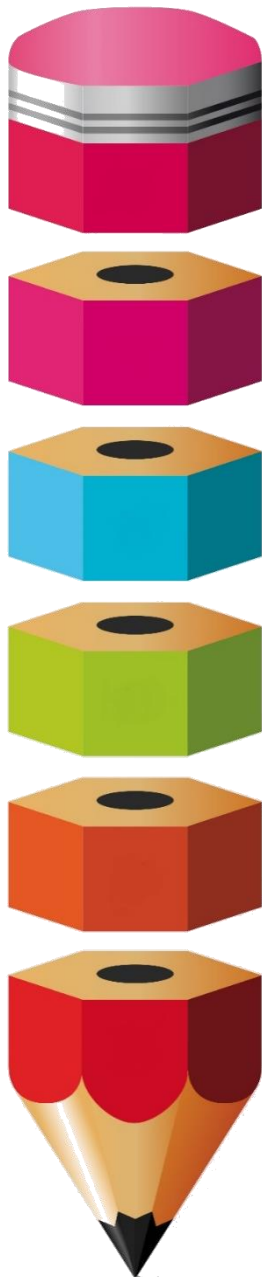


# UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE

# GATEWAY 2018 REPORT

Complied by MelodyM Consulting



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# GATE

# 2018 EVALUATION SUMMARY

## WAY

### PARTICIPANT PROFILE



Compared to the profile of all 2018 first-years, male, off-campus, and white students were under-represented at Gateway 2018.



**Female**

**63%**

59% of first-years are female



**First-generation**

**62%**



**On-campus**

**53%**

20% of first-years live on campus



**Black**

**72%**

76% of first-years are Black

**The proportion of on-campus and black students who participated in Gateway increased significantly from 2017.**

### SESSION RATINGS



All sessions received mostly positive ratings on all aspects - relevance, content, engagement and sense of community, impact and logistical organisation.

**> 90%** said sessions helped them to prepare for their studies, and that sessions were relevant and stayed on topic.

**> 85%** said they felt engaged in the sessions and had their questions satisfactorily answered.

**89%** said that sessions made them feel welcome and helped them integrate into the university community.

**> 85%** said that sessions were at a suitable time, that they were well informed about the time of sessions and that staff were friendly and helpful.

**90%** said that session content was important, useful, relevant, clear and easy to understand.

**> 90%** said they were inspired to get involved on campus and will make use of the services they learnt about.

# SESSION SPECIFIC FEEDBACK



The **ACADEMIC ADVISING** session was rated very highly in terms of relevance, session content and impact.

The session was rated more positively than any other in terms of preparing students for their studies, with 94% of students agreeing that the session accomplished this.

More than 95% said the session content was important and useful, and that they would make use of this service.



## ACADEMIC ADVISING

The **STUDENT LIFE** session was rated highly across most dimensions.

95% of students agreed that the content was relevant, important and useful, and nine out of ten students were inspired to get involved on campus as a result of the session.

Close to 90% of students agreed that the session developed their ability to succeed at university.



## STUDENT LIFE

The **SUPPORT SERVICES** session was rated very highly in terms of relevance and impact.

The session was rated more positively than any other in terms of being focused and relevant to the topic. Nine out of ten students said the session made them feel welcome and helped them to integrate into campus life.

95% said that they will make use of the services and resources on campus that were presented in the session.



## SUPPORT SERVICES

The **B-SAFE** session was rated very highly in terms of its relevance, and more highly than other sessions in terms of engagement, content and impact.

Almost all students said the content of the session was important, useful and easy to understand. It was also the session students found most interactive and interesting.

94% of students said the session was a good use of their time.



## B-SAFE

The **SERVICE LEARNING 1 & 2** sessions were generally rated positively across most dimensions, with more than 80% of students providing positive ratings on most of the aspects evaluated. However, these two sessions received lower ratings than the other sessions in most areas.

The sessions were rated least positively in terms of keeping students engaged and interested (less than 80% of students gave a positive rating). Compared to other sessions, students were less satisfied that their expectations of the sessions were met, and were less positive about whether the sessions (particularly Service Learning 2) were a good use of their time.

The Service Learning 2 session in particular received the lowest rating of all sessions in terms of relevance, engagement, content and impact.



## SERVICE LEARNING 1 & 2

# 92%

of  
students

rated staff members in  
sessions as friendly  
and helpful.

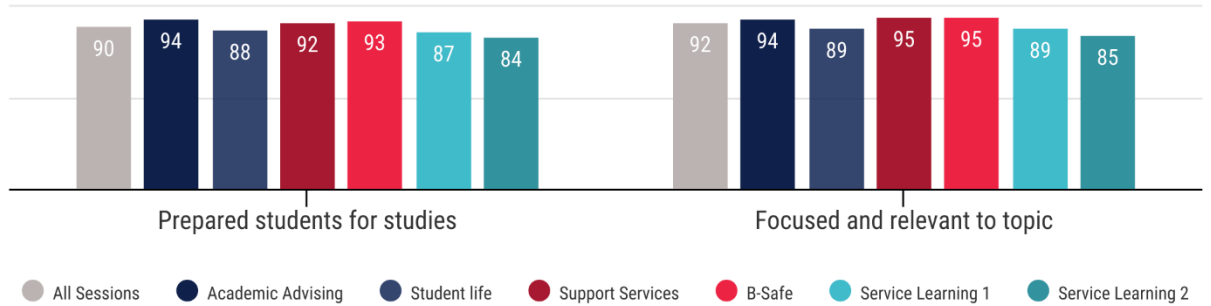


# SESSION RATINGS



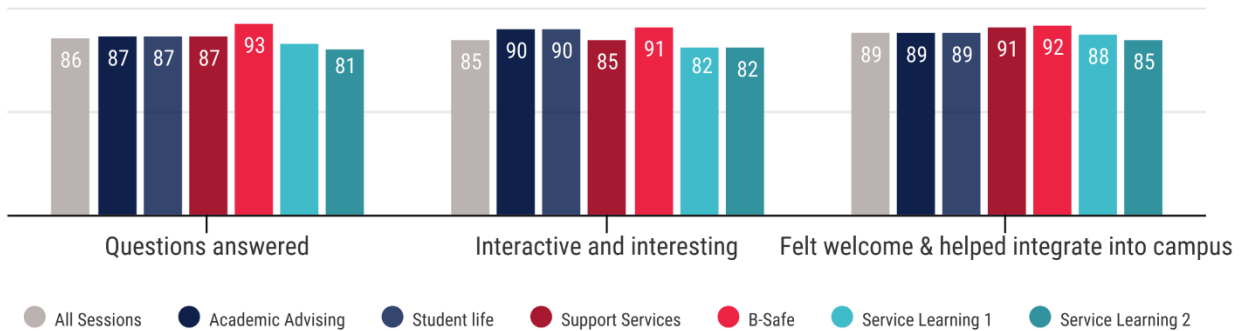
## RELEVANCE

(% of students agreeing)



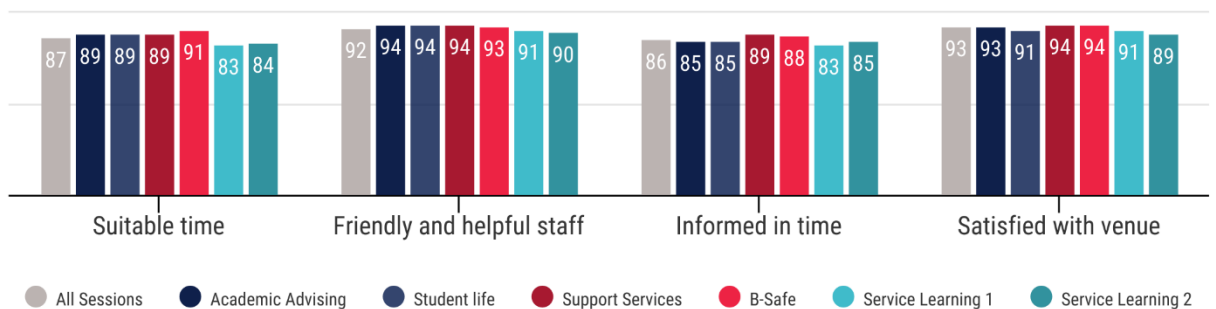
## ENGAGEMENT and SENSE OF COMMUNITY

(% of students agreeing)



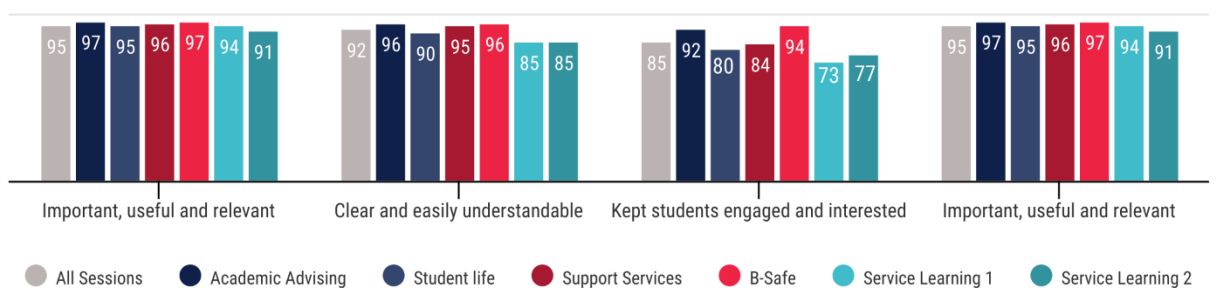
## LOGISTICS

(% of students agreeing)



## CONTENT

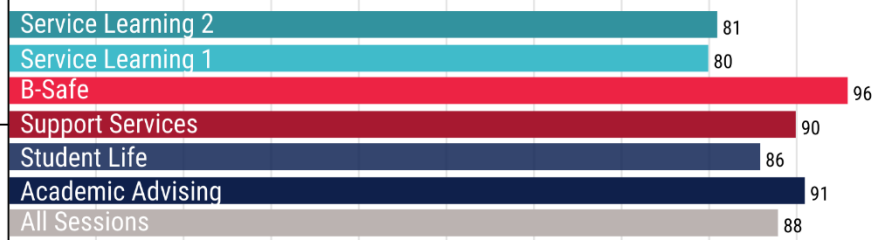
(% of students agreeing)



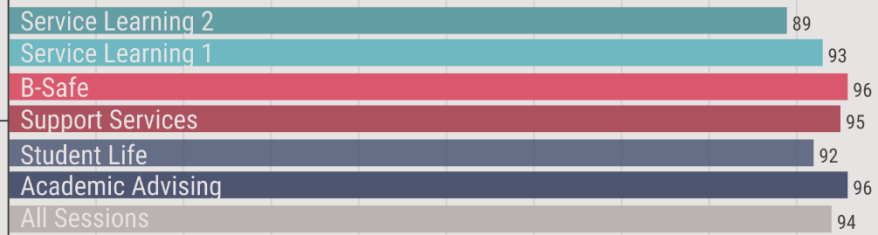
# IMPACT OF SESSIONS



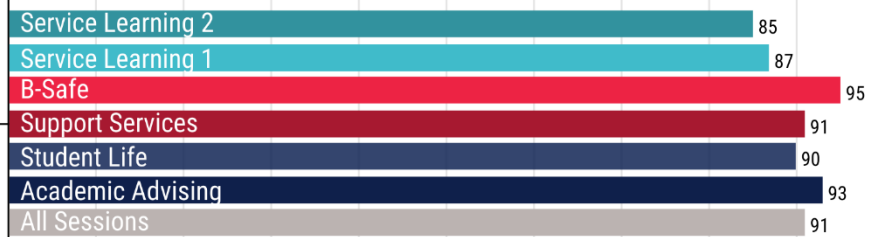
Expectations of session met  
(% of students agreeing)



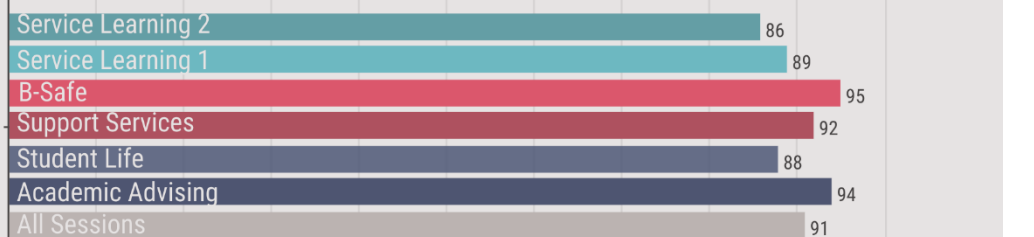
Will use service or resource  
(% of students agreeing)



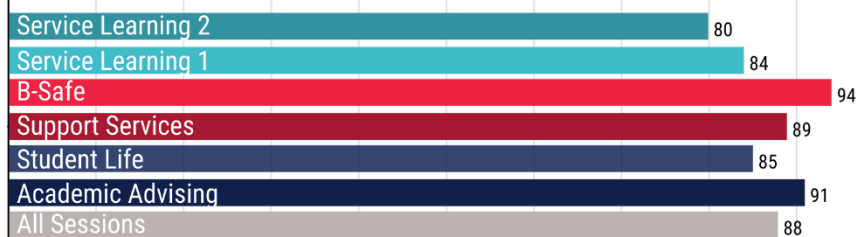
Session inspired students to get involved  
(% of students agreeing)



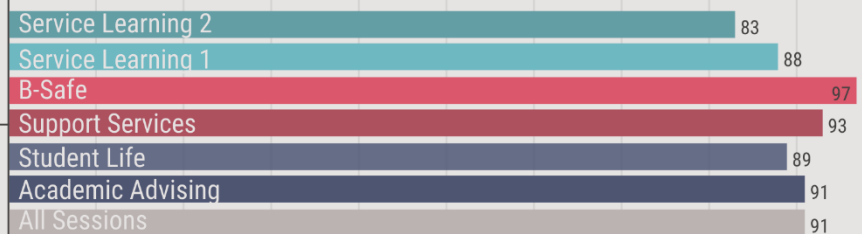
Session developed ability to succeed  
(% of students agreeing)



Session was good use of time  
(% of students agreeing)



Satisfied with developmental impact of session  
(% of students agreeing)



0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

All Sessions Academic Advising Student Life Support Services B-Safe Service Learning 1 Service Learning 2



# WHAT WORKED? GATEWAY '18



Buddies were well-trained and equipped to assist first years.

