



Kovsies[®]
Advice

#UFSLearnOn:

Ending strong and successful



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Non-commercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>.

T: +27 51 401 7421 | E: advising@ufs.ac.za | www.ufs.ac.za

 UFSUV |  UFSweb |  UFSweb |  ufsuv

Inspiring excellence. Transforming lives.

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



UFS
CENTRE FOR TEACHING
AND LEARNING (CTL)



CONTENT

- 3 Getting ready, remaining strong?
- 4 The reality going forward
- 5 Getting comfortable with different ways of learning
- 7 Reimagining my learning:
Learning off different devices
- 12 Keep Educating Yourself
- 14 Finding the 'gist' of my studies
- 16 Revise my time
- 18 Mastering my modules
- 20 Anticipating assessment
- 22 Eat right for your brain – Brain food for success
- 24 Learn & communicate
- 26 Self-care
- 32 Keeping my ear on the ground

Getting ready, remaining strong?

Checklist to get you ready for 20 April 2020

The UFS realises that this uncharted territory may seem a bit daunting. Dealing with uncertainty is never easy, but we have provided you with a checklist below of questions to ask yourself that could support and prepare you for the Online Transition and Orientation period 20 to 30 April 2020.

So, where to begin?

Friday 17 April / Saturday 18 April

- Do I have enough data to check my emails and download documents for all my modules?
- Do I have a device to at least get started?
- Have I downloaded the Kovsie App/Blackboard App on my device?
- Do I have a list with all my registered modules for semester 1 of 2020?
- Do I have a file (paper-based/electronic) per module of notes thus far (organisation is key)?
- Do I have all the content (i.e. notes) from what was covered in term 1 of 2020?
- Do I have a comfortable spot (i.e. space) that I will use daily to perform academic activities?

20 - 30 April

- I have checked my student email account for communication from all my lecturers
- I have checked Blackboard for announcements/communication (eg. Course schedule, module guide etc.)
- I have downloaded the learning/module guides that lecturers sent and saved them
- I know what work needs to be covered per module for the remainder of the term/semester
- I have a list of all the assessments and due dates for assignments for all my modules

Remember that we are here to help and support you! For academic advice, feel free to email advising@ufs.ac.za (BFN), advisingqq@ufs.ac.za (QwaQwa), or ShupingCN@ufs.ac.za (South)

All the best, break a pen **Kovsies!**

The reality going forward

Dear **Kovsie**

Following the letter to you from Prof. Peteresen, we can all agree that we are truly in uncharted territory. But, let us not allow that to deter us, destination graduation is still where we are headed, and we will most certainly end strong and successful!

With the UFS defining **20 to 30 April 2020** as an **Online Transition and Orientation period**, we do hope that the 4 released editions of [#UFSLearnOn](#) will assist you to get all you need during this time.

Having taken into consideration the uncertain environment we find ourselves in as a country and an institution, it is important for you to note that Term 2 will roll out as follows:

- 20 to 30 April 2020: Online Transition and Orientation Period
- 4 May – 31 July 2020: Completion of 1st semester through online)

With the UFS adopting a 'low-tech online/distance approach' to learning and teaching during this time, it is important to remember that we remain committed to you succeeding and most importantly not compromising the quality of your qualification.

The UFS, in collaboration with Universities South Africa is continuously working on the zero-rating of academic sites and in the **interim has found a solution through the provision of 10-GB, 30-day data bundles. In an effort to maximize this opportunity for you, we would need you to verify/update your cell phone/contact number on the UFS system by 19 April 2020 (refer to pages 31) or the official UFS communication sent yesterday 17 April 2020.**

Our success is dependent on how we respond as a Kovsie community.

Keep calm, the UFS staff together with you will continue to work on creating an environment that will ensure we all succeed!

p.s. Lookout for the [#WellbeingWarriors](#) campaign for additional supportive materials on wellbeing.



Getting comfortable with different ways of learning

As humans one of our strengths lies in our ability to make our own choices. And while we may be in the middle of a global pandemic, we are still forced to make choices, different to what we are comfortable with but still they need to be made.

With changes in the academic landscape, the approach adopted by the UFS to provide low-tech online/distance learning and teaching is to best support you from varying backgrounds.

Yes, sure, it won't be easy to get comfortable with a new [low-tech online/distance learning and teaching environment](#) but, support is available to help you succeed.

The 20th of April will most likely present you with varying dimensions of choices so this possibly presents as an opportunity! The UFS has to date released three editions of the #UFSLearnOn in an effort to navigate this new territory and ensure a smooth transition towards student success. As part of this article, we will also reflect on previous editions of #UFSLearnOn to help put your mind at ease that you already have all the resources you need.

If you have not yet downloaded previous editions of #UFSLearnOn, [click here](#) or below to read and download the editions.

#UFSLearnOn: Assess the current reality and breathe

#UFSLearnOn: Get Connected, Get Started

#UFSLearnOn: Stay on track for success

While we are on that note, here are some facts to also help you get past your fears so you can get comfortable to learn

Fear of trying something new

Take a moment to pause as we look back at how you have been learning at the UFS. You have already been exposed to online learning, combined with face-to-face learning it is known as **Blended Learning**. So fact, you are ready for the Blend with a twist (no face-to-face), it's all a click away, For more information of different types of learning refer to page 10 [#UFSLearnOn :Get connected Get Started](#).

Fear of technology

While we live in such a digitally connected world, we are aware that not all students have the gadgets, but fact is you won't be left behind. Technological and internet challenges will constantly sneak up on us but the UFS's low-tech online/distance learning strategy will ensure technology and data do not compromise you. Sometimes fear is not of the technology itself, but of not understanding how to use it. Fact, we have you covered, refer to pages 4, 6, 9, 12-15 in the #UFSLearnOn: Assess your current realities and breathe.

Fear of not having enough time

This fear is common among all students and with this change in learning and teaching environment, you do not know what to expect. In low-tech online/distance learning environment, a daily self-paced schedule is very important and if it is something you have never used before, its time you get savvy with your time because working from home has its own obstacles. Fact, we have you covered; refer to the "Revise your time" article in this edition to get your time management strategies in place.

