



University of the Free State

Institutional Profile

2022

www.ufs.ac.za

*Inspiring excellence, transforming lives
through quality, impact, and care.*

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





Index

Message from the Rector and Vice-Chancellor	2
Our vision	4
Our motto	4
The UFS in numbers	5
Our campuses	6
Quality education	10
Impactful research	18
Areas of impact	22
Advanced facilities inspire excellence	27
Regionally engaged and globally active	32
A caring university	34
Student life and success	38
KovsieSport	46
Embracing the Kovsie brand	48



The University of the Free State (UFS) creates opportunities and growth through leading learning and teaching, focused research, and impactful engagement with society. Situated in the heart of South Africa, our character of caring and diversity translates into an outstanding university experience.



Message from the Rector and Vice-Chancellor: Prof Francis Petersen

The University of the Free State (UFS) is a progressive university focused on transformation as a core strategy. Apart from being a university that excels in teaching, learning, and research, the UFS is focused on making a social impact on society. At the UFS, we have implemented cutting-edge measures for teaching at all levels. State-of-the art equipment allows for interactive

and engaging classroom experiences, helping us to create the class of the future. We have become a leading institution in South Africa in terms of quality learning and teaching and student success.

Our students are encouraged to grasp every opportunity and to take part in student life activities. We are working hard to provide them with an experience filled with the opportunity to build a better tomorrow for themselves.

In terms of research, we invest in areas that will address relevant local, national, and global problems. Our researchers and academics are excelling in various

fields and have achieved international recognition for their work.

When visiting our three campuses, visitors are met by social and environmentally friendly spaces that seek to make the campus a comfortable home away from home with stunning artworks, impressive facilities, and buildings where energy-saving systems were introduced.

We also do not back away from the challenges in enhancing our environmental footprint; with among others solar plants, and water-saving initiatives such as waterwise gardens and greywater systems, we have incorporated eco-friendliness and

sustainability into our planning and implementation processes.

Our infrastructure and student accommodation projects are considered the best in the country, benchmarked against other institutions.

In pursuing excellence, we strive to provide an environment that is enabling and facilitates a sense of caring for our staff and students.

We have certainly come a long way since we opened our doors in 1904, and today we stand proud as an institution that lives up to its motto of inspiring excellence and transforming lives.

Our vision

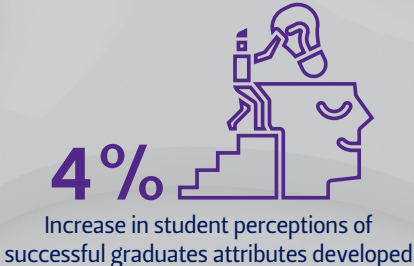
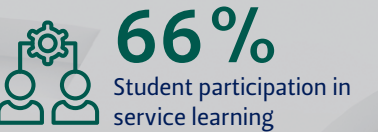
The UFS is a research-led, student-centred, and regionally engaged university that contributes to development and social justice through the production of globally competitive graduates and knowledge.

Our motto

IN VERITATE SAPIENTIAE LUX
(In Truth is the Light of Wisdom)



UFS in numbers



* Based on 2021 statistics



Our campuses

The UFS has a proud history as one of the oldest, most respected institutions of higher education in South Africa. It opened its doors in Bloemfontein in 1904 as the Grey University College, with six students in the Humanities. Today it is a multi-campus institution, with two diverse campuses in Bloemfontein and one in Qwaqwa in the scenic Eastern Free State, accommodating more than 40 000 students, with an increasing number of international students and associates, and an ever-widening scope of active involvement in and contribution to its surrounding communities.

For the past 118 years, the UFS has been delivering quality graduates who have made their mark in various sectors. What sets the institution apart is its holistic student support initiatives, enabling it to achieve some of the highest success rates in the country. Delivering students who are in high demand in the global job market, remains a top priority. An established network of industry partners and close collaboration with the

public and private sectors, as well as a continuous process of transformation and curriculum renewal, dovetail to produce highly employable graduates.

UFS research efforts are driven by dedicated scholars, some of whom are international leaders in their fields, with industry and social impact and real-world application.

Through the principle of engaged scholarship, the UFS responds to societal needs, using its scholarly and professional expertise with an intentional public purpose and benefit.

The UFS is an institution that goes all out to provide its students and staff with an outstanding university experience. Anchored in a value bedrock of social justice, respect, and caring, the institution has managed to remain steadfastly relevant in a challenging and ever-changing national higher education landscape.



Bloemfontein Campus



Qwaqwa Campus



South Campus

Bloemfontein Campus

The Bloemfontein Campus, situated in Bloemfontein, the capital of the Free State in central South Africa, is the oldest and biggest of the three campuses.

Undergraduate and postgraduate studies in all seven faculties are presented on this campus.

The campus houses the historic Main Building, 39 student residences, lecture and study spaces, and sports facilities. All campus premises are available in one location, and when going to a class or a meeting, one can enjoy the beautiful surroundings, including the gardens, artworks, buildings, and other facilities.

The magnificent Red Square with its modern, urban landscaping celebrates the university's diversity with its welcoming social spaces that promote a community environment. The area includes a low-maintenance and waterwise garden with lush greenery. Often, students can be found relaxing or passing the time between classes under the shady trees.



Qwaqwa Campus

The vibrant Qwaqwa Campus in the picturesque Eastern Free State serves a rapidly growing number of rural students from the immediate area and surrounding provinces. Incorporated on 1 January 2003, the campus has students completing their studies in the beautiful surroundings at the foot of the majestic Drakensberg. The strong focus on socio-economic development is informed by a rural context. Programmes, underpinned by a strong research agenda, focus on identifying the best possible strategies to create jobs and stimulate economic growth in this area.

A strong focus on this campus is the mountain research conducted in the Afromontane Research Unit (ARU), a continental leader in African mountain research. The ARU facilitates the development of a high-excellence African-based mountain research ‘community of practice’ that leads African mountain research from within Africa.

This is the fastest growing rural campus in South Africa. To address the growth spurt, infrastructure has been updated, renovated, and new buildings added that, among others, offer students inclusive learning spaces where they can thrive in their academics.



South Campus

Our South Campus, nestled in the hills overlooking Bloemfontein, provides alternative access to higher education for promising students who did not obtain the required marks in their final school examination. Several programmes are in place that offer students the opportunity to access higher education. Through these programmes, students can ultimately enter the mainstream curriculum after completing the preparation courses. By offering this opportunity, students who might otherwise not have been able to enter university, now get to develop their full potential and realise their dreams.

Since its incorporation in 2004, the campus has been playing a significant role in the economy of the region, the enhancement of its people, as well as being a hub for distance-learning programmes offered by the UFS. Due to the adjusted blended teaching-and-learning philosophy and

approach, students have a choice between face-to-face learning and teaching, and distance education.

This campus was also positioned as the driver for the UFS digitalisation strategy. The university recently re-established the purpose and strategic intent of the campus, impacting its distance education numbers and providing an excellent platform for staff and students to acquire online competencies to function in an ever-changing environment. Programmes offered include the Advanced Certificate in Teaching, the Grade R Teaching Diploma, the Higher Certificates in the Humanities and Economic and Management Sciences; the University Preparation Programmes in Natural and Agricultural Sciences and Education; and two Extended Programmes in Natural and Agricultural Sciences and Economic and Management Sciences.