Students cited Buddies as one of the Gateway '18 successes.

## GATEWAY BUDDIES



Although off-campus students are still under-represented at Gateway, there was a significant increase in their participation in 2018. Buddy system positively influenced this.

## MORE OFF-CAMPUS STUDENTS



Gateway 2018 helped to create a sense of community for new first years. Buddy system helped create this sense for off-campus students.

## SENSE OF COMMUNITY CREATED



The visibility of the Gateway Buddies to help first years navigate campus was a success factor. Students reported that the campus tours were highly valuable.

## CAMPUS NAVIGATION

# RECOMMENDATIONS

**1 Continue to expand reach & opportunity for participation** with a focus on increased participation from off-campus students. Maximise strategies that are working well.



**2 Incentivise participation**, for example by linking sessions to immediate incentives (such as food) & later to the student co-curricular e-portfolio



**3 Use a diversified creative marketing strategy** using a range of media, as well as individualised messages where possible.



**4 Craft interactive, fun and engaging sessions** by ensuring logistical effectiveness & findings ways for students to interact with each other.



**5 Consider content from a strategic perspective** in the context of the Student Affairs Strategic Plan, and align content accordingly. Standardise across campuses where relevant.



**6 Continue with monitoring & evaluation efforts** with the long-term goal to understand the impact of Gateway on student success and development.



# INTRODUCTION



The aim of this report is to detail the responses of students who attended the 2018 Gateway Orientation Sessions at the University of the Free State (UFS). Sessions were delivered on all three of the UFS campuses, and various forms of evaluation data collected on each. The broader orientation programme at the UFS consists of the Gateway sessions, the RAG activities and Faculty Orientations. This report details the experiences of the Gateway sessions only and primarily on the Bloemfontein campus. A separate report was compiled after the QwaQwa campus orientation; key findings from the report are integrated into this report in summary format.

Students on the Bloemfontein campus participated in six Gateway sessions:

- **Academic Advising and Success:** The purpose of this session was to introduce students to Academic Advising and its importance.
- **Student Life:** The purpose of this session was to introduce students to the programmes available at Student Affairs.
- **Support Services:** The purpose of this session was to inform students about the support services that are provided by the University of the Free State, including the Centre for Universal Access and Disability Support and Student Counselling and Development.
- **Service Learning 1:** The purpose of this session was an introduction to the Service Learning module.
- **Service Learning 2:** The purpose of this session was a practical presentation on the Service Learning module.
- **B-Safe:** The purpose of this session was a presentation on how to be safe on and off-campus. Presented by Protection Services, SAPS and Community Policing Forum.

On the Bloemfontein Campus, after each session, students were asked to provide immediate feedback via a paper-and-pencil survey, related to the following specific areas.

- **Relevance:** Questions asked students whether the content of the session prepared them for their studies and was focussed and relevant to the topic.
- **Engagement and sense of community:** Questions asked students whether the session was interactive and interesting, if their questions were satisfactorily answered and if they felt welcome and integrated into the community. They were also asked if they engaged with new peers in the sessions.
- **Logistics:** Questions asked students about the convenience of the session time, how timeous the information about the session time was, their satisfaction with the friendliness of the staff members.
- **Content:** Questions asked students whether the content of the sessions was important, useful, relevant, clear, and easy to understand as well as engaging and interesting.
- **Impact of the session:** Questions examined whether students felt the session helped develop their ability to succeed, was a good use of their time, if their expectations were satisfied, if they were inspired to get involved on campus and if they will make use of services and resources shared in the session.

## AIM OF GATEWAY

“To welcome first-year students, familiarise students with the university, ensure students are registered for their programmes, refer students to academic advising, career counselling and other support services on campus, and orientate students around the services that the University of the Free State (UFS) provides.”

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# OVERVIEW OF ALL SESSIONS



A total of 5996 students completed evaluation forms after the various Gateway sessions in Bloemfontein. Their responses are presented in aggregate in this section, providing an overview of the overall satisfaction with the sessions and a profile of all attendees. It should be noted that this aggregated summary does not represent unique individuals – as any individual student could have attended more than one session.

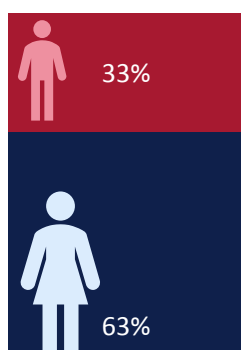
## Participant Profile

This section examines the participant profile of the respondents for all the sessions combined.

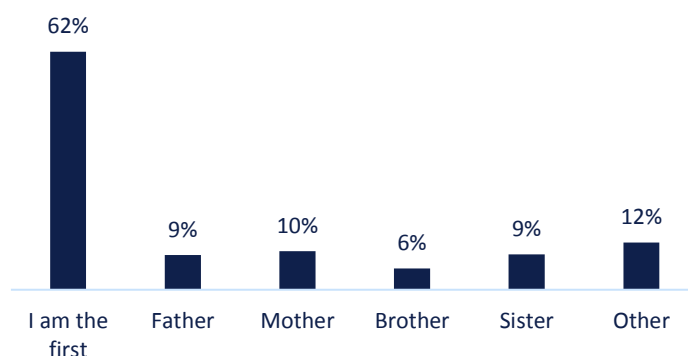
### Biographical

Most of the participants in the 2018 Gateway Programme were female (63%), approximately 6 out of ten were first-generation students and slightly less than three quarters were black. When comparing the sample of participants to the profile of all first-year enrolments, male students are slightly underrepresented (41% of students in the population are male), whilst female students are slightly overrepresented (59% of students in the population are female). White students are underrepresented in the sample (white students constitute 16% of the population, but only 10% of the sample consisted of white students).

All sessions: Gender distribution



All sessions: First-generation Students Proportion



The ratio of female to male students participating in Gateway 2018 was similar to that of Gateway 2017 (roughly two to one). The proportion of black students attending Gateway has been increasing since 2015 and in 2018 was much greater than in 2017 (72% in 2018 versus 48% in 2017). However, the proportion of white students decreased significantly from 2017 (10% in 2018 versus 29% in 2017).

All Sessions: Race Distribution

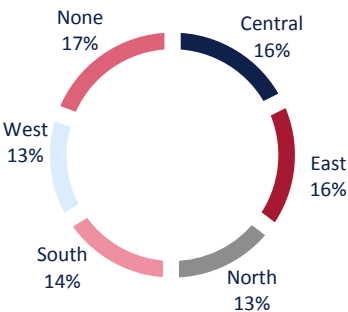


The proportion of first-generation students participating has been increasing since 2015. The proportion was higher in the 2018 group (62%) than in the 2017 group (54%) and the 2015 group (41%). However, no conclusion can be drawn about whether this is a shift in the demographic of the student population or in the Gateway participant profile given that data on first-generational status is not available at an institutional level.

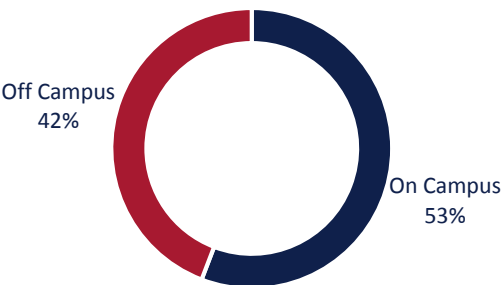
## Residential status and College participation

All Colleges were represented in approximately equal numbers, but off-campus students made up only 42% of participants. This is in stark contrast to their proportion in the population of first years in 2018, where off-campus students constitute 80% of the total first year population.

All Sessions: College Distribution

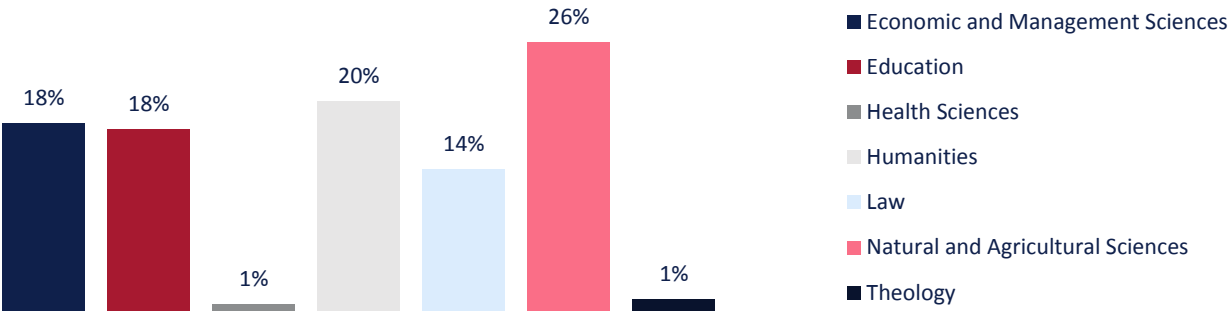


All Sessions: Residence Distribution



The distribution of students participating by Faculty is highly similar to the distribution of total enrolments for all Faculties, except the Faculty of Health Sciences, which was underrepresented, and the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences, which was overrepresented.

All Sessions: Faculty Distribution



An increase in participation in Gateway was noted from 2017 to 2018 in the Faculties of Education, Humanities, Law, and Natural and Agricultural Sciences. That said, decreased participation was noted for the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences and the Faculty of Health Sciences. The decreased participation was particularly salient in the Faculty of Health Sciences, with the percentage of students participating dropping from 13% in 2017 to only 1% in 2018.

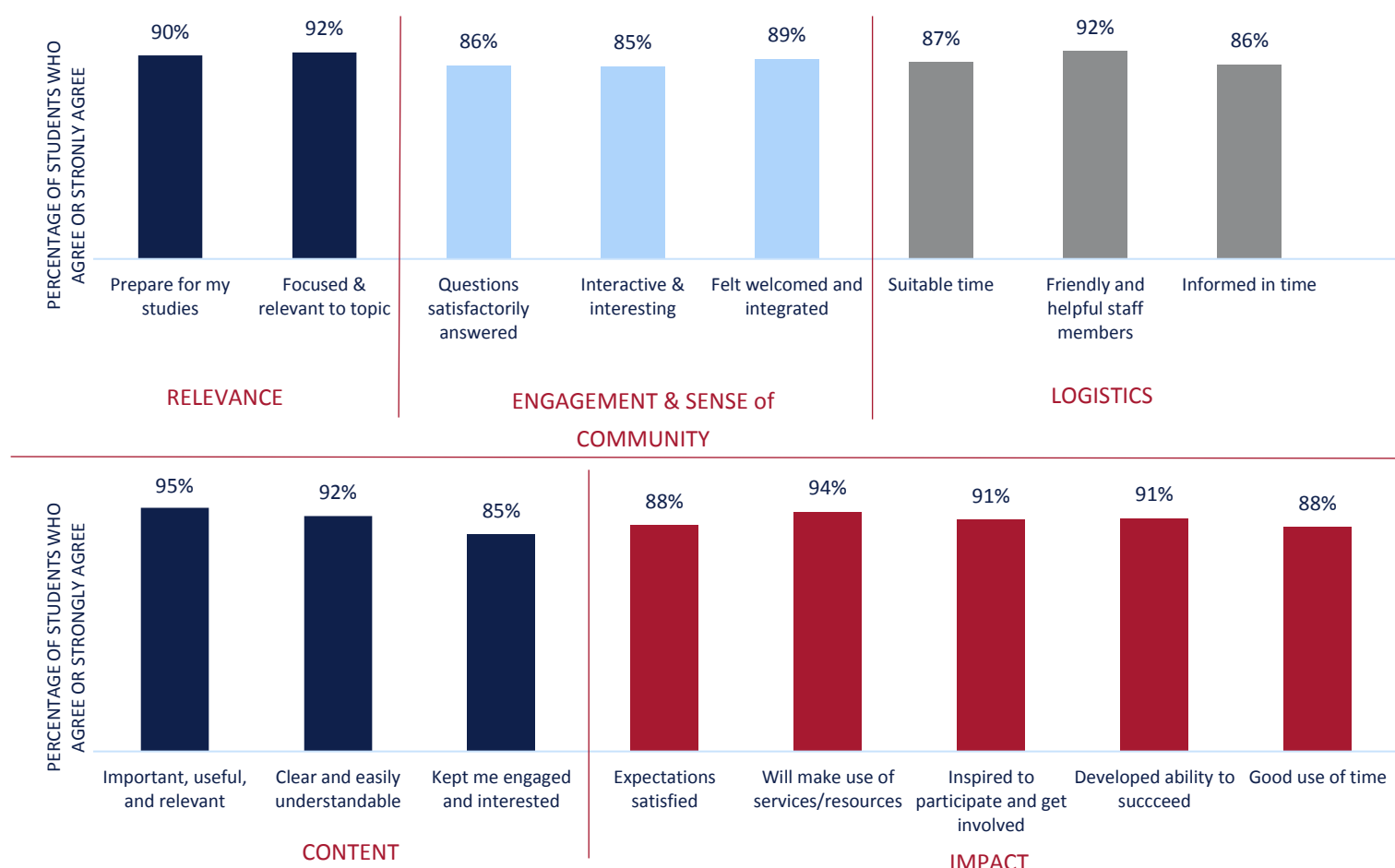
# Session Feedback: All Sessions

This section examines the experiences of the respondents for all the sessions combined.

## Ratings and Satisfaction

The responses of students to each specific question are detailed in the graphs below. For all the areas illustrated in the graphs below the vast majority of students rated sessions positively (responding agree or strongly agree to the questions).

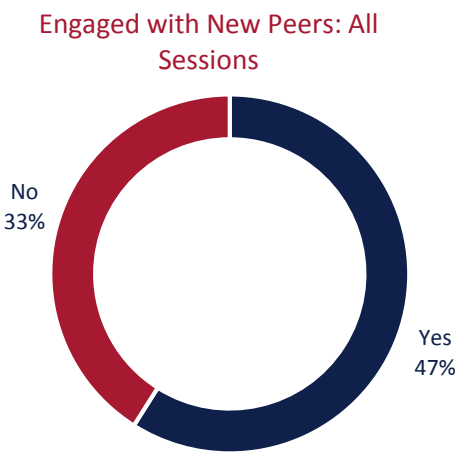
Session Ratings: Overview of All Sessions



Considering the data illustrated in the graphs above, the following trends are noted:

- **Nine out of ten students indicated that the sessions helped them** to prepare for their studies, and that the sessions stayed focused and relevant to topic.
- **The vast majority of students (85% or above) indicated that they felt engaged in the sessions** through having their questions satisfactorily answered and through the sessions being interactive and interesting.
- **Students indicated that the sessions gave them a sense of community**, with 89% indicating that the sessions made them feel welcomed and assisted with their integration into the university culture. However, as is illustrated in the pie chart on the following page, less than half of the students said that they engaged with or met new peers during the sessions.