Fear that you will not succeed as a low-tech online/distance student

Dear Kovsies it is normal to be feel fear and feel overwhelmed sometimes, and sometimes refer to 'Debriefing and Strategies to Keep Calm' and 'Connect with your UFS network and resources' article in the #UFSLearnOn: Stay on track for success. Try to follow these tips to conquer fear about academic success:

- Focus on facts to ensure that you succeed
- Fear cripples and facts empower
- Learning is a step towards success

Fear only has power if it remains unchallenged and if you lack the tools to challenge it, only a Kovsie knows the feeling! You already have the tips, tools and resilience to take your academics to the next level. Stay connected to campus, support is available from the comfort of our home to yours.

Reimagining my learning: Learning off different devices

With restricting measures still active to flatten the COVID-19 curve nationally, it is important that you also think creatively about how you will tackle your academics in this extraordinary time. While being very cognisant of your current circumstances, we are trying to ensure that we bridge the gap so all UFS students succeed. The UFS recently sent out a survey to gauge what devices our students have access to (whether you own one or are able to borrow one) which in turn has informed how lecturers have redesigned the delivery of academic content to support your current circumstances.

With over 13 000 responses to the survey across all 3 of our campuses, we have learnt that while many (approx. 80%) of you may have a device (smartphone or tablet) and others laptops/desktops. We are aware that some students could not participate in the survey and we have developed alternative methods to identify and ensure we support students to be able to connect. This article aims to highlight the following:

- (1) how to make the most of your learning off different devices,
- (2) tips to take care of your eyes, and
- (3) tips to stay data-savvy.

Here we go:

1. Get the Apps

Stay connected through the Blackboard App downloadable [here](#) (Android) or [here](#) (Apple). Also, ensure you download Microsoft Office 365 [here](#) (free for UFS students).

2. Stay organised

Make use of the numerous note-taking and productivity apps mentioned in a previous #UFSLearnOn.

3. Set a timer

Use the stopwatch feature (set to the amount of time you planned) to stay focused and on-task.

4. Avoid interruptions & distractions

It's easy to get distracted by Facebook notifications, instant messages coming in, or even email. To avoid these interruptions, get an App that helps you block these such as [Offtime](#), [Moment](#), [Flipd](#), and [RescueTime](#).

5. Be flexible

Yes, it may be uncomfortable at times to do academic activities on your phone, but at times like these we need to be flexible and adapt.

1. Get the Apps

Stay connected through the Blackboard App downloadable [here](#) (Android) or [here](#) (Apple). Also, ensure you download Microsoft Office 365 [here](#) (free for UFS students).

2. Stay organised

The same note-taking and productivity apps available for phones, can also be used with tablets. In addition, you can also create folders to keep notes made with Microsoft Office in an organised manner.

3. Use the tablet for your reading

If you have both a cellphone and a tablet, the bigger screen is useful for reading pdf documents and Powerpoint presentations.

4. Type assignments and create presentations

If you do not have a laptop, a tablet is handier, compared to a phone, for assignments and presentations.

5. Stick to 1 task at a time

Although it is tempting to use the bigger screen to flip quickly between tasks and assignments, it will lessen your productivity if you do so.

1. Get the Apps

If you do not have it already, ensure you download Microsoft Office 365 [here](#) (free for UFS students).

2. Stay organised

Create folders and subfolders per module. That way, you can easily find information and notes.

3. Stick to 1 task at a time

We often fall in the trap of having 10 tabs open in a browser and 10 files open at a time. Although this might give you the feeling of being busy, you may be busy at the expense of being productive. So close those additional tabs and keep your focus.

4. Be familiar with shortcuts and general tricks to use a laptop/desktop

There are various tips to help your productivity from how to bring back a closed tab on your browser, to how to make sub and superscript text. These can be found [here](#).

MoonBook

Take Care of Your Eyes

Staring at a screen for too long can cause eye strain. Here are a few tips to take care of your eyes:

Maintain a comfortable distance: Avoid hunching over your phone/tablet screen and keep a comfortable distance from a laptop/desktop screen.

Keep your screen brightness at a low setting: Reading books on a phone is difficult in dim light, but the brighter you make your screen, the more you strain your eyes. Ensure that you use the blue-light filter on a smartphone and set your screen's (phone, tablet and/or laptop) brightness at the lowest setting still visible.

Make use of paper notes where possible: Even with the helpful note-taking apps available, you can still consider using pen and paper for making your study notes as this is still one of the most effective methods.

Take breaks often: Take short breaks away from the screen and do some physical exercise (even if it means doing star jumps in one place).

Tips To Stay Data-Savvy

Use data conservatively on social media platforms (you can even buy social bundles for WhatsApp, Facebook, and more to save on costs). [Click here](#) for MTN, [here](#) for Vodacom, [here](#) for Cell C, and [here](#) for Telkom bundles (remember that the bundles are not for voice or video calling).

Minimise data consumption. [Click here](#) for instructions on how to do this on Facebook. To save data on Instagram, [click here](#). You can also switch to 'data saver mode' under 'settings' on your mobile device, switch off automatic download and update of Apps, and [deactivate unused or dormant apps](#) that use background data.

Use the offline functionalities on the Blackboard App.

Capitalise on nighttime deals where you get additional data, and use this 'bonus' data to download materials.

Prepaid Data Deals to Consider¹

¹Service providers may review their pricing at any time. Please check with your service provider first for updates and LTE/Broadband mobile deals (where coverage allow).