Quality education

With a list of high-quality and internationally accepted degrees, diplomas, and certificate courses in our seven faculties, we are making an impact.

Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences and UFS Business School

Some of the programmes on offer, include Business Management, Public Administration and Management, Industrial Psychology, Accountancy, and Economics and Finance. The Centre for Development Support is also situated in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences. The UFS also prides itself on a very dynamic and successful Business School.



In promoting its mission to be dynamic, innovative, and quality-driven in the field of economic and management sciences, the faculty is offering a diverse academic spectrum ranging from public and private sector management to specialised training for accountants on undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Moreover, the faculty is providing relevant, market-driven programmes, creating capacity and competence among our students, enabling them to contribute to social and economic development in society.

One of these programmes is the BCom Investment Management and Banking (IMB) degree, a course that is of great benefit to students who wish to enter the investment profession. The IMB degree

is accredited by the CFA Institute, which is recognised as the gold standard in the investment field. It is also the belief that the new BCom Finance degree will open many doors for our graduates.

The faculty excels in learning and teaching. Students made it to the top in market-relevant competitions such as the extremely competitive local Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) University Challenge and the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) competition. Lecturers are also contributing to the sector by serving as board members on various bodies in the field, including the South African Board for People Practices and the Fiscal Policy and Financial Markets task force of the Lancet COVID-19 Commission.



For the UFS Business School, opportunity-driven initiatives (start-up creation, patenting, licensing, venture capital formation, incubation facilities), technology transfer, and the commercialisation of intellectual property will feature as key considerations going forward. Increased value will be created through university-industry linkages allowing for new ideas to inform and permeate the academic research agenda, while addressing scientific concerns as well as practical problems.

Furthermore, the UFS Business School also intends to become an entrepreneurial



ecosystem committed to responsible science and the generation of credible knowledge that is strong in integrity and high in relevance. It will ensure that small businesses get to work with academics, policy makers, regulators, and the private sector in creating an environment that is conducive to growth and competitiveness. An additional focus will be on the delivery of premium services to start-ups with high growth potential, as well as supporting emerging entrepreneurs in sectors that are not often fully recognised, and who find themselves in geographically dispersed and disparate peri-urban and rural areas.



Faculty of Education

Some of the programmes on offer, include Early Childhood Development, Mathematics and IT Education, Natural Sciences Education, and Technology Education.



In a process where theory and practice are supporting each other, the faculty is preparing caring teachers and contributing to the social transformation of the broader society.

To ensure that pre-service teachers have a strong disciplinary base in preparation for their professional work, the faculty is working closely with schools and other educational institutions.

A research project in the School of Education Studies investigates the

possibilities of training student teachers to embrace the Fourth Industrial Revolution, specifically by learning to teach Science in schools, using mobile devices and mobile apps.

The SANRAL Chair's office forms part of the School of Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Technology Education in the faculty, providing staff with the means to develop innovative solutions to the challenge of improving science and mathematics education in the country.

Faculty of Health Sciences

Some of the programmes on offer, include Cardiothoracic Surgery, Community Health, Virology, Pathology and Biomedical Sciences, and Medical Physics. The National Control Laboratory for Biological Products, the Clinical Simulation and Skills Unit, and the Simulation training facility in the School of Nursing are also situated in the Faculty of Health Sciences.



The UFS is the leader in traditional medicine research and indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) in the country. The IKS platform, situated in the Department of Pharmacology, is competing with other institutions globally as an IKS research hub and is exploring claims for cannabis and related medicinal products such as CBD in relation to diabetes, hypertension, Alzheimer's



disease, pain management, and cancer.

Moreover, the Director of Pharmacology at the UFS, Prof Motlalepula Matsabisa, is the Chairperson of the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Regional Expert Advisory Committee on Traditional Medicines for COVID-19.

We are also proud of our Department of Nuclear Medicine, which for the first

time started using Lutetium 177 PSMA (Lu-177 PSMA) therapy for the treatment of an advanced stage of prostate cancer. According to the researcher involved in this ground-breaking research, this treatment has the advantage of providing lower doses of radiation and damage to normal organs and tissues, a characteristic that conventional therapies do not offer.

Faculty of Law

Some of the programmes on offer, include Mercantile Law, Public Law, and Private Law. The Free State Centre for Human Rights, the School of Financial Planning Law, and the UFS Law Clinic are also situated in the Faculty of Law.



The Faculty of Law is among the best in the country. It is ideally located in the judicial capital of South Africa, exposing our Law students to the expertise of judges and legal practitioners.

Our Law Clinic in the Department of Public Law offers students an opportunity to make a difference in society. While providing free legal services to the community, they get the chance to obtain hands-on legal training.

The Free State Centre for Human Rights, which was established in 2016 and is situated in the Faculty of Law, has the mandate to work towards the transformation of the UFS. Subsequently, its focus is on the relationship between

human rights and this mandate.

Apart from its Research and Postgraduate Division, the centre consists of a Legal Services as well as an Advocacy Division. The latter engages in transformation-related human rights advocacy at the UFS, working primarily in student residences. The Legal Services Division operates as a Free State-focused public interest strategic litigation unit, partly in cooperation with the UFS Law Clinic.

Furthermore, the faculty also received wide coverage for its research on human trafficking by a research fellow in the Free State Centre for Human Rights, with research focusing on combating human trafficking from a legal perspective.



Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences

Some of the programmes on offer, include Plant Pathology, Chemistry, Geology, Disaster Management, Microbial, Biochemical and Food Biotechnology, Physics, Animal Science, and Architecture.



The faculty has a range of diverse programmes divided into agricultural sciences, natural sciences, and building sciences, together with an exciting research agenda.

In our Natural Sciences programmes, the frontiers of knowledge are constantly shifted through fundamental research and new technology developed in support of our efforts to stay in step with the challenges of a constantly changing world. Our expertise in the natural sciences includes plant pathology, algology, palynology, and lipid biotechnology—to name but a few. We are leaders in material, nano, and polymer science, and carry out work on photoluminescence, quantum-dot synthesis, and astrophysics.

In terms of Agriculture, we have the most specialised group servicing the farm-animal industry with expertise in breeding, nutrition, and physiological manipulation.

Our Building Science departments are leaders in the country and are consistently successful in accreditation processes—often unconditionally—by national and international professional bodies.

We are also proud of the work we are doing to reduce wastewater and to recycle water resources, specifically our research in the Centre for Environmental Management on the use of freshwater algae to treat acid mine drainage or domestic wastewater.

The strategy of the faculty to modernise its research equipment is proving to be very successful and a great deal has been invested in much-needed equipment over the past few years, not only adding value in the laboratories but also in the classroom.

The faculty attracts both national and international students as a result of its stimulating curriculum, and the calibre of lecturing personnel and researchers.