- The **logistics for the sessions were rated highly**, with more than 85% of students indicating that the sessions were at a suitable time for them to attend, that the staff members were present, friendly, and helpful, and that they were informed in time about the sessions.
- Nine out of ten students indicated that the **content of the sessions** was important, useful, relevant, clear, and easy to understand, whilst 85% of students indicated that the content kept them engaged and interested.
- **The impact of the sessions was rated highly**, with 88% of students indicating that their expectations were satisfied and that the sessions were a good use of their time, and over 90% of students indicating that they will make use of the services/resources they were told about in the sessions, that they were inspired to participate, and that the sessions helped develop their ability to succeed.



In addition to the above, from the graphs below can be seen that students were also satisfied with both the developmental impact of the sessions and the venue where the sessions were held, with over 90% indicating that they were either satisfied or highly satisfied with both the developmental impact and the venue.

Satisfaction with Developmental Impact: All Sessions



■ Highly Satisfied      ■ Satisfied  
■ Dissatisfied      ■ Highly Dissatisfied

Satisfaction with Venue: All Sessions



■ Highly Satisfied      ■ Satisfied  
■ Dissatisfied      ■ Highly dissatisfied

FACULTY COMPARISON

- On average across all aspects of the sessions, **students in the Faculties of Education and Humanities were more positive than other students**, whilst students in the Faculties of Health Sciences and Theology were the least positive.
- **Students in the Faculties of Education and Natural and Agricultural Sciences were most positive about the sessions helping them to feel a sense of community** at the UFS, whilst students in Health Sciences and Theology were least positive about this aspect.
- For **session logistics**, the **highest ratings were received from students in the Faculties of Humanities and Law**, whilst in line with the overall trend, the lowest ratings were received from students in the Faculties of Health Sciences and Theology.
- **Students in the Faculties of Education and Natural and Agricultural Sciences were most satisfied with the venue**, whilst in line with the overall trend, students in the Health Sciences and Theology Faculties were least satisfied.

# ACADEMIC ADVISING & SUCCESS

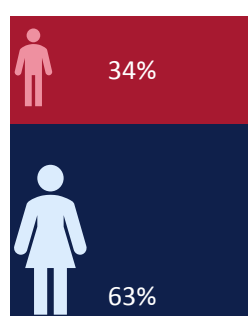
## Participant Profile

This section examines the participant profile of the respondents for the Academic Advising and Success session.

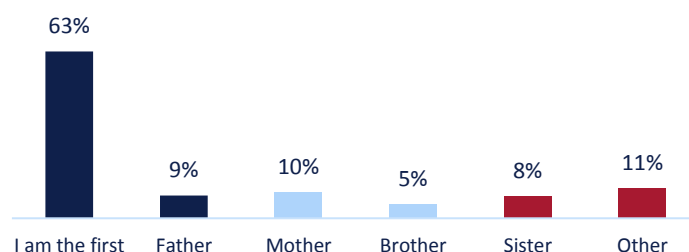
### Biographical

The majority of the participants who attended the Academic Advising and Success Session (63%) were female, close to two thirds (63%) were first-generation students, and a substantial majority (72%) were black. This profile is highly similar to the profile of students who attended all the sessions combined.

Academic Advising & Success: Gender Distribution



Academic Advising and Success: First-generation Students Proportion



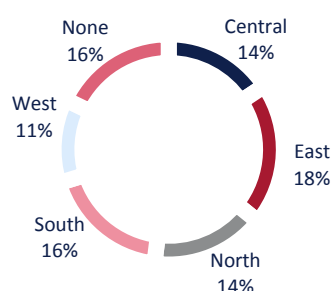
Academic Advising & Success: Race Distribution



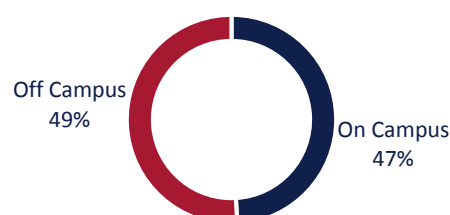
## Residence and Academic Profile

The South and East Colleges had the highest proportion of participating students, followed by the Central and North Colleges, and finally the West College, with a student representation of only 11%. Off-campus students made up nearly half of participants; this is in stark contrast to their proportion in the population of first years in 2018.

Academic Advising & Success: College Distribution

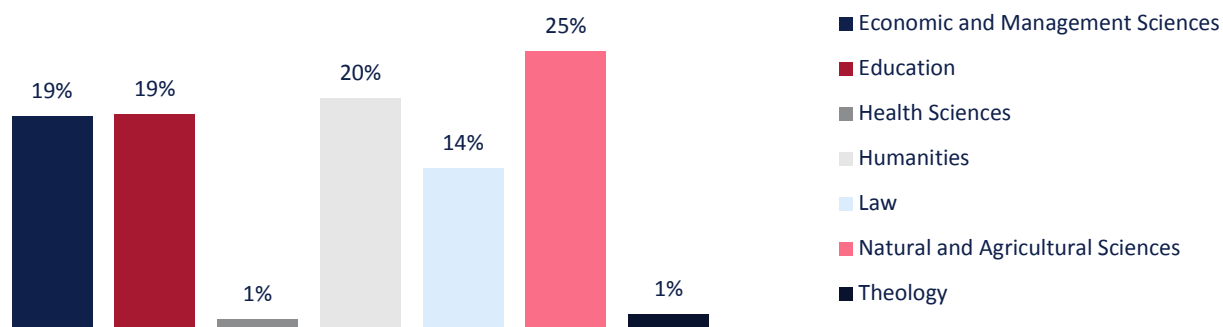


Academic Advising & Success: Residence Distribution



The distribution of students participating by Faculty was relatively similar to the distribution of students in each faculty within the population of 2018 first-years, with the only exceptions being a clear underrepresentation of students in the Faculties Health Sciences, and an overrepresentation of students in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences.

Academic Advising & Success: Faculty Distribution



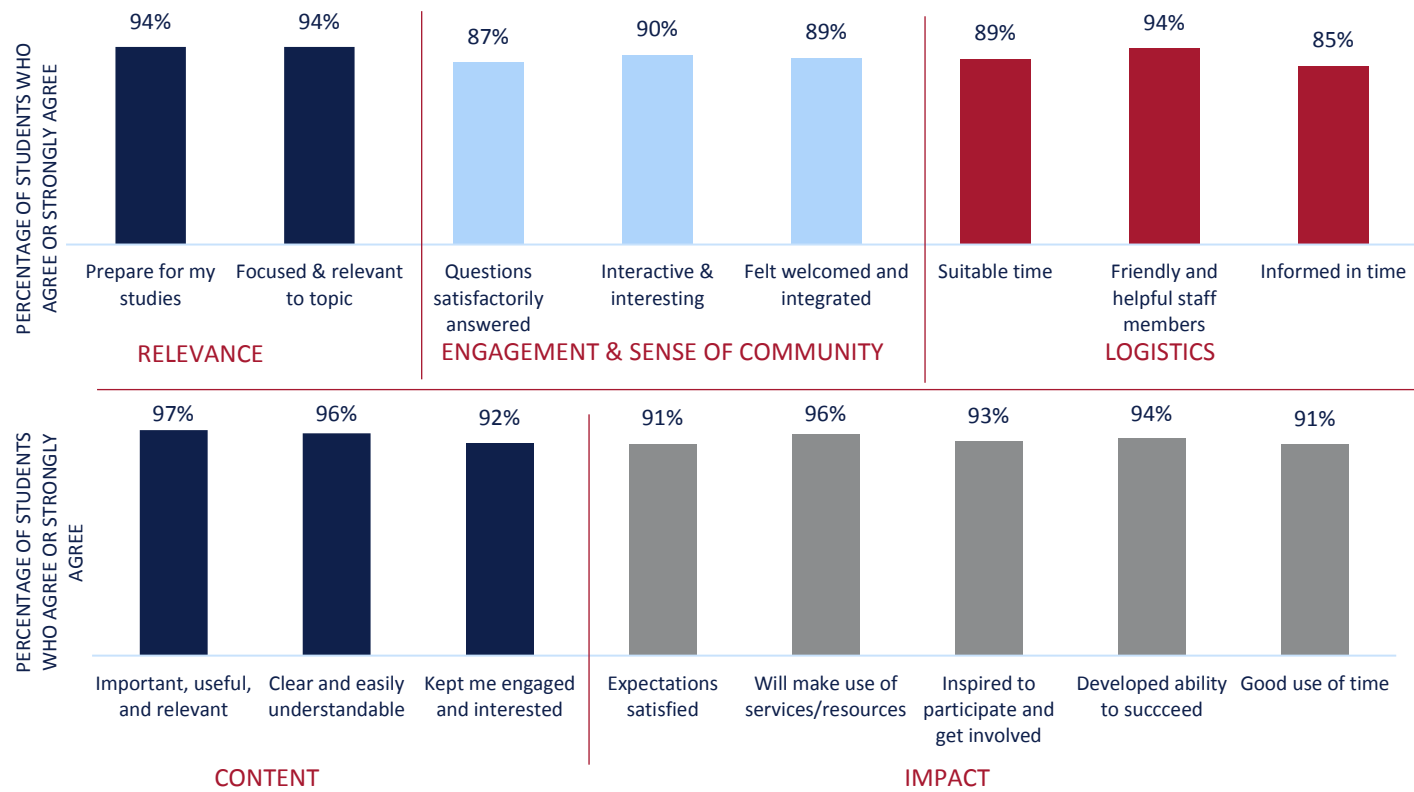
## Session Feedback: Academic Advising & Success

This section examines the experiences of the respondents for the Academic Advising and Success Session.

### Ratings and Satisfaction

The responses of students to each specific question related to the Academic Advising and Success Session are detailed in the graphs below. For all areas illustrated in the graphs below, the vast majority of students rated the session positively (responding agree or strongly agree).

Session Ratings: Overview of Academic Advising & Success Session





### Satisfaction with Developmental Impact: All Sessions



■ Highly Satisfied      ■ Satisfied  
■ Dissatisfied      ■ Highly Dissatisfied

### Satisfaction with Venue: All Sessions

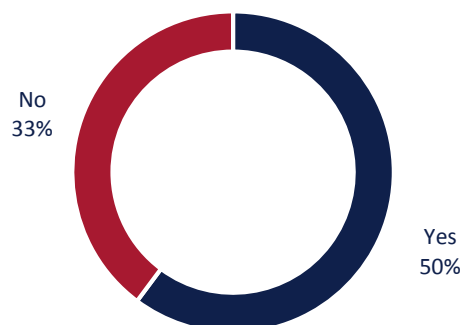


■ Highly Satisfied      ■ Satisfied  
■ Dissatisfied      ■ Highly dissatisfied

Considering the data illustrated in the graphs, the following trends are noted for the Academic Advising and Success Session:

- **Nine out of ten students indicated that the sessions were relevant**, helping them to prepare for their studies and by being focused and relevant to the topic.
- **The vast majority of students were positive about the level of engagement during the sessions**, with 87% indicating that their questions were satisfactorily answered, and 90% indicating that the session was interactive and interesting.
- Although only half of the students indicated that they engaged with new peers during the session, 89% said that **the session helped them to feel welcome and integrated into the university culture**.
- **Students were positive about the session logistics**, with 85% or more indicating that the session was at a suitable time for them to attend, that the staff members were friendly and helpful, and that they were informed in time in order to attend the session.
- **The session content was rated especially favourably by the students**, with nearly all students (97%) indicating that the session content was important, useful, and relevant, and 96% indicating that the content was clear and easily understandable. In addition, 92% of students indicated that the content kept them engaged and interested.
- A particularly salient finding is that over **90% of students rated each aspect related to the impact of the session favourably**, including that the session satisfied their expectations, inspired them to participate and get involved, helped develop their ability to succeed, was a good use of their time, and convinced them to make use of the services/resources they were told about.
- Finally, over **90% of students were satisfied to some extent with the developmental impact of the session**, as well as with the session venue.

### Engaged with New Peers: Academic Advising and Success Session



### FACULTY AND RESIDENTIAL STATUS COMPARISONS – ACADEMIC ADVISING AND SUCCESS SESSION

*It should be noted that the sample size for students in the Faculty of Health Sciences for the Academic Advising and Success Session was very low (N=12), and results for this Faculty are therefore highly likely to be biased and inaccurate. Therefore, the Faculty of Health Sciences is excluded from this comparative analysis.*

- When all aspects of the session as considered together students in the **Faculties of Law and Economic and Management Sciences were slightly less positive about the session** than students in the other faculties.
- The session content was rated highly across all Faculties, **with 90% or more students in each faculty agreeing to some extent that the content was important, useful, relevant to topic, clear, easily understandable, and kept them engaged and interested in the topic.**
- **All aspects related to session impact were rated highly across faculties**, with the only rating below 90% being that 84% of students in the Faculty of Theology assigned positive ratings to the session being a good use of their time.
- Session relevance was rated highly across all faculties, **with 90% or more students in each faculty agreeing to some extent that this session stayed focused and relevant to topic and was relevant to prepare them for their studies at the UFS.**
- **Engagement with new peers during this Gateway session was low across faculties**, and particularly so for the Faculties of Economic and Management Sciences and Natural and Agricultural Sciences, where less than half of the students indicated that they engaged with new peers during this session.
- In contrast, 88% or more students across all faculties agreed to some extent that **the session made them feel welcome and assisted with their integration into the university culture.**
- On average across all aspects, **session logistics were rated positively by a greater proportion of students in the Faculties of Education and Theology** compared to the other faculties. That said, **over 90% of students in all faculties indicated that the Gateway staff members were present, friendly and helpful at this Gateway session.**
- Students in the **Faculty of Education were more positive than students in the other faculties about the developmental impact of the Academic Advising and Success Session**
- Apart from the Faculty of Theology where all students indicated that they were satisfied with the venue, students in the **Faculty of Education were also more satisfied with the venue than other students.**
- Across all aspects of the Academic Advising and Success Session, **on- and off-campus students differed very little in their ratings**, with more than 8 out of 10 on-campus and off-campus students rating each aspect positively.

