real-time emergency communication on the **KovsieApp**.

Step 1: Download the **KovsieApp**

Download Links

- Apple App Store (for iOS devices such as iPhones)
- Google Play Store (for Android devices such as Samsung, Huawei, Sony, LG, etc.)

Step 2: Open the KovsieApp on your mobile device after downloading it from one of the stores listed above.

Step 3: Click on the red "Login Here" button at the bottom of the app.

Step 4: Read and accept the Terms and Conditions.

Step 5: Log in with your student or staff credentials and click on NEXT.

Step 6: Insert your OWN 6-digit pin when prompted by the App and click on NEXT.

Step 7: An OTP (one-time pin) will then be sent to the cell number that is linked to your student or staff profile. If this number is not up-to-date, you will not be able to access your personal information in the app. Staff and students need to follow different instructions to update their information on the UFS systems.

Students: https://www.ufs.ac.za/docs/librariesprovider31/default-document-library/2019-05-28e-kovsieapp-quickguide---edit-student-info-self-service.pdf?sfrsn=234e8921_0

Staff: https://www.ufs.ac.za/docs/default-source/kovsieapp/2019-07-30f-step-by-step-how-to-change-or-add-your-cellphone-number-on-peoplesoft-hr.pdf?sfrsn=a4408421_0

Step 8: Once you have received the OTP, copy or re-type the OTP into the required field on the **KovsieApp**. You will now be logged in and will be able to receive and view staff or student app notifications. Due to security reasons, the app will automatically log out after use. To log back into the app, type in the six-digit PIN you specified when registering your student number or staff username in the app (see Step 6).



How to be DATA SAVVY

As life must go on, so do the academics. The UFS is constantly trying to update its information so as to ensure that it aligns with the national call.

We are aware that not all our Kovsky students are not necessarily on contract and this article is aimed at providing you some options to consider when purchasing data to go a long way. To enhance your accessibility to resources, the UFS is currently in the process of trying to zero-rate specific websites with the various service providers, in the meantime here is some info to consider while that process takes place.

If you are struggling to find the best data solutions, consider the following deals that network providers continue to negotiate.

Some tips to consider:

- Buy monthly or weekly data deals instead of hourly/daily deals
- Manage your data usage (i.e. how much time are you spending on social media)
- Download all necessary resources/material then log off
- Update only the critical apps (i.e. Blackboard App vs. Instagram)

Service providers and prepaid data pricing:

MTN

Data quantity	Daily rate (1day/24hrs)	Weekly rate (1week/7days)
150MB/120MB	R12	R17
300MB/350MB	R27	R40
500MB	-	R55
1GB	R50	R70

Telkom

Once off Data Bundle 1GB + 1GB @ R100.00

- 1GB Anytime data
- 1GB Night Surfer Data* (Midnight - 7am)

Once off Data Bundle 2GB + 2GB @ R140.00

- 2GB Anytime data
- 2GB Night Surfer Data* (Midnight - 7am)