Telkom (dial *180# to recharge)

Bundle	Hourly	Daily	Weekend	60 days
75MB Anytime	R5.00			
100MB Anytime			R10.00	
150MB Anytime		R10.10		
200MB Anytime			R19.00	
500MB Anytime			R29.00	R69.60
1GB Anytime			R49.00	
1GB Anytime + 1GB Night time				R100.00
2GB Anytime + 2GB Night time				R140.00
3GB Anytime + 3GB Night time				R201.00
5GB Anytime + 5GB Night time				R301.00
10GB Anytime + 10GB Night time				R505.00

MTN (dial *141# or *136#)

Bundle	Hourly	Daily	Weekly (7 days)	Fortnightly (2 Weeks)	Monthly rate
75MB Anytime		R12			
100MB Anytime					R20
100MB Night time					R10
120MB Anytime		R15	R17		
150MB Anytime	R12				R29
200MB Anytime			R25		R39
250MB Night time		R5			
300MB Anytime		R27			
300MB Night time					R25
350MB Anytime			R40		R60
500MB Anytime			R55		R75
500MB Night time					R35
750MB Anytime					R89
1GB Anytime	R30	R50	R70	R110	R99
1GB Night time		R10			R59
1.5GB Anytime					R149
2GB Anytime			R99		R189
2GB Night time					R109
3GB Anytime			-		R229
5GB Anytime			R199		-
5GB Night time					R139
6GB Anytime			-		R399
10GB Anytime			-		R469
10GB Night time					R209

Vodacom (dial *100# or *135#)

Bundle	Daily	Weekly (7 days)	Monthly
250MB	R27		
500MB		R60	R79
500MB Anytime + 500MB Night time		R89	
1GB		R80	R99
2GB		R120	-
3GB		-	R229
5GB		-	R349
10GB		-	R469

Cell C (dial *109# or *147#)

Bundle	Daily	5 Days	Monthly
65MB Anytime	R9		R20
80MB Anytime		R12	
100MB Anytime			R29
120MB Anytime	R14		
200MB Anytime recharge			R29
250MB Anytime		R25	R39
250MB Night time	R6		
300MB Anytime			R49
500MB Anytime	R17		
600MB Anytime		R50	R49
750MB Anytime + 250MB Night time			R80
1GB Night time	R15		
1024MB (±1GB) Anytime	R20		
1228.8MB (±1GB) Anytime		R80	
2252.8MB (±2GB) Anytime		R100	
1.5GB Anytime + 1 GB Night time			R80
2GB Anytime + 2GB Night time			R100
3GB Anytime + 3GB Night time			R149
4GB Anytime + 4GB Night time			R199
6GB Anytime + 5GB Night time			R249
12GB Anytime + 7GB Night time			R299

The key to success is to Keep Educating Yourself: healthy habits for lifelong learning

The uncertainty of what lies beyond the lockdown, is one none of us have control over. Though we are hopeful that the month of May will see things going back to what we know, we cannot be certain. Be that as it may, we would like to encourage you Kovsie, to focus your energy on taking control of an uncertain but exciting future ahead.

Envision the future of a lifelong learner, knowing that what you learn today prepares you for life. Learning for self-actualisation, learning for evolution the key action is to keep educating yourself.

The following are a few youthful and popular quotes relevant to what being a lifelong learner is about, in addition we have provided practical tips:

1. ***“If you stay ready, you won’t need to get ready”***: If anything, #FeesMustFall and #SALockdown has taught us is to always be prepared for anything. Flexibility is key to adapting to any change, so don't be afraid to learn something new. Having peace of mind is knowing that whatever happens after April 2020, you will be more tech savvy and comfortable with exploring digital platforms.

UFS tip: Take time to completing some online articulate rise courses on the student success portal, navigate the UFS webpage and other resources available on Blackboard.

2. ***“Being organized is being in control”***: Be on top of your personal administration, be effective and efficient. From having a daily schedule and to do lists, make sure that you are diligent in organising your admin for easy access.

UFS tip: Update your contact details on the PeopleSoft system, all official communication is done through your UFS4life email address.

3. ***“Stretch your data like you stretch your coin”***: If anyone knows how to be money savvy, its students. The data you have now will come in handy when assessment need to be submitted so be frugal with the use of your data. Be resourceful and find alternative ways of keeping up with what's going on globally. Watch the news, read newspapers, read books and have discussions. Use social media for leisure, for now. Save your data for academic activities and communication.

UFS tip: For now, keep up with the UFS social platforms, the #Don'tRush challenge will still be there after lockdown.

4. ***“Learn from what you are living”***: One of the best ways to retain information is to personalize it. The status quo presents itself as an opportunity to improve awareness and behaviour. Think about one day having to lead your company through situations such as these. What would you do boss?

UFS tip: Personalize your module content, access the library resources on the website and research your topics of interest.

5. ***“Dedication is belief transitioned into action which is transformed into change”***
-Byron Pulsifer. Once this Lockdown is all over, be intentional with your life's purpose, dedicate yourself to exploring and being the change you want to see.

UFS tip: Get involved in student associations at the UFS, there's a lot of ways to give back.

“Learn as though you would never be able to master it; hold it as though you would be in fear of losing it” **Confucius:**

Finding the 'gist' of my studies – Engaging in core learning

Academic activities will resume on Monday, and while transitioning back into studying, you will need to focus on two things: firstly, mastering the course content for the week for each module, and secondly, making sure you have covered the learning outcomes well enough to later be assessed on them.

Here are some tips that can help you engage with core content and get you ready to end the semester strong in all your modules.

1. **Plan your work carefully for each module.** Make a list of what will be covered in the module for the week. Then, make a diagram of how concepts are related to one another.
2. **Focus on what the lecturer emphasizes.** Look for concepts that are explained on slides, of which alternative resources are provided, and what lecturers are enthused by.
3. **Look out, Listen and read what is emphasised in the beginning of the lecture/notes.** In a lecture recording or any other format, lecturers often explain what their goals for the lesson are in the beginning.
4. **Use your online module guide as a roadmap.** Make sure you always work through the module guide when covering a section. Look for clues to what is important in the study guide.
5. **Apply information to the real world.** What real-world examples can you think of while going through the material?
6. **Strive to understand rather than to remember.** After reading a paragraph, listening to a video or audio recording of a lecture, try to explain it in your own words.
7. **Read the introduction and conclusion of the chapter or section.**
8. **Identify main ideas in paragraphs.** Look at the first sentence of the paragraph. Then, read the last sentence of the paragraph. Then, read the whole paragraph. Did they make a statement, and then elaborate in the paragraph? Or did they explain something, and then conclude in the last sentence? Look for signal words such as: The most important concept is... The main idea is...can be defined as... subsequently.... In conclusion... note that...
9. **Answer the questions in the chapter of your textbook.**