Independent observers at the Academic Advising sessions rated the session on a scale from 1 to 3 (where 1 is most positive and 3 is least positive). The following aspects were rated (i) the introduction to the session, (ii) the described purposes of the session, (iii) the presenters knowledge of the content, (iv) the flexibility of the presenter, (v) the presenter's communication skills and assertiveness, (vi) the relevance of the content, as well as whether it was presented in a focussed and logical manner, (vi) whether the session was presented creatively and innovatively, and (vii) how the students responded and engaged during the session. The ratings from the observers are summarised below. Comments provided by the observers are included to elucidate the quantitative ratings.

Elements rated	Average rating (1-3)	Comments
Introduction	1	As a result of students registering some sessions started late.
Purpose of session explained	1.1	
Presenter knowledge of content	1	Explained content thoroughly
Presenter initiative and flexibility	1.3	Presenter responded well to technical difficulties in the session.
Presenter communications Skills	1.3	Presenter actively engaged with the students.
Presenter assertiveness	1.3	
Content relevance	1.2	Described as practical and relevant.
Presenter dynamic & innovative	1.6	
Content focused & logical	1.3	
Response from students	1.4	Students were described as looking tired and not responsive.
Engagement of students	1	Students were described as disruptive. Speaker engaged with students, but they were described as non-responsive.

The ratings and feedback from the observers confirm overall the positive feedback from students on the session.

# STUDENT LIFE

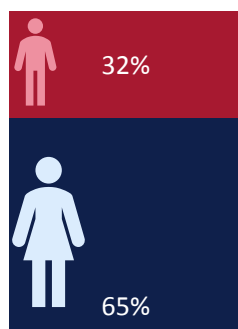
## Participant Profile

This section examines the participant profile of the respondents for the Student Life session.

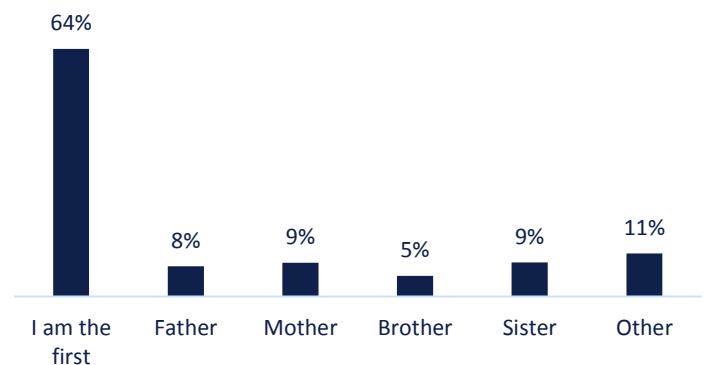
### Biographical

The majority of the participants (65%) were female, 64% were first-generation students, and slightly more than three quarters were black. This is similar to the profile of students who attended all the sessions combined.

Student Life: Gender Distribution



Student Life: First-generation Students Proportion



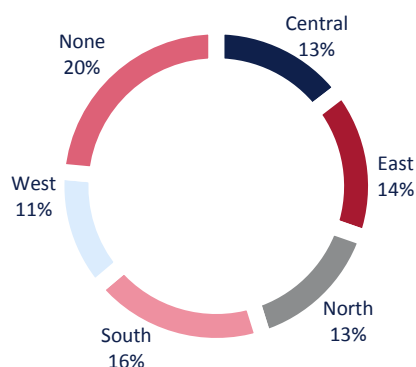
Student Life: Race Distribution



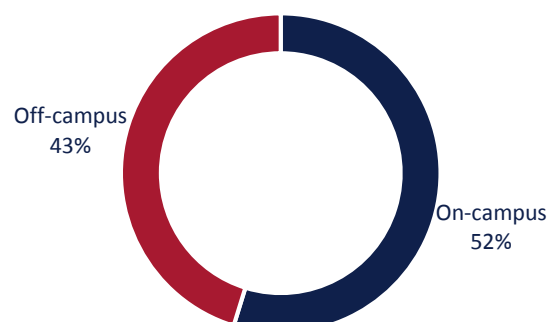
## Residence and Academic Profile

All Colleges were represented in approximately equal numbers, but off-campus students made up only 43% of participants. This is in stark contrast to their proportion in the population of first years in 2018, where off-campus students constitute 80% of the student population.

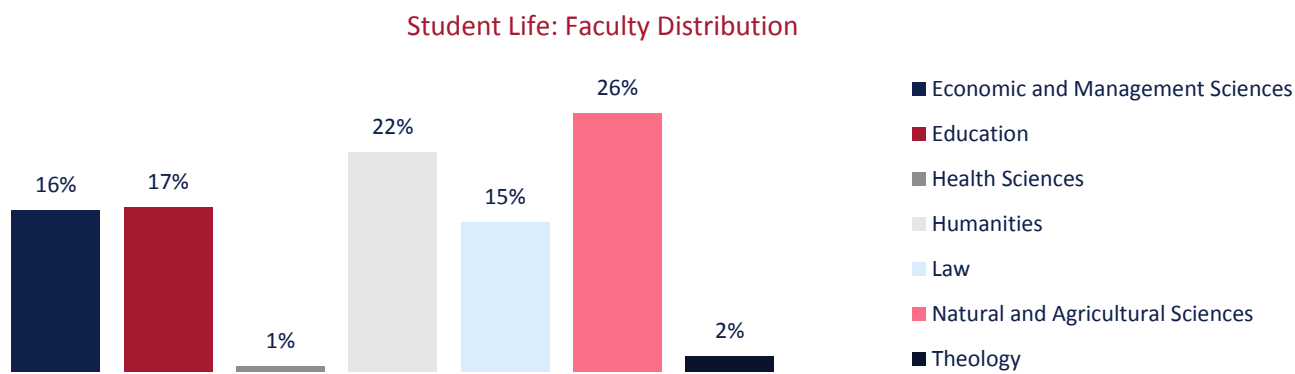
Student Life: College Distribution



Student Life: Residence Distribution



The distribution of students participating by Faculty is similar to the distribution of students in each faculty within the population of 2018 first-years, with the Faculty of Health Sciences somewhat underrepresented, and the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences somewhat overrepresented.

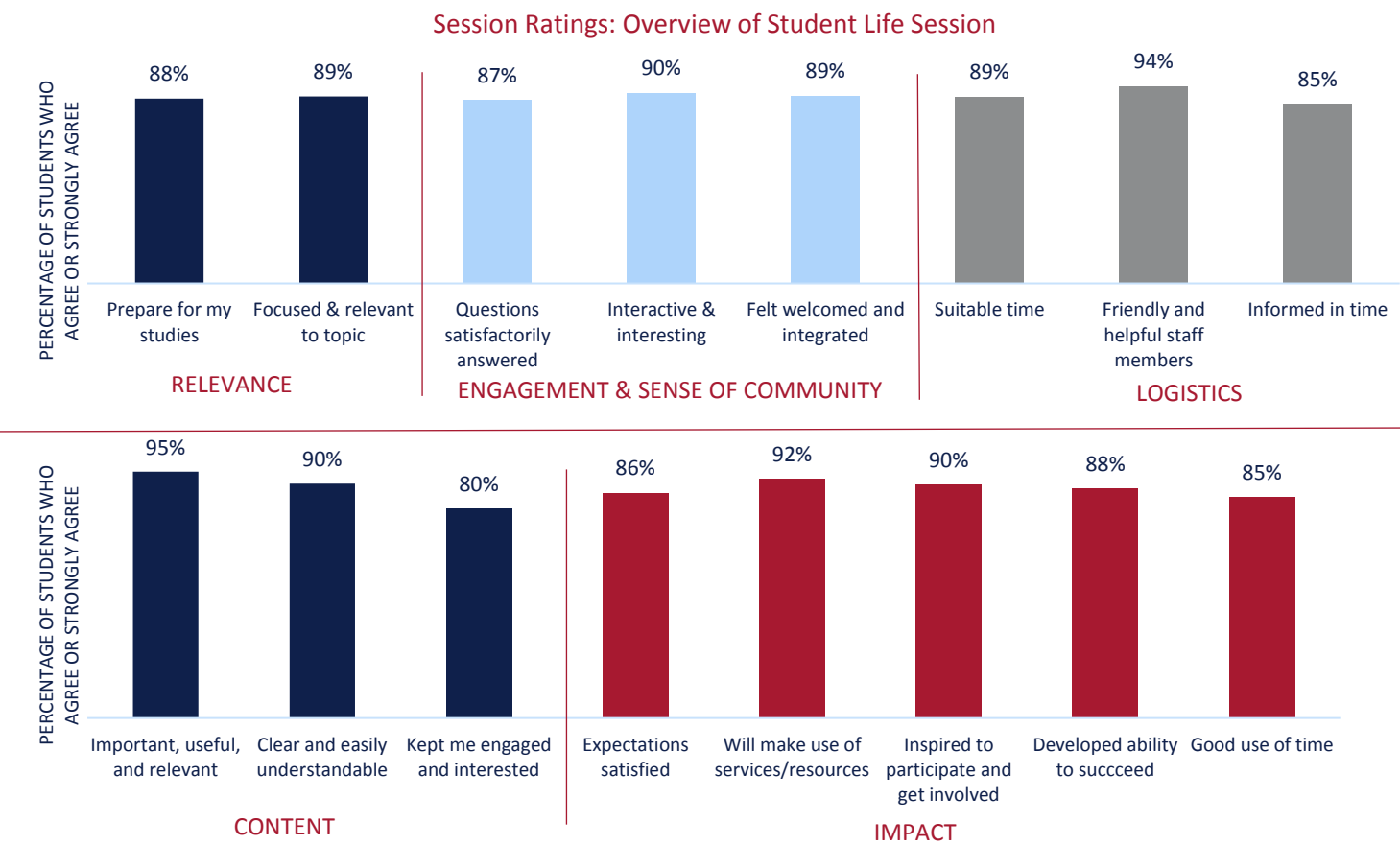


## Session Feedback: Student Life

This section examines the experiences of the respondents for the Student Life Session.

### Ratings and Satisfaction

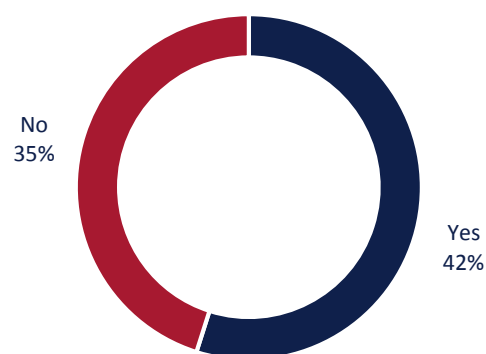
The responses of students to each specific question related to the Student Life Session are detailed in the graphs below. For all areas illustrated in the graphs the vast majority of students rated the session positively (responding agree or strongly agree).



Considering the data illustrated in the graphs, the following trends are noted for the Student Life Session:

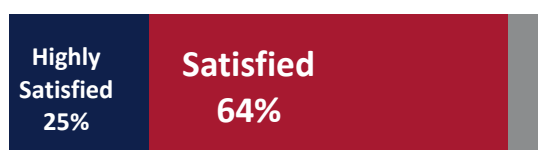
- **The relevance of the session was rated highly**, with over 85% of students indicating that the session was focused and relevant to the topic, and that the session helped them to prepare for their studies.
- **Nine out of ten students noted that the session was interactive and interesting**, whilst 87% indicated that their questions were satisfactorily answered.
- **Approximately nine out of ten students indicated that the session helped them to feel welcomed and integrated into the university culture**. That said, from the pie chart below it can be seen that only 42% of students said that they engaged with new peers during this Gateway session.
- **Students were positive about the logistics for this session**, with approximately nine out of ten students indicating that the session was at a suitable time for them to attend, and that the staff members were friendly and helpful. In addition, 85% of students indicated that they were informed in time in order to attend this session.
- **The vast majority of students (95%) indicated that the session content was important, useful, and relevant**, whilst nine out of ten students said that the content was clear and easily understandable. Although still a substantial majority, a slightly lower proportion of students (80%) indicated that the content kept them engaged and interested.
- **Session impact was also rated highly**, with students especially indicating that they will make use of the resources/services they were made aware of in the session (92%) and that the session inspired them to participate and get involved (90%).

Engaged with New Peers: Student Life Session



In addition to the above trends, from the graphs below can be seen that the vast majority of students were satisfied to some extent with both the developmental impact of the session (89%) and the venue (91%).

Satisfaction with Developmental Impact: Student Life



■ Highly Satisfied
 ■ Satisfied
 ■ Dissatisfied
 ■ Highly Dissatisfied

Satisfaction with Venue: Student Life



■ Highly Satisfied
 ■ Satisfied
 ■ Dissatisfied
 ■ Highly dissatisfied

## FACULTY AND RESIDENTIAL STATUS COMPARISONS – STUDENT LIFE

*It should be noted that the sample size for students in the Faculty of Health Sciences for the Academic Advising and Success Session was very low (N=7), and results for this Faculty are therefore highly likely to be biased and inaccurate. Therefore, the Faculty of Health Sciences is excluded from this comparative analysis.*

- On average across all aspects of the session, **students in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences were slightly more positive about the session** than students in the other Faculties, while students in the Theology Faculty were somewhat less positive than other students.

- Students were **particularly positive about the content being important, useful, and relevant to topic**, with at least 90% of all students in all Faculties assigning positive ratings to this aspect.
- Students in the **Faculty of Humanities assigned slightly higher ratings to all aspects measuring session impact**, except for this Gateway session being a good use of their time. For latter named aspect, students in the Faculty of Education were slightly more positive than students in the other faculties.
- Students in the **Faculties of Law and Natural and Agricultural Sciences assigned especially high ratings (over 90% agreed to some extent) to the session staying focused and relevant to topic**. Albeit still overall favourable, students in the Faculty of Theology rated both aspects related to session relevance somewhat lower than students in the other faculties.
- **It is noteworthy that in all faculties student engagement on average received the lowest ratings**. When each aspect of student engagement is considered separately, lower ratings were especially evident for this Gateway session being interactive and interesting, with positive ratings dipping somewhat below 80% for the Faculties of Economic and Management Sciences, Natural and Agricultural Sciences, and Theology.
- Across faculties, **a low percentage of students indicated that they engaged with new peers** during this Gateway session, with the Faculty of Theology being the only faculty where more than half of the sample (58%) indicated that they engaged with new peers.
- Although session logistics were rated positively across faculties, **students in the Faculties of Economic and Management Sciences, Law, and Natural and Agricultural Sciences especially were positive about the Gateway staff members**, with nine out of ten students in each of these faculties assigning positive ratings to the staff being present, friendly, and helpful.
- Students in the **Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences were slightly more positive about the developmental impact of the session** than students in the other faculties (9 out of 10 were satisfied to some extent).
- **Students were satisfied with the venue for this session**, with nine out of ten students in all faculties except Theology indicating that they were satisfied to some extent with the venue. Only slightly more than three quarters of students in the Faculty of Theology were satisfied with the venue.
- On average across all aspects, **off-campus students were slightly more positive about the session than on-campus students**.