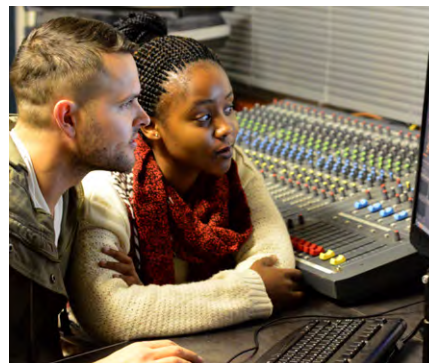
Faculty of The Humanities

Some of the programmes on offer, include Film and Visual Media, Fine Arts, Drama and Theatre Arts, South African Sign Language and Deaf Studies, Political Science, Africa Studies, and Gender Studies. The Odeion School of Music is also situated in the Faculty of the Humanities.



The Faculty of the Humanities is passionately enthusiastic about its field. Its core business – learning and teaching, engaged scholarship, and research – remains strongly focused on the needs of the society. It is an action that occurs as part of the daily engagement with one another, as well as with the students and the communities it serves. It promotes sceptical, sympathetic, and situated scholarship; its research is making an impact locally, regionally, and globally. The faculty adds more value with its state-of-the-art facilities – from the Fine

Arts studios in the Claerhout Building to its Film and Sound studio that provides students with 'real-world' training. Moreover, its three theatres – the Odeion, Scaena and Wynand Mouton – hosted several national and international artists in music and drama performances. Its Fine Arts students also often get the opportunity to display their work in the Johannes Stegmann Art Gallery. The gallery is hosting several art exhibitions a year and holds 150 pieces of art from various South African artists.



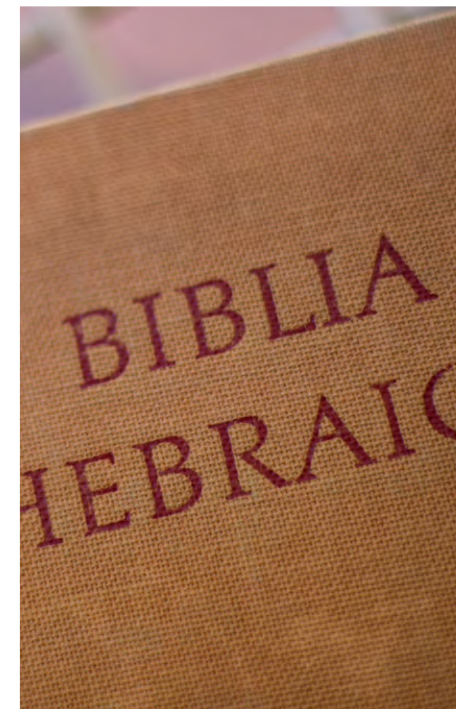
Faculty of Theology and Religion

Some of the programmes on offer, include Old and New Testament, Systematic Theology, Church History, Practical Theology, Missiology, and Religion Studies.



The Faculty of Theology and Religion, striving towards racial, gender, and cultural inclusivity, practises theology as an academic discipline with scientific credibility, and is committed to compassion for people. For more than four decades, it has been the only institution in central South Africa to offer fully-fledged, all-inclusive theological education to train students for a professional career in the ministry.

Avoiding excessively large groups in its classes to promote a learning environment conducive to effective teaching, the faculty delivers a unique national and international contribution to the development of the church, society, and the academic theological environment.



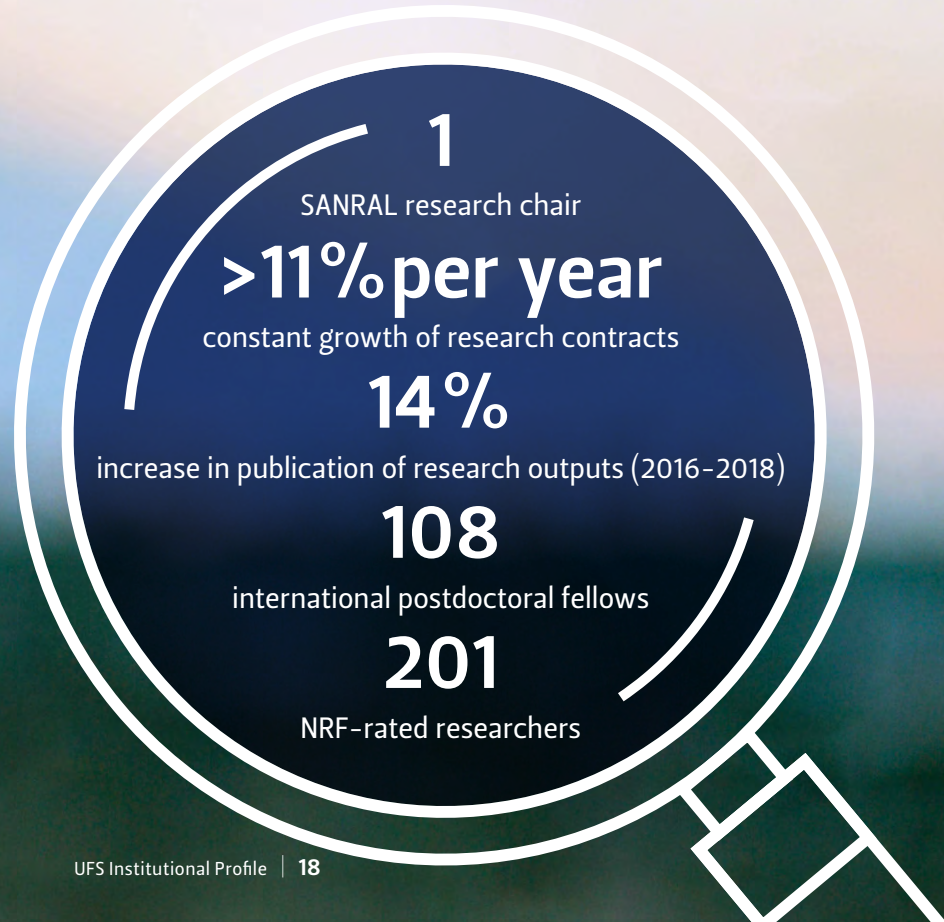
Impactful research

Our research, following a futuristic approach to stay sustainable, has an industry and social impact and is relevant, with a profound real-world application. We work hard to remain on top of the leading – often shifting – global benchmarks of tertiary education, and we are proud of our remarkable achievements, both individually and on an institutional level.

The UFS believes that it should be regionally relevant, focusing on the needs and strengths of its region and its own competitive advantage. The Research Strategy responds to the institutional goal of increasing the UFS' contribution to local, regional, and global knowledge, and aims to address fundamental and strategically important questions and to make an economic, social, and cultural impact at regional, national, and international levels.

Accredited laboratories at the UFS:

- Laboratory with ISO/IEC 17025:2017 accreditation from the South African National Accreditation System (SANAS): **National Control Laboratory for Biological Products**
- Laboratory with ISO/IEC 17025:2017 accreditation from SANAS and the World Anti-Doping Agency, based on accreditation from ILAC (the foundation of ISO: IEC 17025): **South African Doping Control Laboratory**
- Laboratory with ISO/IEC 17025:2017 accreditation from SANAS: **Institute for Groundwater Studies Laboratory**



The UFS is proud of its three A-rated and one P-rated researcher(s)

A-rated scientists



Prof Melanie Walker received an A rating from the NRF in the field of Higher Education and Human Development. Her two most recent books from the selection of more than 140 books she has authored, focus on higher education and human development, as well as educating 'public-good' professionals. She is also President of the Human Development and Capability Association (HDCA). This is the first time that the HDCA president is from the Global South.