10. **Use the unit Learning Outcomes to develop a practice test for yourself.** Make a list of the learning outcomes that will be covered in the week, and then turn them into possible questions. Try to answer these questions. Remember, lecturers will focus on covering the learning outcomes in their modules, as these are the most important objectives for your modules.
11. **Locate additional books or previous test/exam papers.** You can ask your peers to share old papers, check if your lecturer has shared some questions as additional materials from Blackboard or visit the UFS library resources: [kwiuhttps://apps.ufs.ac.za/exampapers/login.aspx](https://apps.ufs.ac.za/exampapers/login.aspx)
12. **Ask/consult with your lecturer** what the format of the remaining assessments will be (i.e. formative, summative or continuous), and what examples are available and how certain sections will be asked.
13. **Meet up with a tutor.** They often have a good sense of what types of questions you can expect, as well as effective study techniques to master the specific module content. Contact your faculty TLC (details on page 30) or otherwise your lecturer will inform you on whether e-tutorials are available in a specific module.
14. **Look for themes among the class notes and textbooks.** Identify the relationships between concepts. For example, can you compare and contrast two different ideas or describe the cause and effect of an event? This is especially important for essay exams.
15. **Change headings and subheadings into possible test questions.** This will guide what you need to master in the section.
16. **Use online resources** such as Quizlet to quiz yourself. You can visit the website at: <https://quizlet.com/> (additional costs may be incurred)
17. **Practice, practice, practice.** If you are studying math or science, complete as many practice examples as you can.
18. **For assignments, make sure you understand clearly what the gist OR what is required in an assignment.** If you are not sure, and you would like assistance, make use of a WriteSite consultant by emailing: writesite@ufs.ac.za.

Revise your time

With not much time left before we transition back into academic activities, it is important that you do not think you still have plenty of time on your hands. The time you have now is for you to work effectively towards managing your workload in order to successfully complete all your modules for the semester.

As we now find ourselves in a unique position where you are completing the semester online, you will need to think of the time you will be spending going through your course schedule as your 'time in class'. Make sure to download all the material for all of your modules. Scan through the material, and use these practical steps to time management.

1. **Diarise all your assessment activities and their due dates**
2. **Estimate the amount of time you will need to spend on each assessment for the time required to learn the material and understand the topics before you can write on them.**
3. **Then, complete the following table for all your modules, based on your estimations.**

Module	Amount of hours I need to spend on:		Total hours
PSYN1234	Assessment 1 = hours to go through content + hours to write	Assessment 2 = hours to go through content + hours to write	X hours
Total hours:			X hours

4. **Add up the total hours for all of your modules, and divide that by the remaining weeks of the semester to get an idea of how much time you would need to spend per week on your modules.**

Tip: In a week, you can either use the morning for one module, take a lunch break and then use the afternoon for another module, or you can use each day for a different module for the entire week. Just make sure that at the end of the week you have covered the content for all your modules.

Procrastination

Procrastination is postponing a behavior or action. For example, browsing through your phone, watching series or movies, while your open textbook is next to you.

It is impossible to talk about time management without bringing up procrastination. As a student, you may be tempted to relax because you are at home during the lockdown, thinking that you have ample time to prepare for all your modules. On the other hand, you might be so anxious because of all the changes and uncertainties, that you avoid doing any academic work. It is therefore essential to practice mindfulness, be disciplined, and work at your studies every day.

Here are some tips to help you beat procrastination during this time:

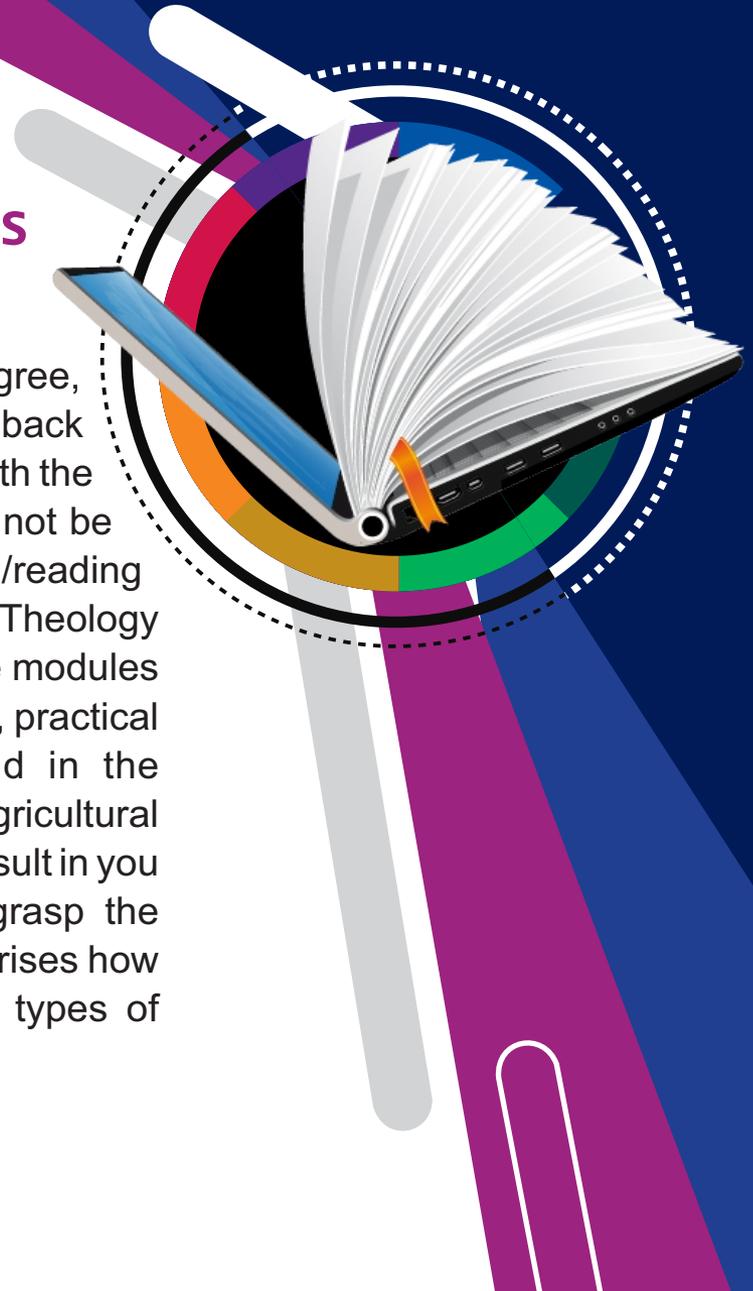
- **Set rewards** - If you set yourself a reward that you will engage in or give yourself at the end of the task, you will increase your motivation to complete the task. Keep in mind the bigger picture and your goals. Tell yourself that you will watch that series episode or that movie once the task is complete, rather than using the series or that movie to procrastinate.
- **Prioritise** - Prioritise your most difficult tasks and do them first (it will help if you know when you work best - morning or evening). This will give you energy and momentum for the rest of the day.
- **Break things down** - break your tasks into smaller manageable bits. Looking at a large task that needs to be completed can be intimidating. So set smaller goals to achieve, step-by-step, with their own short-term deadlines. Setting the tasks that are more enjoyable, such as writing the intro to an essay, may help you get started.
- **Just start** - Remember you do not have to finish the specific task (assessment, essay, studying, etc.) all in one go. That might be demotivating - what is important is that you just start it. Once you start, the task will not be as bad as you think it is and getting started will generate motivation and kick-start you to keep going! Divide your work into sections (chunks) and complete these.
- **Minimise distractions** - Find a workspace where you work best (whether this is a quiet space or filled with your favourite music). You may be working from devices such as phones, tablets so switch off your mobile data/Wi-Fi or notifications from your social media apps.
- **Do not multitask** - If you are constantly multitasking and dividing your attention between tasks, you will not progress at a rate that motivates you. Focus on one thing at a time!