Independent observers at the Student Life sessions rated the session on a scale from 1 to 3 (where 1 is most positive and 3 is least positive). The following aspects were rated (i) the introduction to the session, (ii) the described purposes of the session, (iii) the presenters knowledge of the content, (iv) the flexibility of the presenter, (v) the presenter's communication skills and assertiveness, (vi) the relevance of the content, as well as whether it was presented in a focussed and logical manner, (vi) whether the session was presented creatively and innovatively, and (vii) how the students responded and engaged during the session. The ratings from the observers are summarised below. Comments provided by the observers are included to elucidate the quantitative ratings.

Elements rated	Average rating (1-3)	Comments
Introduction	1.38	
Purpose of session explained	1.13	
Presenter knowledge of content	1.00	Knows content well
Presenter initiative and flexibility	1.50	
Presenter communications skills	2.13	
Presenter assertiveness	1.38	
Content relevance	1.63	Much of the content was noted as being the same as the Support Services session
Presenter dynamic & innovative	2.00	Some slides have text too small to be able to read
Content focused & logical	1.13	Presenter jumped from topic to topic
Response from students	2.50	
Engagement of students	2.25	Presenter does not make enough effort to engage the audience



# SUPPORT SERVICES

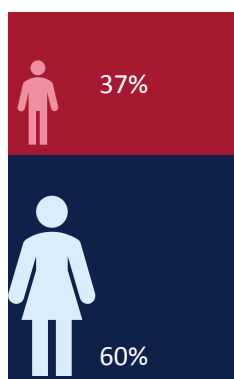
## Participant Profile

This section examines the participant profile of the respondents for the Support Services Session.

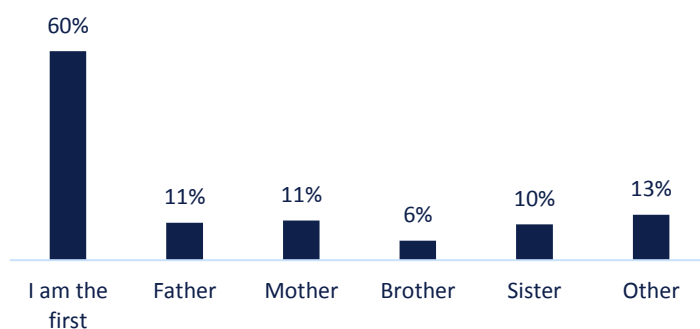
### Biographical

The majority of the participants (60%) were female, 60% were first-generation students, and slightly more than two thirds were black. The gender and racial distributions for the session were very similar to that of all first-year enrolments.

Support Services: Gender Distribution



Support Services: First-generation Students Proportion



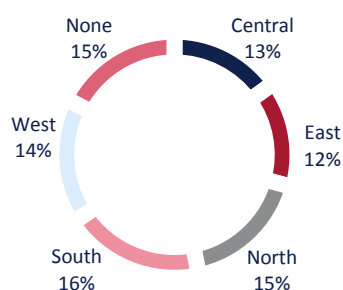
Support Services: Race Distribution



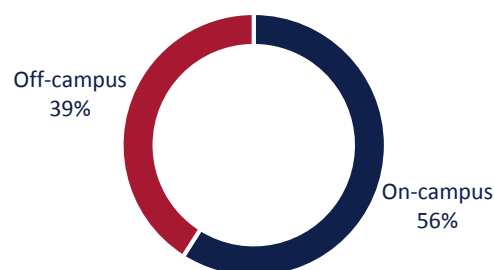
## Residence and Academic

All Colleges were represented in approximately equal numbers, but off-campus students made up only 39% of participants. This is in stark contrast to their proportion in the population of first years in 2018.

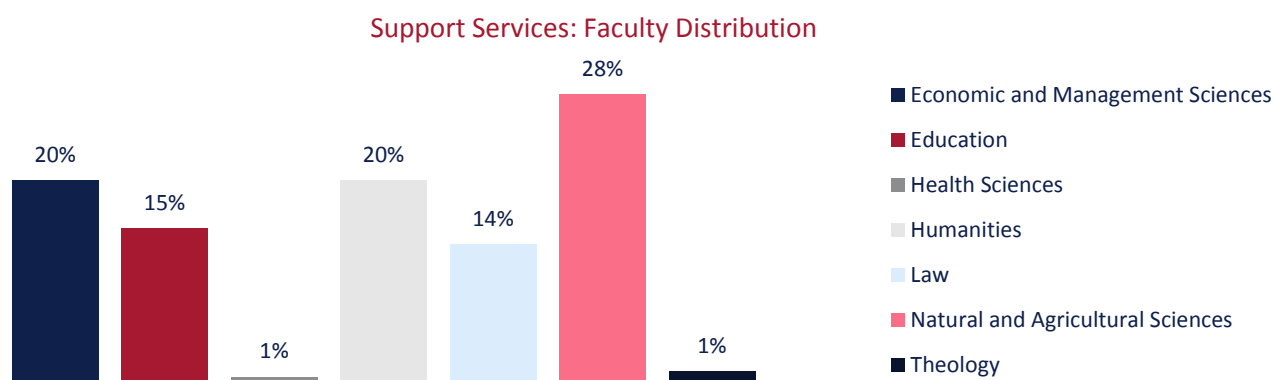
Support Services: College Distribution



Support Services: Residence Distribution



The distribution of students participating by Faculty is similar to the distribution of students within the first-year population, but with students in the Faculties of Education and Health Sciences somewhat underrepresented and students in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences overrepresented.

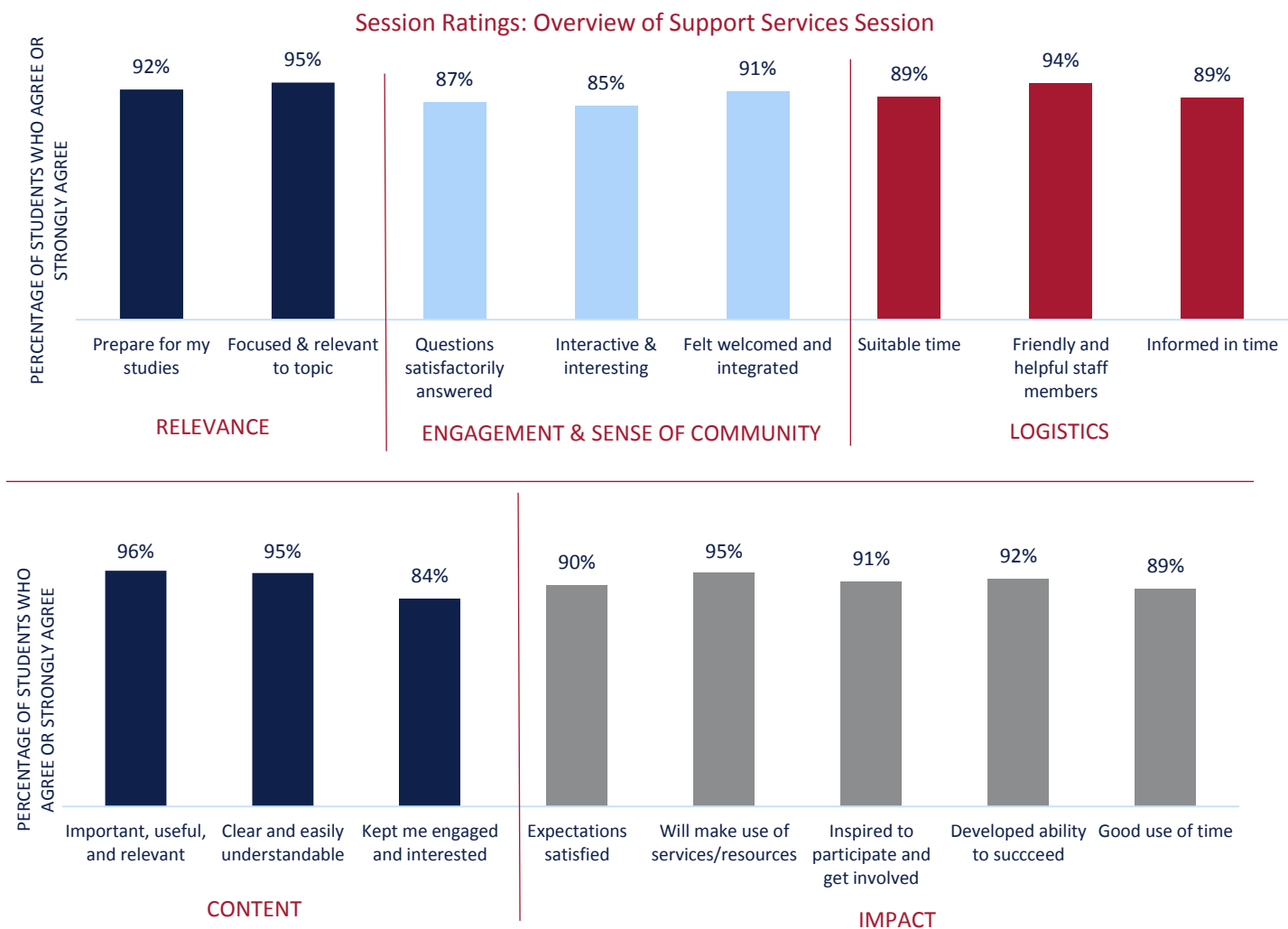


## Session Feedback: Support Services

This section examines the experiences of the respondents for the Support Services Session.

### Ratings and Satisfaction

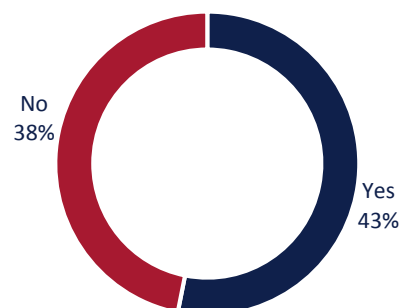
The responses of students to each specific question related to the Support Services Session are detailed in the graphs below. In all areas illustrated in the graphs the vast majority of students rated this session positively (responding agree or strongly agree).



Considering the data illustrated in the graphs, the following trends are noted for the Support Services Session:

- **Session relevance was rated highly**, with nine out of ten students indicating that this session helped them to prepare for their studies, and almost all students (95%) indicating that the session was focused and relevant to topic.
- **The vast majority of students (85% to 87% respectively) indicated that the session was interactive and interesting**, and that their questions were satisfactorily answered.
- Although less than half of the students said that they engaged with new peers during this session, **nine out of ten indicated that the session helped them to feel welcome and integrated into the university culture**.
- **Session logistics were rated highly**, with approximately nine out of ten students indicating that the session was at a suitable time for them to attend, that they were informed in time in order to attend the session, and that the staff were friendly and helpful.
- **Students were especially positive about the session contents**, with 95% to 96% of students indicating that the session content was important, useful, relevant, clear, and easily understandable.
- **Session impact received particularly high ratings**, with approximately nine out of ten students indicating that their expectations were satisfied, that they were inspired to participate and get involved, that their ability to succeed was further developed, and that the session was a good use of their time. In addition, nearly all students (95%) indicated that they will make use of the services/resources they were informed about at the session.

Engaged with New Peers: Support Services Session



In addition to the above, over 90% of students indicated that they were satisfied to some extent with both the developmental impact of the session and the session venue.

Satisfaction with Developmental Impact: Support Services



■ Highly Satisfied
 ■ Satisfied
 ■ Dissatisfied
 ■ Highly Dissatisfied

Satisfaction with Venue: Support Services



■ Highly Satisfied
 ■ Satisfied
 ■ Dissatisfied
 ■ Highly dissatisfied

## FACULTY AND RESIDENTIAL STATUS COMPARISONS - SUPPORT SERVICES

*It should be noted that the sample sizes for students in the Faculties of Health Sciences (N=5) and Theology (N=11) for the Support Services Session were very low, and results for these Faculties are therefore highly likely to be biased and inaccurate. Therefore, the Faculties of Health Sciences and Theology are be excluded from this comparative analysis.*

- Overall across all aspects, **students in the Faculties of Humanities and Natural and Agricultural Sciences assigned slightly higher ratings to the Support Services session than students in the other faculties**, whilst students in the Faculties of Education and Law assigned slightly lower ratings to this session than students in the other faculties.

- Regarding session content, students **across faculties were especially positive about the content being important, useful, relevant to topic, clear, and easily understandable**, with at least nine out of ten students in all Faculties rating these aspects positively.
- Overall, **session impact was rated highly, with an average of at least nine out of ten students within each faculty assigning positive ratings** to the five aspects related to the impact of the Support Services Session.
- At least nine out of ten students within each faculty indicated that the **Support Services Session was relevant to prepare them for their studies at the UFS, whilst nearly all students in the Faculties of Humanities (96%) and Natural and Agricultural Sciences (97%) indicated that the session stayed focused and relevant to the topic.**
- Of all aspects related to the Support Services Session, **session engagement was rated the lowest in all faculties.** That said, at least 85% of students in all faculties still indicated that their questions were satisfactorily answered during this session, whilst at least eight out of ten students in all faculties indicated that the session was interactive and interesting.
- Students in the **Faculty of Education were somewhat less positive than students in other faculties about this Gateway Session making them feel welcomed and integrated into the university culture.**
- Regarding session logistics, **particularly high ratings were received for the staff members being present, friendly, and helpful, with more than 90% of students in all faculties agreeing with this statement.**
- Students in **the Faculties of Economic and Management Sciences and Humanities were slightly more positive than students in other faculties about the developmental impact of the session**, with 95% of students in each of these faculties indicating that they were satisfied to some extent with this aspect of the session.
- Nearly all students in the **Faculties of Natural and Agricultural Sciences (97%) and Economic and Management Sciences (96%) were satisfied to some extent with the venue** for this session.
- There were **little differences between on- and off-campus students' ratings of all aspects related to the Support Services Session**, except for whether students engaged with new peers during the session, where a greater proportion of off-campus (48%) than on-campus (38%) students indicated that they did engage with new peers.