Prof Maxim Finkelstein received an A1 rating in the field of Probability, Statistics and Operations Research. He is the only researcher with an A1 rating in Probability, Statistics and Operations Research in South Africa. This is the second time that Prof Finkelstein, Distinguished Professor in the Department of Mathematical Statistics and Actuarial Science, has obtained an A rating. The first was in 2015.



Prof Willem Boshoff is an A2-rated researcher in the field of Art. This world-renowned artist, academic, researcher, and generalist is internationally recognised for his work and is a leader in his research discipline. Most of his artworks involve long-term archival research across a range of disciplines such as music, botany, visual arts, philosophy and more.

P-rated scientist



Dr Matteo Grilli, a historian from the International Studies Group (ISG) since 2016, is a P-rated scientist in the field of Political History. He specialises in the political history of Ghana and Southern Africa, as well as in the history of Italian communities in Africa. He has published articles in *History in Africa* and the *South African Historical Journal* and his first monograph, *Nkrumaism and African Nationalism*, was published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2018.

SARChI research chairs

The main goal of the SARChI Research Chairs is to strengthen and improve the research and innovation capacity of public universities for the production of high-quality postgraduate students, research, and innovation outputs. The UFS has five tier-1 SARChI research chairs and one tier-2 SARChI research chair.

Tier-1 SARChI research chairs



SARChI Research Chair in Solid-state Luminescent and Advanced Materials:
Prof Hendrik Swart

The main focus of his research group is the improvement of luminescent materials for applications in flat panel displays, solar cells, solid-state lighting, dosimetry, and thermometry. This chair has been key in the development of processes to synthesise and deposit thin films of various types of semiconductor nanoparticles, which will enhance the colour, luminescent intensity, and lifetime of such displays.



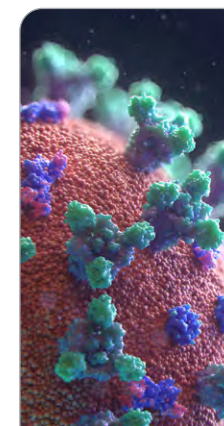
SARChI Research Chair in Higher Education and Human Development Research Programme:
Prof Melanie Walker

This chair is concerned with advancing social justice and removing inequalities in and through higher education. The focus is to interrogate the role of higher education in advancing or constraining human development. Questions about the kind of society we want, what is important in a democratic society, and thus, what kind of higher education is valuable and relevant, are addressed.



SARChI Research Chair in Disease Resistance and Quality in Field Crops:
Prof Maryke Labuschagne

The uniqueness and strength of the research chair lies in a two-pronged approach, namely the breeding of cereal crops for resistance to fungal diseases and improving the quality of crops for processing and consumption, thus making an impact on food security in South Africa and the rest of Africa through this collaborative effort. The chair is involved in the training of PhD and MSc students from all over Africa and South Africa.



SARChI Research Chair in Vector-borne and Zoonotic Pathogens:
Prof Felicity Burt

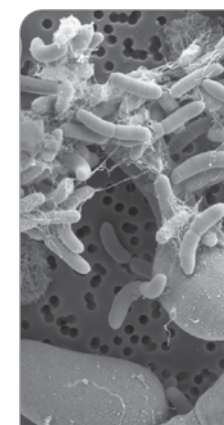
This research chair aims to contribute towards identifying and investigating medically significant arboviruses and zoonotic viruses, as well as host immune responses to arboviral and zoonotic infections. The team of researchers operating within this research chair is also performing studies to determine the seroprevalence of severe acute respiratory coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) in the Free State. Prof Burt emphasises that the majority of new and emerging viruses are zoonotic in origin and that the current SARS-CoV-2 pandemic highlights the impact of an emerging zoonotic pathogen on society.



SARChI Research Chair in City-Region Economies:
Prof Ivan Turok

The chair, focusing on City-Region Economies, seeks to understand how cities can accelerate economic growth and inclusive development in South Africa. It analyses why some cities are more successful than others, and what policies and practices can improve conditions for citizens and communities. Research from this chair will also speak to the South African Cities Network's agenda of transforming urban space in the country.

Tier-2 SARChI research chair



SARChI Research Chair in Pathogenic Yeasts:
Prof Carolina Pohl-Albertyn

With an increase in the number of individuals who are sensitive to invasive fungal infections, yeasts are reported more frequently as pathogens. Research under this chair is contributing towards understanding pathobiology of medically significant pathogenic yeasts belonging to the genera *Candida* and *Cryptococcus*. The research group is the only one in South Africa focusing on understanding the role of bioactive lipids in host-pathogen interaction, as well as in the search for novel drug targets.

According to Prof Pohl-Albertyn, an important hurdle in the treatment of invasive yeast infection is the emergence of drug resistance in these pathogens. Therefore, research on pathobiology, including new drug targets as well as novel treatment options, is a necessity.

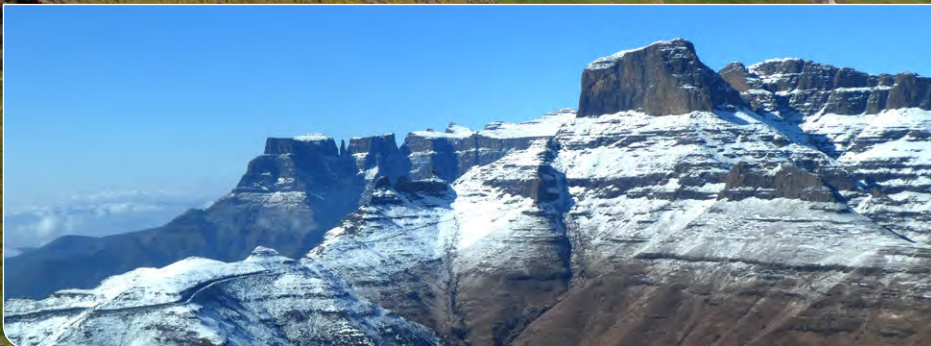
Areas of impact

Our focus is on being the best in a selected range of areas. We are investing in areas that are and have the potential to become pillars of excellence and that will address relevant local, national, and global problems. Our current areas of research excellence are grouped into five research themes:

Local and regional socio-economic development:

We excel in research related to the mountainous areas of the continent through the Afromontane Research Unit (ARU) on our Qwaqwa Campus. The ARU is crucial in providing a blueprint for community-centred research and development in montane areas across the continent. The focus of the project ranges from conservation and the sustainable use of Afromontane biodiversity, to living and doing business in mountainous environments, investigating aspects such as sustainable tourism, food security, and connectivity. A very encouraging development was the founding of the Qwaqwa Campus Risk and Vulnerability Science Centre (RVSC) as part of the Department of Science and Innovation's

(DSI) Global Change focus theme. The RVSC has been embedded under the ARU as the potential future Sustainability Science Hub, focusing on the sustainable development of Phuthaditjhaba as a sustainable African mountain city. Focusing on the SADC region – we also pay attention to improving the quality of life and the sustainable utilisation of our natural resources through our research on gender, peacebuilding, human security and liberation movements in Africa, work on religious and political fundamentalism, as well as a focus on regional and national economic development. We believe that our studies on the local consequences of mining towns will add value to this area.