"Procrastination is attitude's natural assassin. There's nothing so fatiguing as an uncompleted task" - William James

Mastering my modules:

Content-rich vs Practice-rich Modules

While each year presents varied challenges, we can all agree, 2020 has presented UNIQUE challenges! As you transition back into academic mode, you may start to feel overwhelmed with the amount of work but fear not, the quality and quantity will not be compromised. For those of you registered for theory-based/reading intensive modules (for example modules in the faculty of Theology and Religion, and in the Humanities) the intensity of these modules may be a more real experience for you. On the other hand, practical and/or number-based modules (such as those found in the Economic and Management Sciences, and Natural and Agricultural Sciences faculties) often build on each other, which may result in you also perceiving the work as too much, especially to grasp the concepts. Well aware of these realities, this article summarises how you can cope with approaches to deal with these two types of modules.



Content-rich Modules

Here are 5 steps to help you:

1. Preview & Question - Use the unit learning outcomes as questions and write these in the text (textbook and articles) under the heading/sub-heading/paragraph where you expect to find the answer Tip: Do not yet read the whole text, but scan through (i.e. look at headings, subheadings, bold words and the first paragraph of an article). This step will take you less than 10 minutes to do.

2. Read - Now you read the full text and underline the answer to the learning outcome stated for that part of the work.

3. Summarise - Now, summarise the answers you underlined in your own understanding. Tip: Adapt your notes according to the learning outcomes and work through systematically (especially if the answers to one outcome are found in three articles).

4. Study to remember - At this step, you use the summaries you made and study using memory techniques

5. Test yourself - The last step is to test yourself in terms of what you have just studied.

Splitting the material into manageable chunks and taking it step-by-step can be quite beneficial. That way, you can keep track of what you have accomplished instead of looking at the tremendous amount of work and getting overwhelmed. Eliminate distractions to allow you to engage in this study technique during your study sessions fully. Remember, just like any other skill, practice makes perfect. Study smarter, not harder. For more help with this technique, visit the short course [A New Study Approach For Success: PRSST](#).

Practice-rich Modules

Factors that aim to support you:

Practice makes Perfect – These modules cannot be crammed for a test. You need to study them routinely. An athlete does not practice only the day before a marathon, but builds up through practice every day. In the same way, you need to practice regularly for your tests and exams (your marathon).

Focus on the principles – Although you may need to memorise some information, that is only the beginning. For practice-rich modules like mathematics and auditing, it is more important to know how and when to use formulas, processes and equations. Focusing on the underlying principles will help you identify when to use which formula or process.

Learn the module vocabulary – Modules like physics and mathematics have vocabularies of their own. A commonly used word like *speed* has a different meaning to its synonym *velocity* in physics. It is critical to learn and differentiate between these terms and how they are applied.

Use visual aids – Use concept maps, diagrams and charts to help illustrate and remember the various concepts.

Think about the material all the time – The key here is that the more you engage with the work, the better. You can think about the concepts you learned and how you would explain them to someone else (similar to the [Feynman technique](#)). You can also relate the concepts to what you see in your everyday life.

Learn from your mistakes – When you get a question wrong in a test, it is crucial that you investigate where you went wrong. It won't help to only glance at your test mark before filing it. The chances are that you will make the same mistake again if you do not learn and grow.

Anticipating assessment

Assessments are aimed at determining the value, significance, or extent of what students know, understand, and can do with their knowledge as a result of their educational experience. Assessments can entail more than merely exams. At the UFS, we distinguish between three types of assessment:

Formative assessments

Formative assessments include a range of formal or informal assessments given throughout the semester. They are aimed at monitoring the progress you have made towards achieving learning outcomes and obtaining semester mark or predicate. Formative assessments further provide you with an opportunity to practice skills and gauge your understanding of the work. It helps students to work continuously in a module, and not only towards the end of the semester when they prepare for the final exams. Formative assessments may include:

- A class test
- A Blackboard Quiz that you need to complete online
- A research proposal that you need to submit for feedback
- Class reflection activities
- Remote lab activities
- A worksheet based on a case study
- An essay which you will receive feedback on

Feedback forms an important part of formative assessments, as it provides students with an idea of where they are in mastering their content. When completing formative assessments, make sure you go through the feedback received, and if you don't understand something, ask your lecturer. Remember, the aim is that you learn from the feedback, and use it to guide how you prepare for the final (summative) assessment.