Independent observers at the Support Services sessions rated the session on a scale from 1 to 3 (where 1 is most positive and 3 is least positive). The following aspects were rated (i) the introduction to the session, (ii) the described purposes of the session, (iii) the presenters knowledge of the content, (iv) the flexibility of the presenter, (v) the presenter's communication skills and assertiveness, (vi) the relevance of the content, as well as whether it was presented in a focussed and logical manner, (vi) whether the session was presented creatively and innovatively, and (vii) how the students responded and engaged during the session. The ratings from the observers are summarised below. Comments provided by the observers are included to elucidate the quantitative ratings.

Elements rated	Average rating (1-3)	Comments
Introduction	1.23	Professional video at the beginning of the session
Purpose of session explained	1.08	
Presenter knowledge of content	1.08	Presenters knew content well
Presenter initiative and flexibility	1.46	
Presenter communications Skills	1.62	
Presenter assertiveness	1.31	
Content relevance	1.31	Very useful and informative
Presenter dynamic & innovative	1.46	
Content focused & logical	1.08	A lot of repetition noted with the Student Life session
Response from students	2.15	Limited responsiveness from students
Engagement of students	2.00	Some students seemed disinterested and tired.



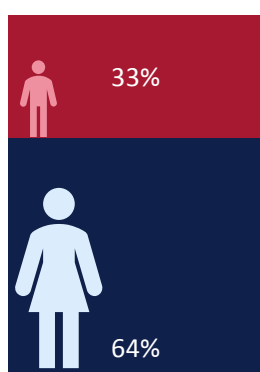
## Participant Profile

This section examines the participant profile of the respondents for the B-Safe Session.

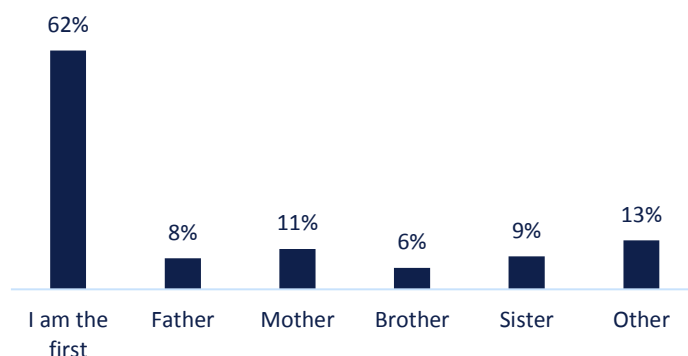
### Biographical

The majority of the participants (64%) were female, 62% were first-generation students, and slightly less than three quarters were Black. When compared to the profile of all first-year enrolments, male students and white students are underrepresented, whilst coloured students are somewhat overrepresented the participating group.

B-Safe: Gender Distribution



B-Safe: First-generation Students Proportion



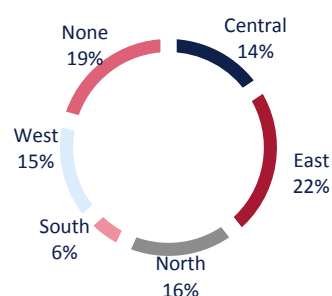
B-Safe: Race Distribution



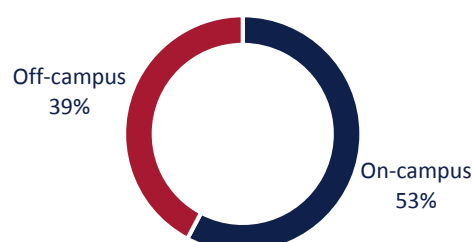
## Residence and Academic

All Colleges were represented in approximately equal numbers, except for a higher representation of the East College (22% of students), and a lower representation of the South College (6% of students). On-campus students made up slightly more than half of the participants which is in stark contrast to the distribution of 2018 first year students.

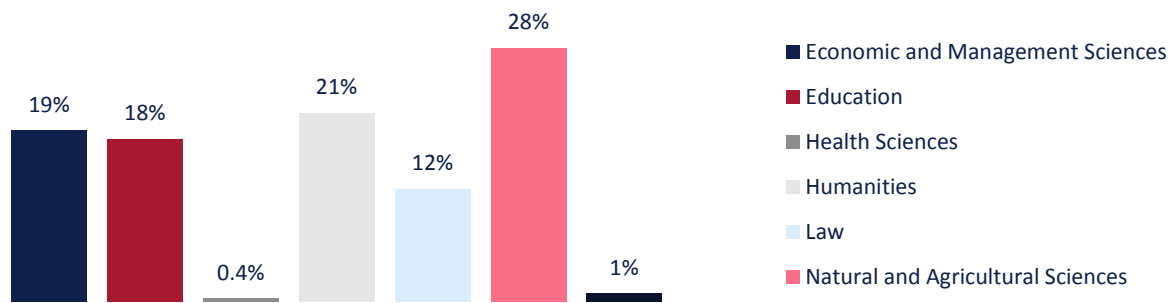
B-Safe: College Distribution



B-Safe: Residence Distribution



## B-Safe: Faculty Distribution



The distribution of students participating by Faculty is approximately similar to the distribution of students in each faculty within the population of 2018 first-years, but with students from the Faculty of Health Sciences somewhat underrepresented, and students from Natural and Agricultural Sciences overrepresented.

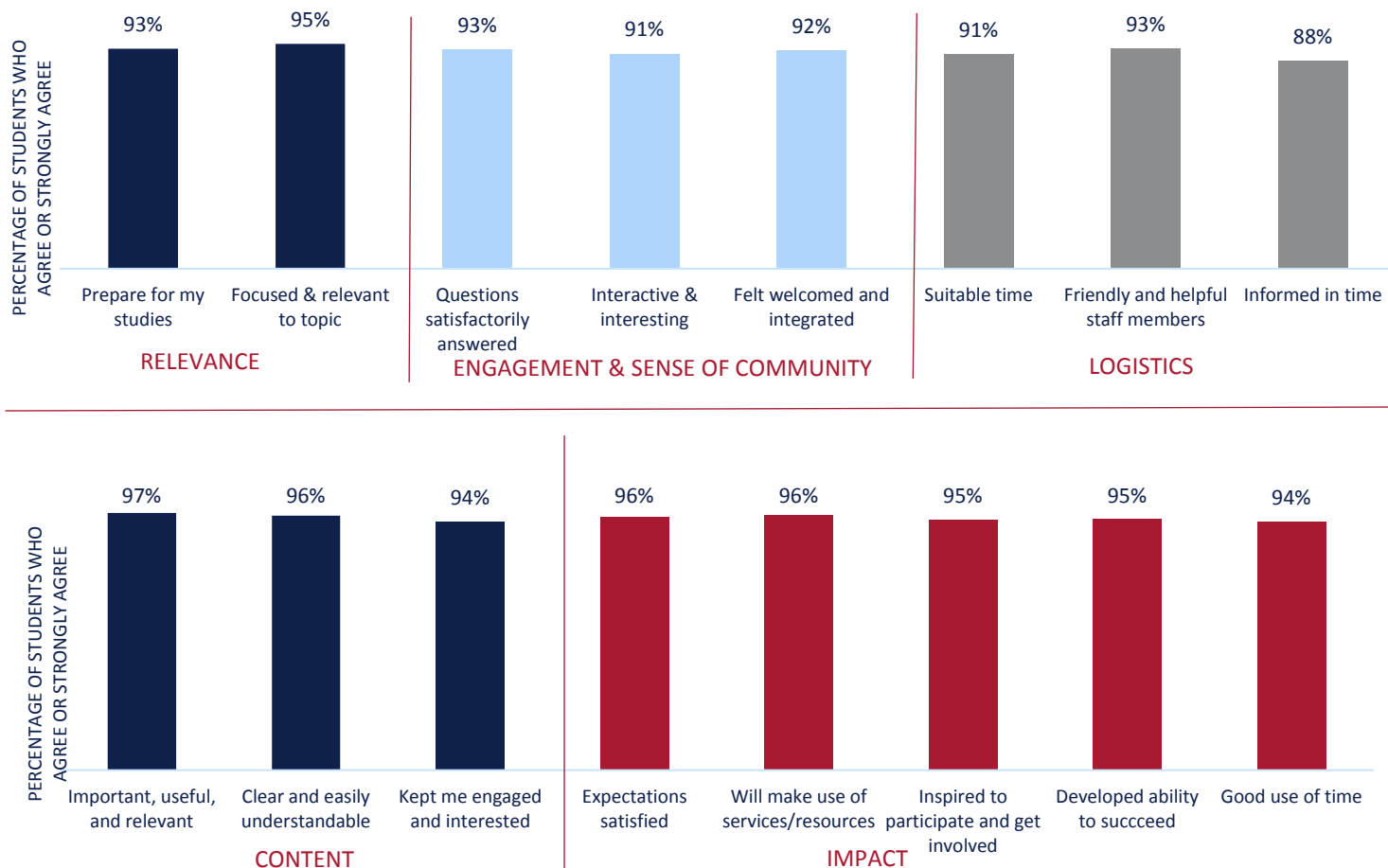
## Session Feedback: B-Safe

This section examines the experiences of the respondents for the B-Safe session.

### Ratings and Satisfaction

The responses of students to each specific question related to the B-Safe Session are illustrated in the graphs below. In all areas illustrated in the graphs, except for the data in the pie chart related to engaging with new peers, the vast majority of students rated sessions positively (responding agree or strongly agree).

#### Session Ratings: Overview of B-Safe Session

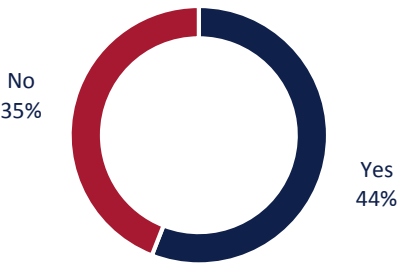




From the data illustrated in the graphs, the following trends are noted:

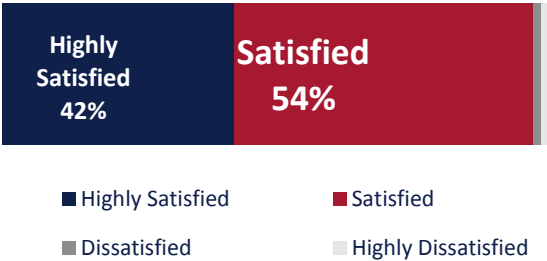
- **The vast majority of students noted that the session helped them to prepare for their studies (93%) and was focused and relevant to the topic (95%)**
- **Session engagement was rated highly**, with nine out of ten students indicating that their questions were satisfactorily answered and that the session was interactive and interesting.
- Although **nine out of ten students felt that the session made them feel welcome and integrated into the university culture**, less than half indicated that they engaged with new peers during this session (44%).
- **Session logistics were rated highly**, with the only aspect dipping slightly below 90% being students being informed in time in order to attend the session.
- **Almost all students indicated that the session content was important, useful, relevant (97%) and clear and easily understandable (96%), whilst 94% felt that the content kept them engaged and interested.**
- **Session impact was rated particularly favourably**, with a particularly high proportion of students (96%) agreeing that their expectations were satisfied, and that they will make use of the services/resources that they were made aware of during this session.

Engaged with New Peers: B-Safe Session

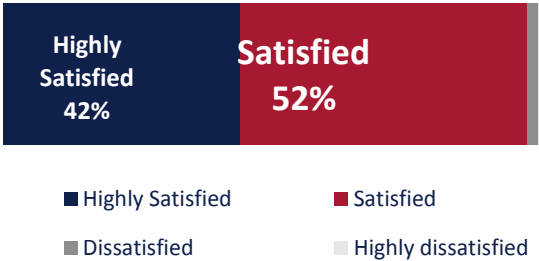


In addition to the above, nine out of ten students indicated that they were satisfied to some extent with both the developmental impact of the session, and the session venue.

Satisfaction with Developmental Impact: B-Safe



Satisfaction with Venue: B-Safe



FACULTY AND RESIDENTIAL STATUS COMPARISONS – B-SAFE

*It should be noted that the sample sizes for students in the Faculties of Health Sciences (N=3) and Theology (N=7) for the B-Safe Session were very low, and results for these faculties are therefore bound to be biased and inaccurate. Therefore, the Faculties of Health Sciences and Theology are excluded from this comparative analysis.*

- On average across all aspects related to the B-Safe session, there was little difference in student’s ratings between the faculties, with the only noticeable difference being students from the **Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences being slightly less positive about this session** than students from the other faculties.
- **An overwhelming majority of participants across all faculties rated session content highly**, with almost all participants (95% or more) in each faculty noting that the content was important, useful, relevant to topic, clear, and easily understandable, whilst at least nine out of ten within each faculty indicating that the content kept them engaged and interested in the topic.
- Although session impact was rated favourably within each faculty, especially high ratings were evident for the **Faculties of Education and Law, where on average across all aspects related to session impact almost all students (97%) assigned positive ratings for session impact.**
- More than **90% of students in each faculty indicated that the session was relevant to prepare them for their studies at the UFS, and that the session stayed focused and relevant to topic.**

- Students in the **Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences** assigned slightly lower ratings (slightly below 90%) to the **two aspects related to session engagement** than students in the other faculties, where at least nine out of ten students in each faculty noted that their questions were satisfactorily answered during this Gateway session, and that the session was interactive and interesting.
- A low percentage of students across faculties indicated that they engaged with new peers during this Gateway session, with the **greatest proportion of students who engaged with new peers being only 51% and coming from the Faculty of Law**. That said, approximately **nine out of ten students within each faculty indicated that this Gateway session made them feel welcomed and integrated into the university culture**.
- Although all aspects related to session logistics were rated favourably across faculties, **within all faculties somewhat lower ratings were given for students being informed in time about this Gateway session in order to attend**.
- **Almost all students in the Faculties of Education, Humanities, Law, and Natural and Agricultural Sciences (96% to 97%), and nine out of ten students in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences** were satisfied to some extent with the developmental impact of the session.
- Students across faculties were satisfied with the venue for the session, **with the lowest levels of satisfaction reported for the students in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences**, where 89% of students indicated that they were satisfied to some extent, and the highest levels of satisfaction reported for the Faculty of Law, where 97% of students were satisfied to some extent with the venue.
- There were little difference in on- and off-campus students' ratings across all aspects related to the B-Safe Session, except for **students engaging with new peers during the session, where a noticeably greater proportion of off-campus students responded positively (47% versus 42%), and students being informed in time in order to attend the session, where a noticeably greater proportion of on-campus students responded positively (90% versus 84%)**.