Food security and land reform:

Our academics are involved in research along the entire agricultural value chain, ranging from input, production, and collection, to processing and retailing, with a special focus on developing the skills of emerging farmers. Agriculture dominates the landscape of the UFS' home province, with most of its residents living in rural and farming areas. The university continues to explore and develop innovative farming techniques to work towards food security and the sustainable use of natural resources.

With our Agribusiness Transformation Programme, we have joined forces with the public and private sector to develop black commercial farmers and sustainable black-owned agribusinesses in the province. We also make a local difference by enhancing the livelihoods of communal wool producers with the support of the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture, where we transform communal wool growers'

production from an underachieving enterprise to a profitable, sustainable, and renewable venture.

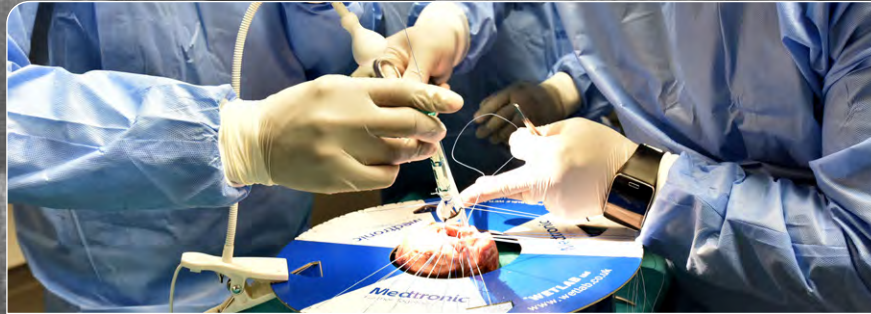
Our researchers are also attentive to agricultural and food processing, plant diseases, and disease resistance of field crops to *improve food security in Africa*. Through the genetic improvement of staple crops in our Department of Plant Sciences, seeds are developed with an inherent resistance to disease.

Our Department of Soil, Crop, and Climate Sciences also breeds novel plant varieties that are adapting to a changing global climate. Researchers are investigating the effects of weather and climate on crops, trees, grasslands, and livestock production systems, and developing agrometeorological services such as early warnings, irrigation scheduling, microclimate manipulation, and weather forecasts, to cope with a changing and increasingly variable climate.



Health and well-being:

Research is conducted in key health areas to improve the health of South Africans. These include cardiothoracic surgery, cervical cancer research, radiation treatment, understanding in the field of pathogenic yeasts – with a focus on the development of disease in people with compromised immune systems. Additionally, the UFS is also doing work on cancer, diabetes, hypertension, and mental problems, based on traditional knowledge, traditional medicines, and plants such as medicinal cannabis. The department would like to advance IK-based innovation by transforming informal sectors into formal secondary economies that will be translated into actual decent job creation.



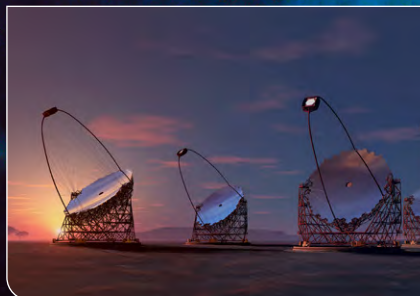
Social justice, and the removal of inequalities:

With our focus on human rights, social justice, and reconciliation, the research of UFS academics focuses on societal challenges, with an emphasis on diversity, change, social justice, and the removal of inequalities in and through higher education. With the Free State Centre for Human Rights in the Faculty of Law, the UFS aims to strengthen a human-rights culture both locally and across South Africa through research, advocacy, and litigation. Within this theme, we also focus on education-related research, with studies on higher education and human development, student engagement, and mathematics and science.



New scientific and industrial challenges:

The UFS is researching and innovating in niche areas to develop new socio-economic solutions and knowledge in pace with the demands of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. The Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences has a national and international reputation as a world leader in the field of nanoscience and the development of new materials. In Astrophysics, we are at the forefront of gamma-ray research and are leading the UFS' contribution to innovation with impact. In the medical field, our Next Generation Sequencing Unit is working to advance genomics research.



Advanced facilities inspire excellence

The UFS is known nationally and internationally for excellence in education and research. Our state-of-the-art facilities, equipment, and infrastructure have made this possible:

The Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences **undergraduate microscope laboratory** is the most advanced and largest digital classroom of its kind in Africa and the third largest in the world. The microscope laboratory, with 227 microscopes connected to 67 computers, is proof that the faculty continues to upgrade and expand its training and research equipment, giving students a relevant learning experience with the latest, most modern equipment.



Our **PHI Quantes XPS** system in the Department of Physics is the first in Africa and one of only 20 in the world. The Quantes XPS system uses X-rays to determine the chemical composition of molecules on the surface of a sample. The system is unique in the sense that it also has an extra X-ray source that can

determine the chemical state below the surface, which was not possible in the past. This will help to dictate the position of defects in phosphor materials, which will consequently enable the department to create better phosphor for solid-state lighting as well as solar cell applications.



We are home to the **South African Doping Control Laboratory (SADoCoL)**, the only laboratory in Africa accredited by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) to perform analysis for prohibited substances on samples of any athlete from any of the sporting codes underwritten by WADA.

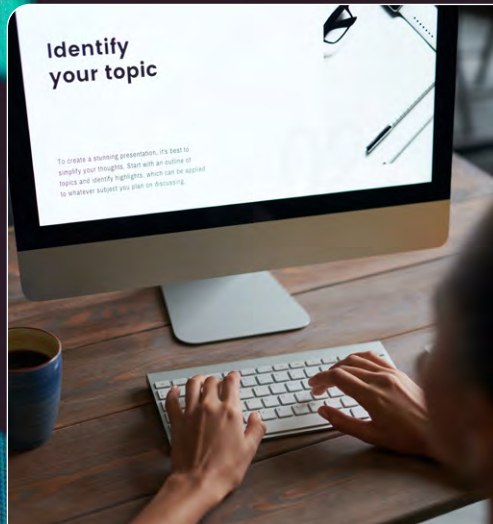
The **National Control Laboratory for Biological Products (NCL)** is one of only 12 laboratories worldwide contracted to perform vaccine testing for the World Health Organisation. The NCL is also the only vaccine testing laboratory in the country that performs the final quality-control testing of all human vaccine batches marketed in South Africa on behalf of the South African Health Products Authority (SAHPRA). When the first COVID-19 vaccines arrived in the country, the NCL performed the all-important task of vaccine lot release.



Simulation training provided by the **Clinical Simulation and Skills Unit** (in our School of Clinical Medicine) imparts a hands-on training and learning opportunity, allowing for deliberate practise and mastery of learning. Human patient simulators provide a tool to enhance the education and training of medical students by expanding the teaching platform. Our School of Nursing also boasts state-of-the-art simulation laboratories. The Clinical Simulation Unit in the School of Nursing offers healthcare students exposure to training in a safe environment without harming the patient, using computer-based interactive mannequins.