Summative assessments

As the aim of a formative is for students to learn, the aim of a summative assessment is to assess how much you have learned. Summative assessment takes place after the learning has been completed, i.e. at the end of a quarter, semester or year, and provides information and feedback that sums up the teaching and learning process (i.e. the examinations). The intention behind summative assessment is to validate performance and award grades or marks. Examples of summative assessments include:

- A semester test
- A final-year or mid-year exam
- A final project that needs to be submitted
- A research paper
- A portfolio of evidence on a project completed

Remember, summative assessments will often count a lot of marks, and therefore need more preparation time than formative assessment. Therefore, plan for summative assessment well ahead of time. In cases where you will need to complete a summative assessment that needs to be submitted, make sure you consult the rubric provided. Structure your assignment/paper/report according to the outline of the rubric. Make sure that you have covered all the elements on the rubric before submitting. Furthermore, remember that your summative assessments might be online, and you might not be used to completing tests and examinations in this way. Make sure you know how to access the assessment, and what the rules entail.

Continuous Assessment

Continuous assessment is used as an alternative to summative assessment. Continuous assessment is a series of assessments that occurs throughout the learning process, and not only after the learning process. Students are thus examined continuously over the duration of a quarter, semester or year. It is cumulative and the marks are calculated to produce a final result. Examples of continuous assessments can include:

- Regular feedback on your research project
- Observation of your practical skills
- Entry slips and exit slips handed in for marks during lectures
- Submission of lab reports

Modules with continuous assessment, often do not have an examination. Although it might seem like the easier option, remember that these modules will have many activities that you need to complete throughout the semester, and that everything counts towards your final mark. Keep a regular eye on modules with continuous assessment, and make sure that you do not miss anything.

Brain food for success

The kitchen and more specifically the fridge may have become your go-to places and in some instances, it hasn't been the best options. As you prepare to get back into the groove of the academic activities, this piece highlights some factors to consider to help you eat right to focus and succeed.

Brain food is any food that enhances cognitive development.

The brain is the most complex part of your body. Like a computer, it runs on many processes every day therefore it needs constant topping up with the fuel it operates on-glucose, which is a type of sugar. Your body obtains glucose from the food you eat, and it is delivered to the brain through the bloodstream. The problem with the brain is that it cannot store glucose, so you need to top up your levels every day.

Diet plays a crucial role in the forming and shaping of brain tissue and nerve connections that underlies cognitive development. Cognitive development, in turn, determines one's cognitive functioning, which plays a crucial role in academic achievement. If your brain is not properly fueled-up, then you are likely to have trouble sleeping, poor memory, and difficulty solving problems. That is not how you want to feel during this transition to a different learning environment.

Cognitive functioning is vital because it involves processes like working memory, verbal memory, attention and planning abilities. The link between food and cognition plays out in the long run - in other words, the type of diet that a student follows habitually affects his/her cognitive functioning, but also in the short term, meaning that what a student ate for breakfast, for example, can affect their cognitive function on a given day.



Your brain is 73% **water**, and water is vital to keeping your body (and brain) in shape.



Antioxidants help delay or even prevent certain effects of aging on the brain. This includes most fruits and vegetables, especially berries, pomegranate, oranges, carrots, spinach and broccoli, etc.



Foods with **Omega-3** have been found to help your brain work harder and improve your mental health. These include oily fish (eg. Pilchards), eggs, light chunk tuna, chicken and beef.



Protein helps your brain send messages to the rest of your body, and helps create brain chemicals that improve your mood. This includes meat, fish, eggs, poultry, nuts and seeds, dried beans, lentils, and dairy products.



Caffeine in small doses, of course can help you feel refreshed and more focused. Such as green tea, coffee and dark chocolate.



More resources:

Click on the image on the right and check the **Eat&Succeed** page on the Student Success Portal by the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics (UFS) for many easy, quick and cheap recipes!



Learn and Communicate

In light of the low-tech online/distance learning and teaching environment adopted by the UFS, the view on the effectiveness of learning and communication is centered around 2 themes: communication of experience and knowledge.

- Firstly, learning is an opportunity for both students and lecturers to share their various experiences of learning. As a student you can share information and learn from your peers based on your experiences of learning to improve your own learning. Your Lecturers/Mentors are there to support you academically, you also need to be better prepared for learning related challenges such as language use, numeric skills, etc.
- Secondly, we view sharing and communication of knowledge a key factor in determining the effectiveness of learning. It is important that their communication is of sound practice, as this can influence how students part-take in learning. Peer learning is an effective way for you to learn, but make it a point that you also include your lecturers/facilitators in your learning for better understanding and guidance.

Based on the above 2 assumptions, this articles points to tools that can enhance how you learn and communicate.

Tools to connect with my peers

Most students and lecturers know and understand the power of learning - the preferred way to do this is by working collaboratively, and understanding that there are various ways to learn. In this day and age technology plays an important role in learning. The following are tools to use when connecting to your peers:

Blackboard - is a good medium for communication and exchange of information. It provides good peer support and peer coaching - contributes to enhancing peer learning. It is used as a tool that facilitates student-centred and student-led learning. It promotes lifelong learning and active engagement concepts. The modules on Blackboard may also have discussion boards on which you can engage with your fellow classmates

Twitter and Facebook - can be used to teach media and information literacy, including digital skills as well as global citizenship. You can prepare students to be informed, creative, engaged, empowered as well as how to express themselves - contributing to positive societal change while being safe and smart on Twitter and everywhere else online.