Independent observers at the B-Safe sessions rated the session on a scale from 1 to 3 (where 1 is most positive and 3 is least positive). The following aspects were rated (i) the introduction to the session, (ii) the described purposes of the session, (iii) the presenters knowledge of the content, (iv) the flexibility of the presenter, (v) the presenter's communication skills and assertiveness, (vi) the relevance of the content, as well as whether it was presented in a focussed and logical manner, (vi) whether the session was presented creatively and innovatively, and (vii) how the students responded and engaged during the session. The ratings from the observers are summarised below. Comments provided by the observers are included to elucidate the quantitative ratings.

Elements rated	Average rating (1-3)	Comments
Introduction	1.6	Session started late
Purpose of session explained	1.2	
Presenter knowledge of content	1	Knowledge was good, but presenters did not present the same info in all sessions, some info left out some times
Presenter initiative and flexibility	1.8	
Presenter communications skills	2.4	Different reactions to the different presenters
Presenter assertiveness	1.8	Different reactions to the different presenters
Content relevance	1.2	Practical and highly relevant information shared.
Presenter dynamic & innovative	2.4	Videos appreciated as creative inputs
Content focused & logical	1	
Response from students	2.2	More students asked questions than in some of the other sessions
Engagement of students	2.2	Videos from student counselling captured students' attention

# SERVICE LEARNING ONE



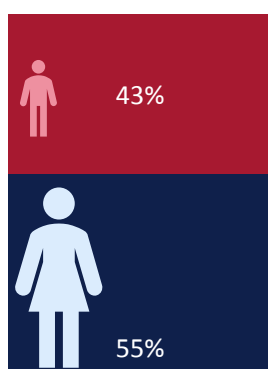
## Participant Profile

This section examines the participant profile of the respondents for the Service Learning One Session.

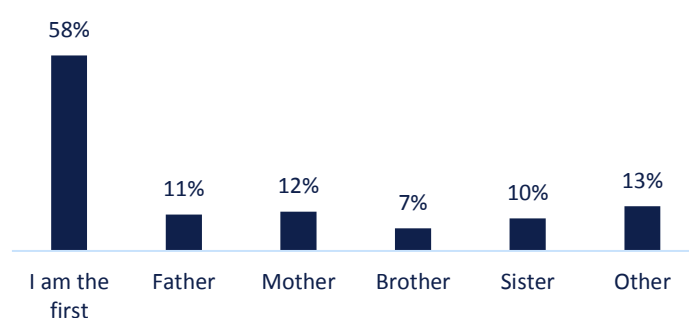
### Biographical

The majority of the participants (55%) were female, 58% were first-generation students, and slightly more than two thirds were Black. When compared to the profile of all first-year enrolments, white students are underrepresented, whilst coloured students are somewhat overrepresented in the participating group.

Service Learning One: Gender Distribution



Service Learning One: First-generation Students Proportion



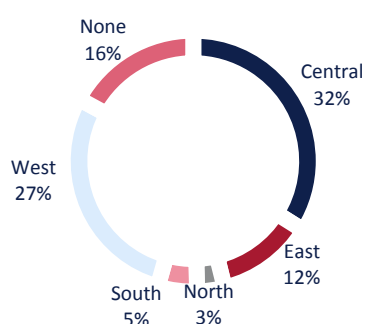
Service Learning One: Race Distribution



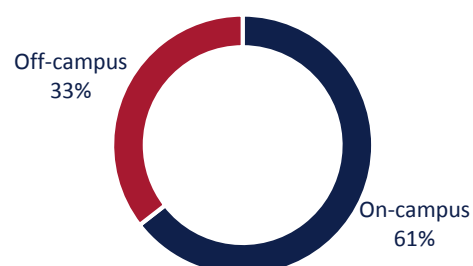
## Residence and Academic

There was a higher representation of the Central and West Colleges (32% and 27% of students respectively), whilst the South and North Colleges had a low representation (5% and 3% of students respectively). On-campus students made up six out of ten participants which differs significantly from the distribution of 2018 first year students.

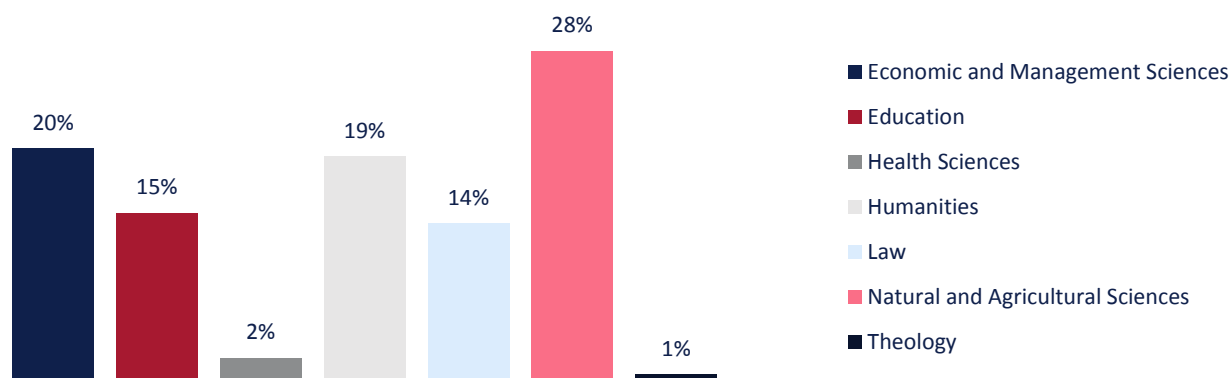
Service Learning One: College Distribution



Service Learning One: Residence Distribution



### Service Learning One: Faculty Distribution



The distribution of students participating by Faculty is approximately similar to the distribution of students in each faculty within the population of 2018 first-years, but with students from the Faculties of Education and Health Sciences somewhat underrepresented, and students from the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences overrepresented.

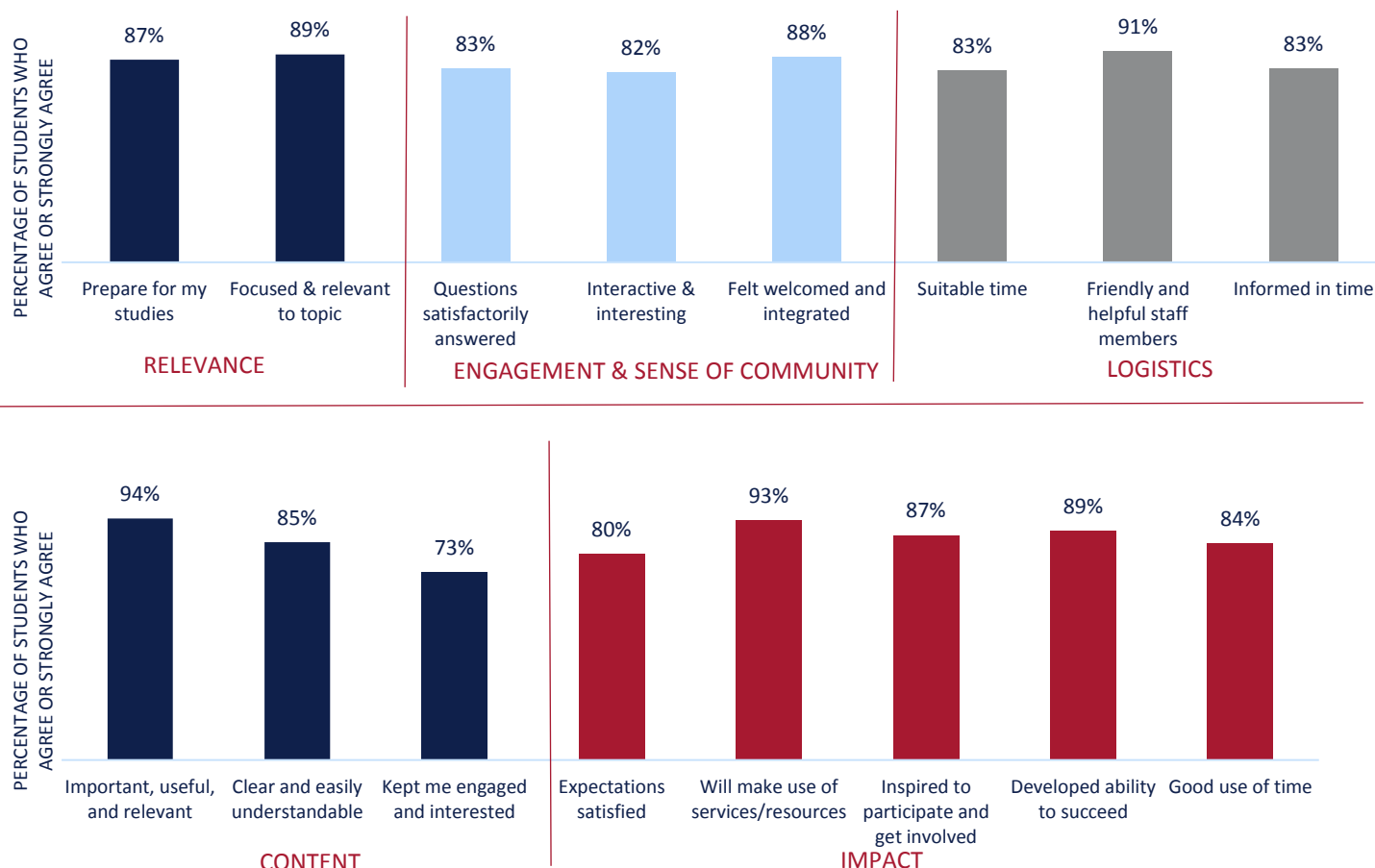
## Session Feedback: Service Learning One

This section examines the experiences of the respondents for the Service Learning One Session.

### Ratings and Satisfaction

The responses of students to each specific question related to the Service Learning One Session are illustrated in the graphs below. In all areas illustrated in the graph, the vast majority of students rated all the aspects of the session positively (responding agree or strongly agree).

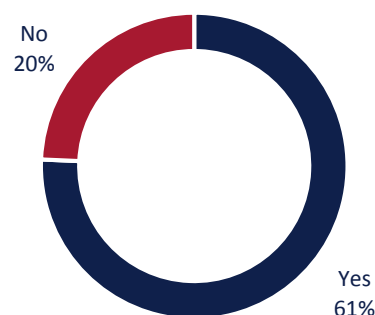
### Session Ratings: Overview of Service Learning One Session



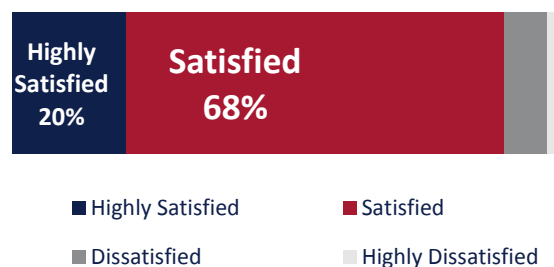
From the data illustrated in the graphs, the following trends are noted:

- **Session relevance was rated highly**, with close to nine out of ten students indicating that the session helped them to prepare for their studies and was focused and relevant to topic.
- Eight out of ten students noted that their **questions were satisfactorily answered, and that the session was interactive and interesting.**
- The vast majority of students said that the session made them feel **welcomed and integrated into the university culture (88%)**, six out of ten said that they **engaged with new peers during the session (61%).**
- **Logistics was rated highly**, with students assigning particularly favourable ratings to the staff members being friendly and helpful (nine out of ten students agreed to some extent).
- Although the vast majority of students indicated that the session content was important, useful, and relevant (94%), as well as clear and understandable (85%), a somewhat lower percentage noted that the content kept them engaged and interested (73%).
- **At least eight out of ten students rated each aspect related to session impact favourably**, with an especially high percentage of students (93%) indicating that they will make use of the services/resources they were told about during this session.

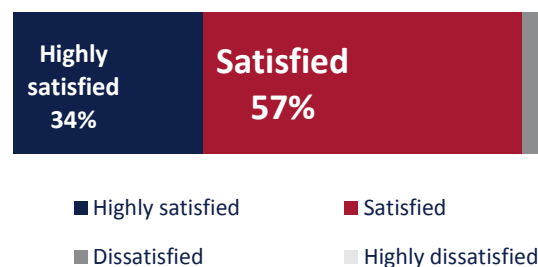
Engaged with New Peers: Service Learning One Session



Satisfaction with Developmental Impact: Service Learning One



Satisfaction with Venue: Service Learning One



In addition to the above, approximately nine out of ten students indicated that they were satisfied to some extent with both the developmental impact of the session, and the session venue.