The node for Mineral Biogeochemistry was established at the UFS after the Department of Science and Technology approved a **Mineral Biogeochemical Research Infrastructure Platform**, which is housed in the Centre for Mineral Biogeochemistry on the Bloemfontein Campus.



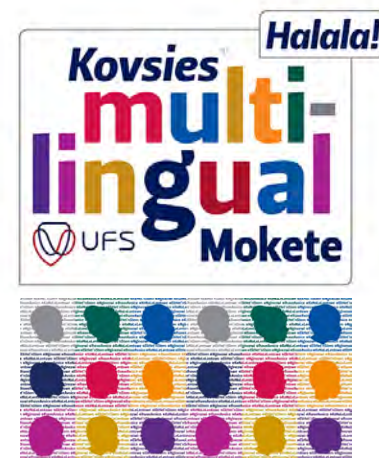
In an effort to find multidisciplinary solutions to complex societal problems, the UFS established an **Interdisciplinary Centre for Digital Futures (ICDF)** in 2021.

The ICDF is a collaborative, co-creative, synergistic space where social scientists, natural scientists, data scientists, engineers, health scientists, etc., collaborate, learn, and interact with industry, the private sector, government, and community partners to provide a unique intellectual ecosystem that drives the digital future responsibly and critically for the benefit of society.

The **Academy for Multilingualism** was established at the beginning of 2021, flowing from the UFS Language Policy that expresses the university's commitment to multilingualism.

The academy provides students with a space where Sesotho, isiZulu, and Afrikaans are promoted on institutional and social levels and where English as the language of instruction is improved.

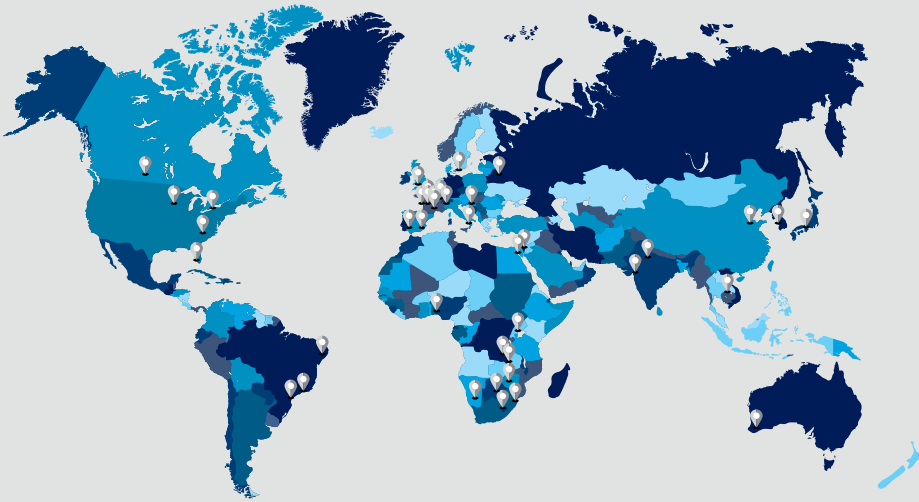
The aim is to promote these languages through various academic and community-based projects and initiatives such as the Kovies Multilingual Mokete.



The mixed farming activities on the **Paradys Experimental Farm** are serving a teaching and research purpose for the faculty. It also boasts a weather station and was the first tertiary institute in the world to mechanise in-field rainwater harvesting on a commercial scale. The experimental farm is also hosting the commercialisation activities of the agribusiness development, where novel projects with potential commercial value are developed for successful commercialisation. The start-up companies include a brewery, cheese factory, large-scale mushroom production, and plant-growth stimulator production, grouped within a newly developed agribusiness park.

Regionally engaged and globally active

International research contracts



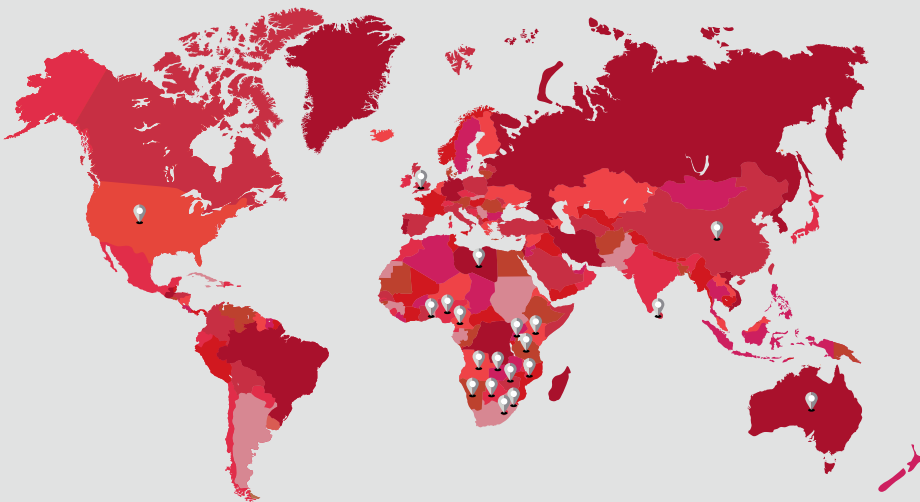
Australia	4	Greece	1	Nigeria	5
Bahrain	1	Hong Kong	1	Poland	1
Barbados	1	India	4	Portugal	1
Belgium	18	Indonesia	2	Romania	1
Botswana	1	Ireland	3	Russia	2
Brazil	2	Israel	1	Scotland	2
Cameroon	1	Italy	3	Seychelles	2
Canada	8	Jamaica	2	Singapore	1
China	3	Japan	3	Spain	4
Cyprus	2	Kenya	8	Sweden	10
Czech Rep	1	Rep of Korea	2	Switzerland	9
Denmark	2	Lesotho	10	Tanzania	1
Egypt	1	Malawi	5	USA	61
England	8	Mauritius	1	Uganda	4
Finland	2	Mozambique	3	Wales	1
France	5	Namibia	3	Zambia	14
Germany	26	Netherlands	23	Zimbabwe	16
Ghana	7	New Zealand	3		

Focus on internationalisation, Africanisation, and decolonisation

In line with the South African policy priorities, the internationalisation process at the UFS now has a stronger focus on the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Africa, BRICS, and the Global South. International partnerships have been

strengthened, with the university establishing new collaborations on the continent and in the Global South. The university, however, continues to strengthen and expand its relations and partnerships throughout the Global North.

International graduates per country



Angola	1	Ghana	2	Sri Lanka	1
Australia	1	Kenya	4	Taiwan	1
Belgium	1	Lesotho	218	Tanzania	2
Botswana	11	Libya	1	Uganda	1
Cameroon	1	Malawi	4	UK	1
China	1	Mozambique	1	USA	2
Cuba	1	Namibia	48	Zimbabwe	4
Eswatini	9	Netherlands	1		
Ethiopia	3	Nigeria	10		

Internationalisation at home

The UFS internationalisation-at-home process purposefully integrates international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum of all UFS students within their domestic learning environments. Advancing internationalisation at home, the Umoja Buddy Programme enables students to receive an international experience on home ground. The programme connects international and local students through meaningful lifelong

friendships and fosters their academic, social, and cultural integration. With this initiative, senior students provide a warm, welcoming, friendly face and a helping hand to first-entry international students.