Cell C

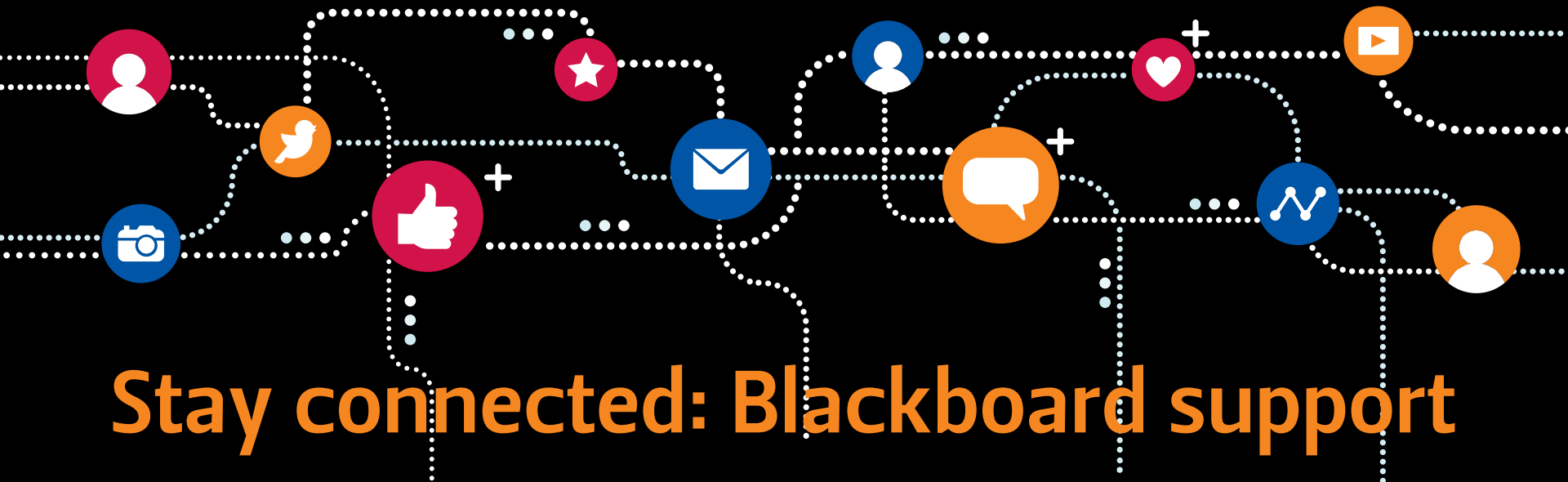
Day Data Bundle	
5 day Bundle 2252.8 MB (also 2,252.8 GB)	R100
Data bundles (Monthly)	
2 GB (4 GB Included Nite Data)	R199
Double data (New) (Monthly)	
2 GB Anytime + 2 GB Nite	R100

Vodacom

Data quantity	Daily rate (1day/24hrs)	Weekly rate (1week/7days)
100MB	R15	R17
250MB	R27	R35
500MB	-	R60
1GB	R29	R80
2GB	-	R120-

**NB: Some network providers have night time deals, if you are more productive at night (night owl) consider getting connected with the provider with the best night time deals.*





Stay connected: Blackboard support

PASSWORD QUERIES (INCLUDING BLACKBOARD PASSWORDS)

During office hours

Monday to Friday: **07:45 - 16:30**

Contact details (office hours): **051 401 2442**

Email: **studentdesk@ufs.ac.za**

After hours password queries (Including Blackboard passwords)

Monday to Friday: **16:30 - 24:00**

Saturday/Sunday/University Holidays: **09:00 - 24:00**

Public Holidays: **09:00 - 24:00**

Contact details (after hours): **051 401 3994**

Email: **studentdesk@ufs.ac.za**

BLACKBOARD QUERIES (ACCESS TO MODULES/BLACKBOARD ACTIVITIES AND MATERIALS)

Monday to Friday: **07:45 - 21:00**

Saturday/Sunday/University and Public Holidays: **09:00 - 18:00**

Contact details: **051 401 9452**

Email: **ehelpdesk@ufs.ac.za**



ICT connectivity support

Student Email

You have a free email account from the University of the Free State.

All official communication from the university is sent to your UFS email account. Take note that this ufs4life email account is a Gmail account.

To access your ufs4life emails, visit the following website:

URL address: <https://www.ufs.ac.za/kovsielife>

Log in with:

Username: student number

Password: UFS campus password

Set up your email step-by-step and get connected.

You can also forward your ufs4life emails to your personal email account. Please visit the EduTech Buddy organisation on Blackboard for steps - take note that we are not liable for any emails not successfully transferred to your personal account.

Managing your password

- Keep your password secret.
- **Change** your password regularly. Use a random mixture of at least seven characters, including upper and lower case letters, numbers, and symbols.
- **Do not** make use of the "Save my password" option.

Change your password

Log into the UFS network with your student number and password, and access the self-service website: <https://selfservice.ufs.ac.za/>

Follow the instructions to change your password.





The UFS is committed to not losing you academically during the current realities. Student success remains our core commitment! We are committed to remaining connected with you and request that you please complete this quick survey (Digital Identity Survey 2020) so that we can provide you with the most suitable resources and materials at all times. [Click here](#) to access the survey.