Using e-mail - E-mail can be a good way to establish new communication channels in class; It is also an interesting resource to share content, videos, graphics, class work, communicate with students from other areas, practice languages, etc. this is also a platform students can use to ask questions to each other or the lecturer/facilitator to send/ forward study material for a given task or activity.

Telegram, WeChat and WhatsApp - these Apps can easily be downloaded to your computer and smart phone. They allow you to communicate via text and voice messages.

- **Telegram** is particularly useful outside the online classroom to encourage additional practice and skills development. Chats help students become **autonomous learners** as they begin noticing their own mistakes and self-correct sooner. Get in touch with your classmates and share important notes and material.
- **WhatsApp** is a platform which encourages collaboration and can also assist in managing large classes, sharing notes.
- With **WeChat** Lecturers and students are able to share all kinds of learning materials, including the latest developments published in journals, papers, books, and a great variety of images, voice recordings, and videos WeChat platform offers more communication opportunities for both lecturers and students.
Lecturers can also share their new ideas and experiences outside the classroom environment.

NB! Be on the lookout for module-level communication from your lecturers weekly, especially Blackboard, email and SMS.

Finding balance: giving your academics the time it needs

The implications of physical confinement can have detrimental effects on certain aspects of your wellness, and understandably you may be concerned with returning to what you once knew having a different air. Academics make up the largest portion of your time and energy, and the thought of what you once knew changing requires dedication on your part to evaluate and explore ways to enhance your academic wellness.

As an attribute to overall wellness, academic wellness requires you to remain positive about learning even in the face of adversity. Finding meaning in what you are learning motivates you to want to learn further, empowers you and assists you to remain in control of an otherwise uncontrollable situation.

During this extended lockdown, make the most of the UFS adapted way of learning (low-tech online/distance). Make intentional efforts to learn every day, be resourceful and think of how what you do today will contribute to improving your wellbeing in the future.

The following are a few of the ways on how you can concern yourself with your wellness:

- Find challenging subject matter and engage with content, constantly seek mental **stimulation**.
- At this time, be open-minded about learning something you may have not been interested in, always be open to learning and improving **skills**.
- Stay in touch, keep **sociable** without creating a distraction from your academics. Be disciplined and diligent with knowing when its time for leisure and when its time for learning. Increase your knowledge by using multiple resources to present one of the best ways of learning and teaching.
- Understand your**self**, strengths and limitations. Self-awareness is important in self-improvement so use what you already have to enhance and improve what you don't.
- And lastly **FOCUS**, by **f**ollowing **o**ne **c**ourse **u**ntil you **s**ucceed. Take your time and don't rush yourself, pace your learning and learn to understand.

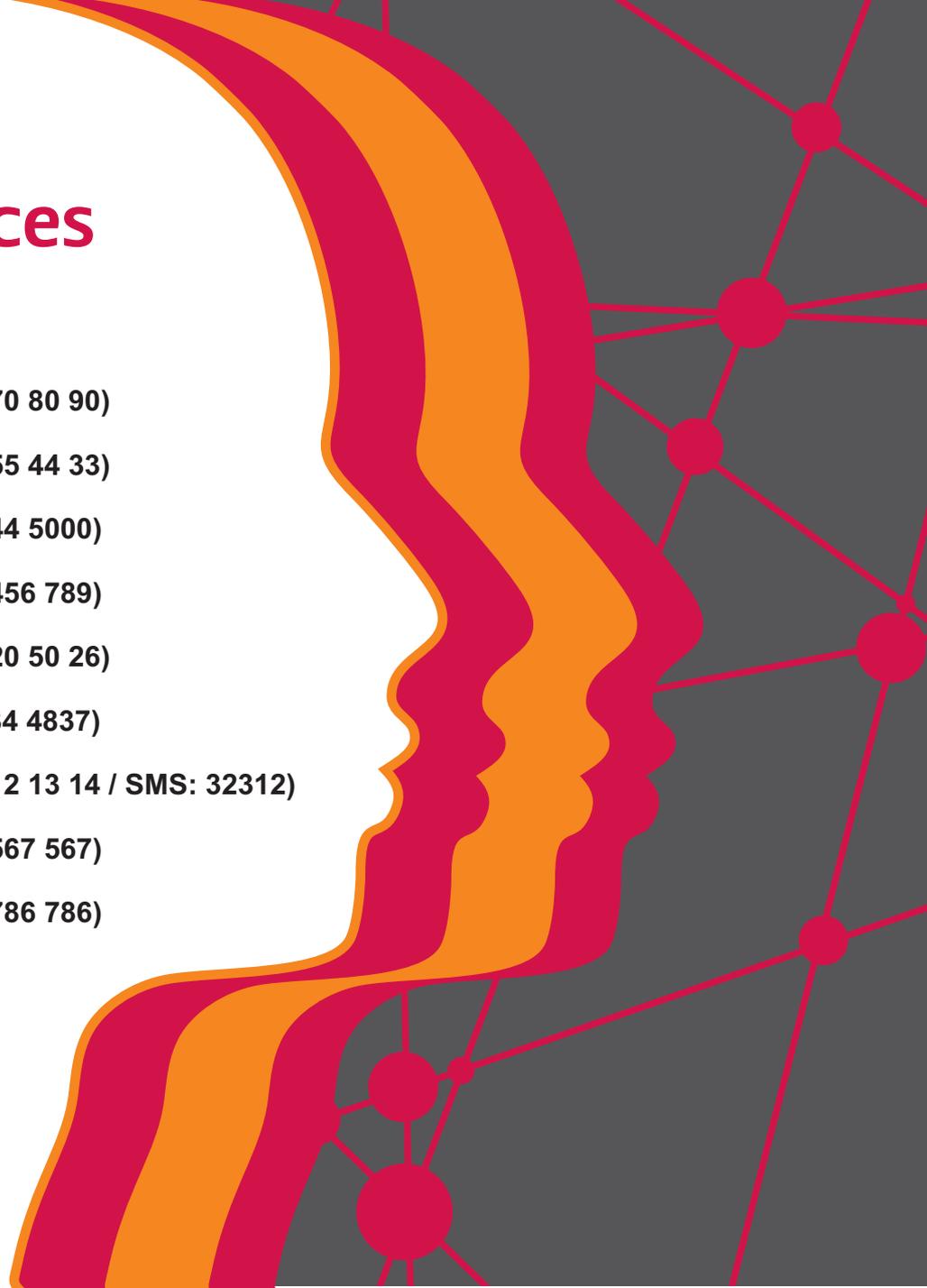
"Remember, what you do everyday matters more than what you do once in a while". - Gretchen Rubin