The intellectual cross-fertilisation between students from different backgrounds provides opportunities for the acquisition of international and intercultural competencies by all students, and results in the enhanced employability of our graduates.

A caring university

As an engaged university of the future, we are committed to connecting our resources to address pressing societal, social, political, technological, and environmental challenges in local, regional, continental, and global contexts. We strive to be not only professionally attuned, but also humanely informed, taking our global responsibilities seriously.

Science-for-the-Future (S4F) Family Maths and Family Science

This programme addresses some of the factors that are preventing learners from excelling in Mathematics and Science. The programmes focus on factors such as teachers' subject-content knowledge, teaching skills, teaching resources at school and at home, parental involvement, and the language of learning and teaching that differs from home languages. S4F also provides all project participants with sufficient activity material for the classroom and parent training sessions.



Common good for society

The university has made its expertise and infrastructure available to community-engagement programmes to develop a common good for society. The Directorate: Community Engagement has initiated an innovative online platform where students can continue to engage with UFS community partners, and at the same time be assessed for their service learning and community engagement projects. The e-engagement approach has met the university's strategic mandate to be a caring, responsive, and engaged university. The UFS is fortunate to have a Common Good First Digital Storytelling lab, which has enabled us to establish pilot Wi-Fi hotspots at flagship partnership sites, facilitating e-engaged scholarship.

No Student Hungry

The No Student Hungry (NSH) campaign has supported and continues to support hundreds of students with meal grants, food parcels, and access to healthy, nutritious vegetables grown in the vegetable tunnels on the Bloemfontein and South Campuses. The purpose of the NSH Programme is to ensure that the most vulnerable students – with an excellent academic record but who are food insecure – are provided with healthy food options so that they can successfully complete their studies.



Internet Broadcast Project (IBP)

The IDEAS LAB Project at the UFS is reaching out to schools in and around its area, with targeted interventions aimed at assisting learners, teachers, and school principals. With the IBP, cutting-edge webcasting technology is used to broadcast interactive lessons in more than 16 different subjects to high school learners (Grade 8–12) in participating schools daily. Currently, approximately 71 000 learners in about 80 schools are reached every week. The IBP has been widely acclaimed as playing a vital role in

the vastly improved matric results of the Free State in recent years.

During the national lockdown (due to the COVID-19 pandemic), the IDEAS LAB's studios were made available to the Free State Department of Education, and technical assistance was provided to record the provincial trimmed annual education plan. The recording time for lessons and subjects covered was also increased, and a YouTube channel was launched to upload video lessons for learners affected by the lockdown.



Student life and success

We are outcome-driven; producing graduates, thinkers, problem-solvers, and leaders across all industries who are equipped and committed to changing our world for the better. Quality, impact, and care are integrated into the education and outstanding university experience we offer. Playing a vital part in our students' academic experience are our Centre for Teaching and Learning, the Department of Library and Information Services, our Postgraduate School, and our Career Office.

Centre for Teaching and Learning

For more than a decade, the university has become a leading institution in terms of quality learning and teaching and student success in South Africa through the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL).

Our innovative locally and globally recognised research and projects include the following:

- Combining data analytics with high-impact interventions that include the UFS student success skills module (UFSS), academic advising, academic language and literacy development, and the academic student excellence tutorial programme (A_STEP). The collaboration on these and other interventions between CTL and

faculties has enabled the UFS to reduce the first-year dropout rate and improve the undergraduate success rates.

- Nationally, CTL leads the South African Surveys of Student Engagement (SASSE), providing critical data to help institutions improve quality learning and teaching and student success. The CTL conducts research projects in collaboration with the Department of Higher Education and Training, Universities South Africa, and the Council on Higher Education.
- The Central Academic Advising Office in CTL enables students to align their personal, academic, and career aspirations through individual and/

or group sessions as well as through digital platforms. CTL leads a national collaborative grant to develop academic advising across the higher education sector and offers the only professional academic advising training programme in South Africa.

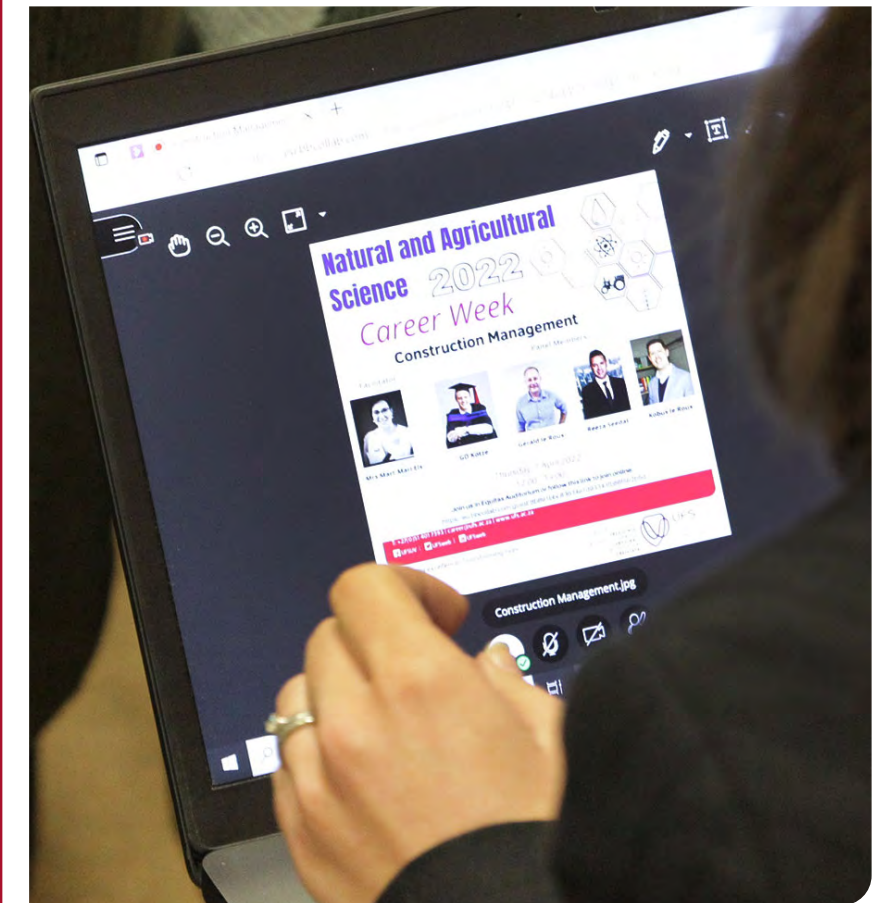
- CTL coordinates the Career Development and Employability Network (CDEN), which focuses on aligning UFSS and graduate attribute development with employability initiatives at the UFS.
- The CTL has received grants from a range of international foundations to drive innovation and quality in learning and teaching and student success.