Alternative mental health resources

telephonic online

Adcock Ingram Depression and Anxiety Line	(0800 70 80 90)
ADHD Helpline	(0800 55 44 33)
Befrienders Bloemfontein 24hr Helpline	(051 444 5000)
Cipla 24hr Mental Health Helpline	(0800 456 789)
Pharmadynamics Police & Trauma Line	(0800 20 50 26)
SADAG Mental Health Line	(011 234 4837)
Substance Abuse 24hr Line	(0800 12 13 14 / SMS: 32312)
Suicide Crisis Line	(0800 567 567)
Gift of the Givers COVID-19 Counselling	(0800 786 786)

www.mobieg.co.za (online chat, articles and app)
www.helpguide.org (online resources)



The Blackboard App

A powerful App designed specifically for students. It's simple, easy-to-use and enjoyable mobile learning App for the on the go and goal-oriented students.

KEY FEATURES

ACTIVITY STREAM

The Activity Stream is the first page you see in the app. The stream shows new announcements, course content, tests, assignments, discussions, grades, and what's due. It prioritizes events and activities across all of your courses so that the most important items catch your attention first. Tap a stream item to go directly to the content or activity.

PUSH NOTIFICATIONS

Push notifications pop up on your device for announcements, new tests, upcoming or past due tests, new grades, new content items, and new courses.

COURSE LIST

Course list provides a timeline of all of your courses and information. You can swipe to view past and upcoming terms.

DUE DATES

See upcoming assignments and tests across all of your courses in one place. Work is colour coded by course and grouped by day and week. You can quickly see what's due and prioritize your work.



T: +27 51 401 9452 | E: ehelpdesk@ufs.ac.za | <https://ufs.blackboard.com>

UFSUV | UFSweb | UFSweb | ufsuv

Inspiring excellence. Transforming lives.

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



UFS
CENTRE FOR TEACHING
AND LEARNING (CTL)

DOWNLOAD THE



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.

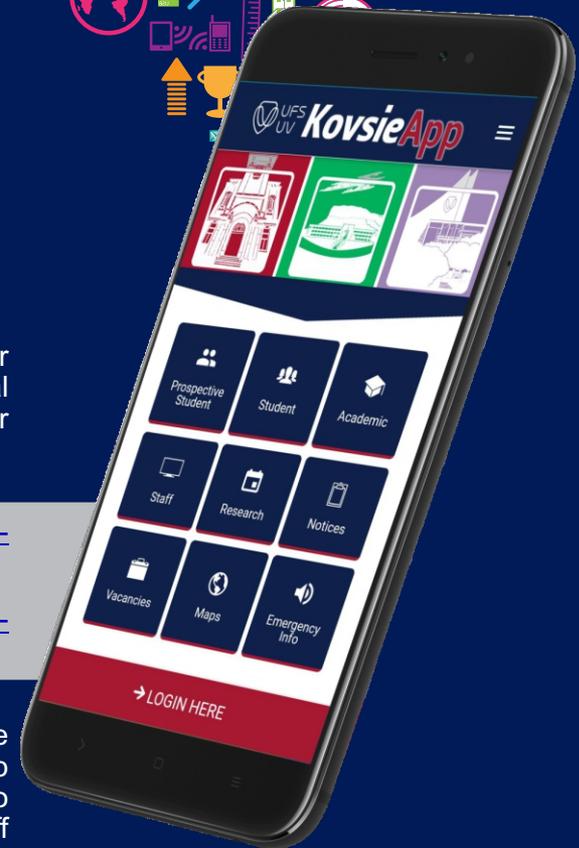
Step 6: Insert your OWN 6-digit pin when prompted by the App and click on NEXT.

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?sfvrsn=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?sfvrsn=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 update or verify your addresses (physical address) on the UFS Self-Service:

Step

1

Go to <https://www.ufs.ac.za/kovsielife/student-self-service>

Step

2

Log on using your student number and password
****If you need to 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/> and follow the prompts to change your password.

Step

3

Under self-service, go to campus personal information and select "Addresses" - In the box that appears, you have the option to edit your existing address or the option to add a new address

Step

4

When adding a new address - save your changes

Step

5

Ensure that you receive a confirmation message that the changes are saved



How to update or verify your Cellphone number/contact details on the UFS Self-Service:

Step

1 Go to <https://www.ufs.ac.za/kovsielife/student-self-service>

Step

2 Log on using your student number and password
****If you need to 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/> and follow the prompts to change your password.

Step

3 After logging in, Under Self-service, go on Campus personal information

Step

4 Click on “phone numbers” – you have options to delete and add a phone number below the box

Step

5 Save your changes



Keeping my ear on the ground

With situations constantly shifting, and Covid-19 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 Mobarra, 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.



The 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

Academic Advising Network – South Campus

Acting Programme Head:	Ms Anne-Marie Church Email address: churchA@ufs.ac.za
Advising/ General Support – Education & The Humanities	Mr Chwaro Shuping Email address: ShupingCN@ufs.ac.za
Advisor – Sub-regions	Ms Lerato Mosiah Email address: MosiahLP@ufs.ac.za
Support – Economic and Management Sciences	Mr Lerato Sekonyela Email address: SekonyelaLE@ufs.ac.za
Support – Natural and Agricultural Sciences	Ms Elzmarie Oosthuizen Email address: OosthuizenME@ufs.ac.za
Library	Ms Lianda Coetzer Email address: lianda@ufs.ac.za

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. You can also download the Toolkit for some self-paced support

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