Careers Office

The Careers Office is here to guide our students from registration to graduation into the workplace with the following programmes:

- With work-readiness programmes, we guide our students to get the jobs they want by teaching them valuable skills, including networking and job-hunting capabilities, how to design a new-age CV, and establishing their personal brand.
- In our career development programmes, students are exposed to online and face-to-face interactions to develop a career plan, goals, and objectives.
- With our company relations programme, we help our students to explore careers and introduce them to potential employers. Career Services also creates awareness around entrepreneurship, the growth mindset, and increasing employability.
- With our special projects, students are selected to attend personalised online workshops and several coaching opportunities.
- We also offer our students volunteer opportunities to gain valuable work skills, with a reference letter specifying the specific skills obtained.
- In our career closet project, students who do not have the budget to buy a professional outfit for a job interview can pick what they need from the careers closet and take it home for free.





Library and Information Services

With its libraries being a key priority for the university, the UFS strives to provide the university community with a world-class, digital, state-of-the-art facility. The Department of Library and Information Services provides students access to study resources in its five libraries situated on our three campuses. Students have access to:

- 29 212 audio items
- 67 0552 book items
- 165 034 serial items
- 52 databases
- collections such as Kovsiana, Africana, and the Archives for Contemporary History

Dedicated to supporting the research activities at the UFS, LIS has established the Centre for Digital Scholarship, which is playing a key role in increasing the visibility and accessibility of research and research data.

Creating a welcoming space not only for learning but also for research, LIS has repurposed and redesigned its spaces into modern, flexible workspaces that meet differentiated and multipurpose learning and research needs for undergraduate and postgraduate students. Meeting the needs of its users, LIS also migrated to virtual and digital platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Centre for Graduate Support

Our Centre for Graduate Support contributes to the Academic Project, provides funding to postgraduate students in need of financial aid, and offers excellent support in terms of research capacity development (RCD) and academic writing, which accomplishes the goal of creating an enabling environment for postgraduate students and staff to

successfully complete their studies. The UFS Centre for Graduate Support is the only school in the country that offers RCD workshops in provinces and countries where UFS postgraduate students reside. Our online offerings also ensure that postgraduate students receive RCD and academic writing support in any part of the world.





Health and safety

Students are one of our most valuable assets. A team of professionals are holistically supporting our students, working hard to ensure their physical safety and mental health. Health and wellness facilities are present on all three of our campuses. Our students also have access to protection services, medical emergency services, and the services of social workers and student counselling and development practitioners.

Besides offering counselling for various psychological, emotional, and developmental challenges, Student Counselling and Development also presents a variety of developmental workshops and programmes to equip our students with the necessary skills to deal with life's

challenges. Furthermore, a number of helplines are available to assist students in a time of need, including the SADAG 24-hour Suicide Emergency Helpline; Adcock Ingram Depression and Anxiety Helpline; and the Befrienders Bloemfontein 24-hour Helpline.

The services of the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) are also available for students to report incidents of gender-based violence, sexual harassment, and any act of prejudice or discrimination.

According to an online survey conducted by Universum, the global leader in the field of employer branding and talent research, UFS students see our secure campus environment as the most important attribute of the university.

Accessible and inclusive campuses

The UFS is committed to providing inclusive and accessible living, teaching, and learning spaces, and the Centre for Universal Access and Disability Support (CUADS) strives to ensure that the UFS becomes an accessible higher education institution of choice for students with disabilities.

While the primary focus of the support services offered by CUADS is to promote equity for students with disabilities in order to reach academic success, a holistic approach to student participation and success is followed to ensure a humanising experience.

CUADS furthermore helps to create and sustain a universally accessible environment that is welcoming and accepting to persons with disabilities. Ongoing developments at the university to address the challenges

facing persons with disabilities include tactile paving, ramps at the entrances of some buildings to make the premises accessible, signage inside and outside buildings, and dedicated seating in lecture rooms.

While the centre coordinates academic support for students with disabilities, the university also has a well-established South African Sign Language interpreting service for deaf students. With a large population of students with visual impairments, we provide study material in different accessible formats, i.e., Braille.

In support of its goal to be an inclusive institution, the UFS has approved a number of policies, including the Universal Access Disability Support policy for students with disabilities.





Residences

In the residences across our three campuses, we are offering a variety of accommodation options to our students, including junior men's and ladies' residences, senior men's and ladies' residences, co-ed residences for men and ladies, the recently added faculty-based residences (Faculty of Health Sciences), as well as day residences.

Since 2020, we have also been engaged in the ongoing process of creating gender-neutral housing.

Residences are optimally designed according to the Department of Higher Education and Training's norms and

standards at a cost per bed that is among the lowest in the country. Our student accommodation is conducive to living and learning, offering uniquely designed bathrooms, study areas, and kitchenettes in each corridor, as well as a corridor that is fully accessible to people with disabilities. Access-control systems in our residences also contribute to the safety of students.

To enhance the safety and living conditions of off-campus students, we have accredited off-campus student houses according to a list of requirements drafted in partnership with the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality.



Arts and culture

Students participate in numerous arts and culture-related events, including events such as performances at the annual Rector's Concert and the Student Affairs Arts Week. Those who love the sound of harmony can sing in the choirs available across all three of our campuses.



76



Springboks

1



Olympic gold medallist (400m)

15



Athletes were world champions and/or took part in Olympic and Paralympic Games

92



SA athletes

21



National women's hockey players

5



National men's hockey players

13



Protea cricket players

27



SA Sevens players

23



SA netball players

2021

Varsity netball champions

12 yrs



National university tennis champions

3



National women's soccer team players (2 SA national ladies' football players, 1 Lesotho national team player)

5



Officials (team manager and 4 coaches) part of SA team at the World Student Games

The university is proud of its sports facilities, including the following:

- An Olympic-sized swimming pool.
- 2 Olympic-standard hockey fields. For coverage of evening games, the fields are equipped with floodlights. Additionally, we have 4 grass hockey fields.
- 18 tennis courts, 4 equipped with floodlights.
- 5 renovated squash courts.
- 5 cricket fields and 20 nets.
- 3 cross-country courses.
- 3 soccer pitches.
- 6 netball courts.
- 4 rugby fields in addition to Shimla Park, the main field.
- A sports stadium on the Qwaqwa Campus with athletics tracks and netball and basketball courts.
- A four-lane International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF)-approved standard synthetic run-up that caters for long-jump as well as triple-jump competitions, with a total runway length of 65 m from end to end at Pellies Park.
- The badminton hall caters for table tennis, badminton, indoor hockey, and volleyball.
- New multi-purpose sports grounds on the South Campus, catering for a wide variety of sporting codes, were fully operational by the beginning of 2020.



Embracing the Kowsie brand

The KowsieGear, KowsieFit, and KowsieInn facilities on our campuses are within walking distance of students' teaching and learning environment. With everything in proximity and situated on one campus, one has to embrace the Kowsie brand. Students, staff, and visitors can acquire their favourite piece of clothing, bag, or other memento at the award-winning KowsieGear merchandise outlet. This facility is also available on our Qwaqwa Campus.





Bloemfontein Campus

Nelson Mandela Drive
Bloemfontein
9301
+27 51 401 9111

Qwaqwa Campus

Kestell Road
Phuthaditjhaba
9866
+27 58 718 5000

South Campus

Oliver Tambo Road
Bloemfontein
9301
+27 51 401 9111