## FACULTY AND RESIDENTIAL STATUS COMPARISONS – SERVICE LEARNING ONE

*It should be noted that the sample sizes for students in the Faculties of Health Sciences (N=9) and Theology (N=3) for the Service Learning One Session were very low, and results for these faculties are therefore bound to be biased and inaccurate. Therefore, the Faculties of Health Sciences and Theology are excluded from this comparative analysis.*

- On average across all aspects related to the Service Learning One Session, students in the **Faculties of Education and Humanities were somewhat more positive about the session** than students in the other faculties, whilst students in the **Faculties of Economic and Management Sciences and Natural and Agricultural Sciences were somewhat less positive.**
- Almost all students in the **Faculties of Education (97%), Humanities (95%), and Law (97%)** noted that the session content was **important, useful, and relevant to topic.** That said, less than three quarters of students in the **Faculties of Law (71%) and Natural and Agricultural Sciences (68%)** indicated that the content kept them engaged and interested in the topic.
- Almost all students in the **Faculties of Education (97%) and Humanities (99%)** indicated that they would make use of the **services/resources that they have been made aware of in this Gateway session.**

- Almost all students in the **Faculty of Education (98%)** also indicated that this Gateway session developed their ability to be **more successful in their studies** at the UFS.
- Session relevance was rated favourably by at least eight out of ten students across all faculties, with students in the **Faculty of Education again assigning the highest ratings to the relevance of this Gateway session to prepare them for their studies at the UFS and the session staying focused and relevant to topic** (95% assigned positive ratings to both aspects).
- Although the aspects related to session engagement were rated favourably across faculties, **somewhat lower ratings were assigned to students' questions being satisfactorily answered by students in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences** (77% of students rated this aspect positively), and to the **Gateway session being interactive and interesting by students in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences** (79% of students rated this aspect favourably).
- The proportion of students who engaged with new peers during this Gateway session was the highest for students in the **Faculty of Law (67%)**, and the lowest for students in the **Faculty of Education (59%)**.
- **Nearly all students in the Faculty of Humanities (96%), and at least eight out of ten students in all other faculties** indicated that this Gateway session made them feel **welcomed and integrated into the university culture**.
- Although session logistics were rated favourably across faculties, compared to students in other faculties a somewhat lower proportion of students in the **Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences (78%)** agreed to some extent that **the session was at a suitable time for them to attend**. It is also salient that **nearly all students in the Faculty of Humanities (96%)** indicated that **the staff members were present, friendly and helpful** during this Gateway session.
- In line with the overall trend for this session, students in the **Faculties of Education and Humanities were somewhat more positive than students from other faculties about the developmental impact of the session** (94% and 92% respectively were satisfied to some extent) and **about the venue** (95% in both these faculties were satisfied to some extent).
- On- and off-campus students gave similar ratings to most aspects related to this Gateway session, however:
- Off-campus students were notably more positive than on-campus students regarding the **content of the session keeping them engaged and interested in the topic** (83% versus 68%).
- **Off-campus students were notably more positive than on-campus students regarding the Gateway session being a good use of their time** (91% versus 81%).
- **Off-campus students noted more frequently than on-campus students that they engaged with new peers** during the Gateway session (70% versus 54%).
- **Off-campus students were notably more positive than on-campus students regarding and the session being at a suitable time to attend** (90% versus 78%).

Independent observers at the Service Learning One sessions rated the session on a scale from 1 to 3 (where 1 is most positive and 3 is least positive). The following aspects were rated (i) the introduction to the session, (ii) the described purposes of the session, (iii) the presenters knowledge of the content, (iv) the flexibility of the presenter, (v) the presenter's communication skills and assertiveness, (vi) the relevance of the content, as well as whether it was presented in a focussed and logical manner, (vi) whether the session was presented creatively and innovatively, and (vii) how the students responded and engaged during the session.

Elements rated	Average rating (1-3)	Comments
Introduction	1.0	
Purpose of session explained	1.0	
Presenter knowledge of content	1.1	
Presenter initiative and flexibility	1.3	Microphone does not work all the time, presenter adapted well
Presenter communications skills	1.3	
Presenter assertiveness	1.7	
Content relevance	1.5	Session prepares student for the group work they will need to do
Presenter dynamic & innovative	1.6	Slides are sometimes too long
Content focused & logical	1.4	
Response from students	1.1	Students participate through the activity
Engagement of students	1.2	Students find activity in the session engaging



# SERVICE LEARNING TWO



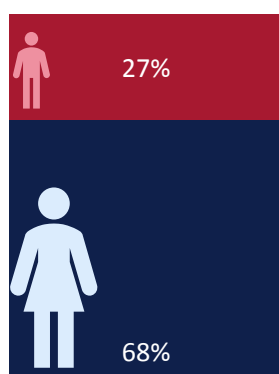
## Participant Profile

This section examines the participant profile of the respondents for the Service Learning Two Session.

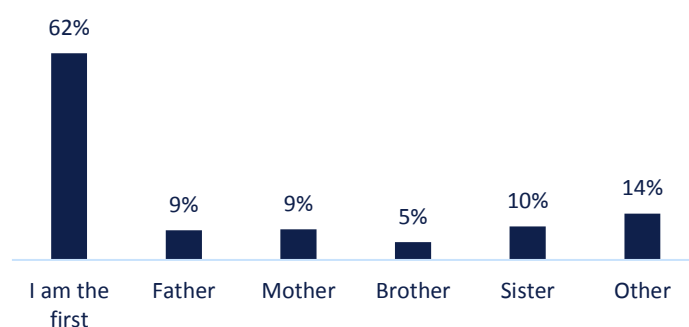
### Biographical

The majority of the participants (68%) were female, 62% were first-generation students, and slightly more than two thirds were Black. When compared to the profile of all first-year enrolments, males and white students are somewhat underrepresented in the participating group.

Service Learning Two: Gender Distribution



Service Learning Two: First-generation Students Proportion



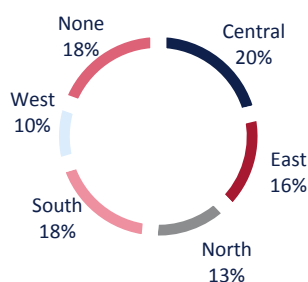
Service Learning Two: Race Distribution



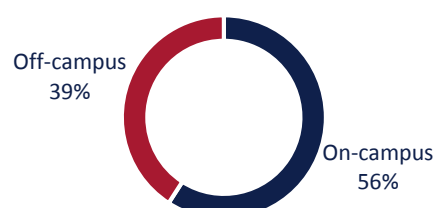
### Residence and Academic

There was a higher representation of the Central and South Colleges (20% and 18% of students respectively), whilst the West and North Colleges had a somewhat lower representation (10% and 13% of students respectively). On-campus students made up slightly more than half of the participants, which is in stark contrast to the distribution of 2018 first year students.

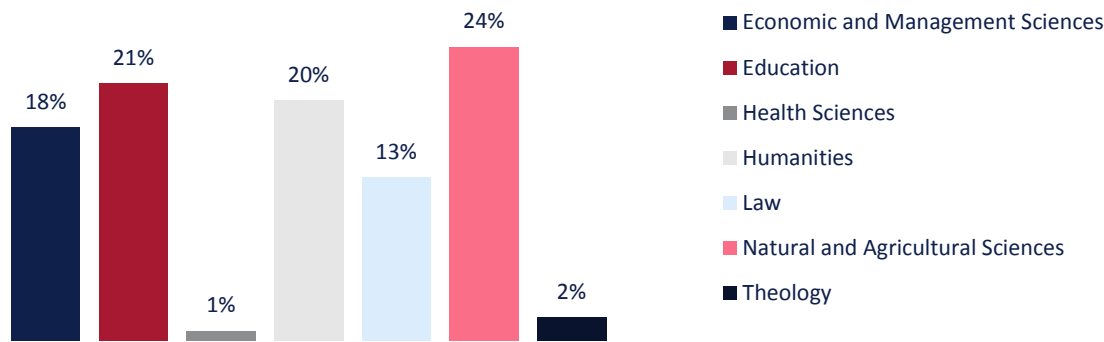
Service Learning Two: College Distribution



Service Learning Two: Residence Distribution



## Service Learning Two: Faculty Distribution



The distribution of students participating by Faculty is approximately similar to the distribution of students in each faculty within the population of 2018 first-years, but with students from the Faculty of Health Sciences somewhat underrepresented, and students from Natural and Agricultural Sciences somewhat overrepresented.

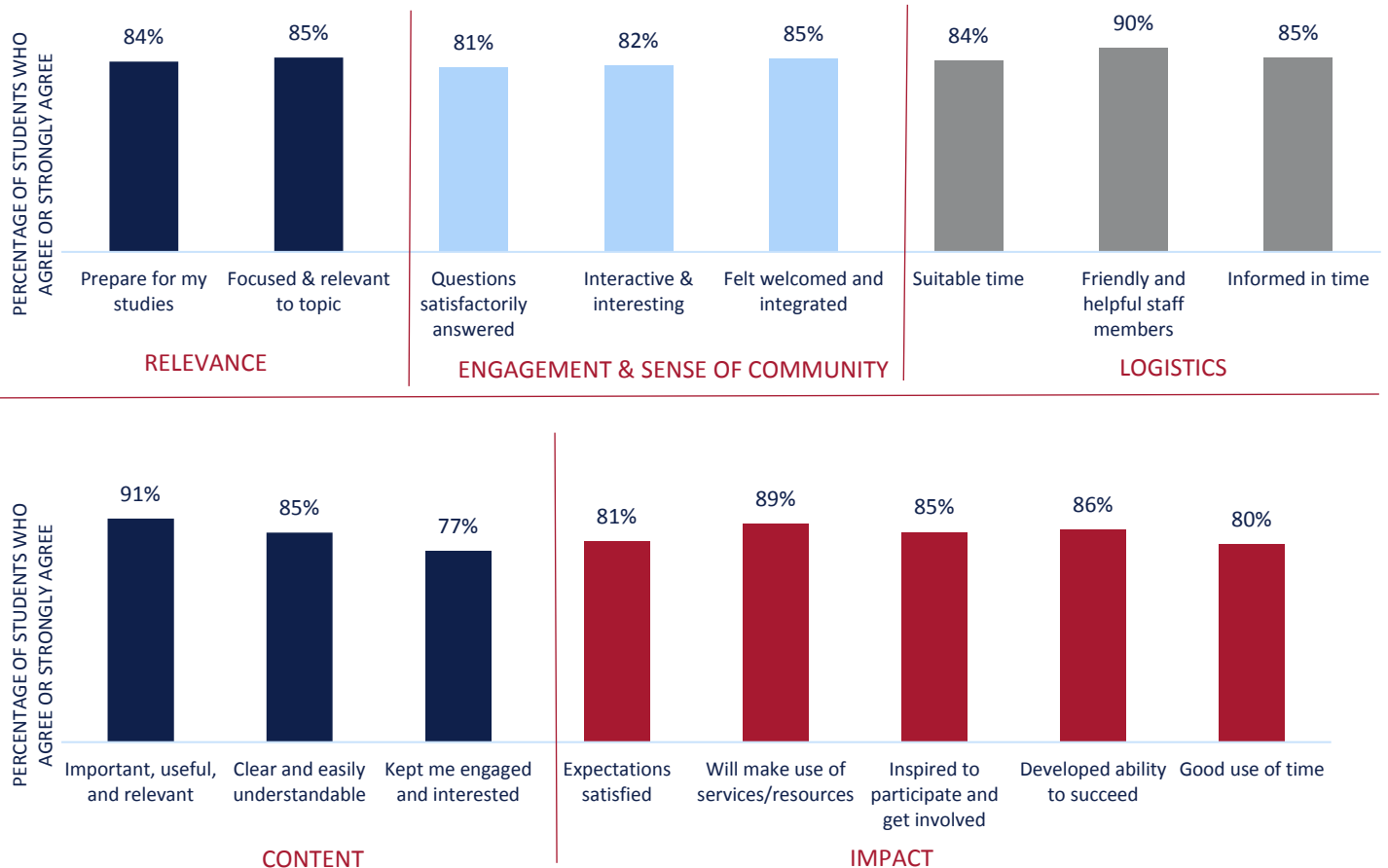
## Session Feedback: Service Learning Two

This section examines the experiences of the respondents for the Service Learning Two Session.

### Ratings and Satisfaction

The responses of students to each specific question related to the Service Learning Two Session are illustrated in the graphs below. In all areas illustrated in the graphs, the vast majority of students rated sessions positively (responding agree or strongly agree).

#### Session Ratings: Overview of Service Learning Two Session



From the data illustrated in the graphs, the following trends are noted:

- **Session relevance was rated highly**, with more than 80% of students indicating that the session helped them to prepare for their studies and was focused and relevant to topic.
- Eight out of ten students noted that their **questions were satisfactorily answered, and that the session was interactive and interesting**.
- Although the vast majority of students said that the session made them feel **welcomed and integrated into the university culture (85%)**, only half said that they **engaged with new peers during the session (51%)**.
- Logistics was rated highly, with a particularly high proportion of students (nine out of ten) agreeing to some extent that the **staff members were friendly and helpful**.
- Although nine out of ten students indicated that the **session content was important, useful, and relevant**, and the vast majority felt that the content was **clear and understandable (85%)**, a somewhat lower proportion noted that the session kept them **engaged and interested (77%)**.
- At least eight out of ten students rated each aspect related to session impact favourably, with an especially high proportion of students (approximately nine out of ten) indicating that they will **make use of the services/resources they were told about during the session**.

Engaged with new peers: Service Learning Two Session



Satisfaction with Developmental Impact: Service Learning Two



■ Highly Satisfied  
■ Satisfied  
■ Dissatisfied  
■ Highly Dissatisfied

Satisfaction with Venue: Service Learning Two



■ Highly Satisfied  
■ Satisfied  
■ Dissatisfied  
■ Highly Dissatisfied

In addition to the above, approximately eight out of ten students indicated that they were satisfied to some extent with the developmental impact of the session, whilst approximately nine out of ten were satisfied to some extent with the session venue.

## FACULTY AND RESIDENTIAL STATUS COMPARISONS – SERVICE LEARNING TWO

*It should be noted that the sample sizes for students in the Faculties of Health Sciences (N=8) and Theology (N=18) for the Service Learning Two Session were very low, and results for these faculties are therefore bound to be biased and inaccurate. Therefore, the Faculties of Health Sciences and Theology are excluded from this comparative analysis.*

- On average across all aspects related to the Service Learning Two Session, students in the **Faculties of Education and Humanities were somewhat more positive about the session** than students in the other faculties, whilst students in the **Faculties of Economic and Management Sciences and Natural and Agricultural Sciences were somewhat less positive**.
- Although session content was rated favourably across faculties, a **comparatively higher proportion of students in the Faculties of Education (96%) and Humanities (93%)** agreed to some extent that the content was **important, useful, and relevant to topic**, whilst a **comparatively lower proportion of students in the Faculties of Economic and Management Sciences (73%)** and

**Natural and Agricultural Sciences (70%)** agreed to some extent that the session content kept them **engaged and interested** in the topic.

- Session impact was rated highly across faculties, and especially so in the **Faculties of Education and Humanities**, where nine out of ten students agreed to some extent that they **will make use of the services/resources that they have been made aware of** during this session, that they **feel inspired to participate and get involved in activities they have been made aware of**, and that this session **developed their ability to be more successful in their studies** at the UFS.
- In line with the overall trend, a **somewhat higher proportion of students in the Faculty of Education** than in the other faculties agreed to some extent that this Gateway session was relevant to **prepare them for their studies at the UFS (90%)** and **stayed focused and relevant to the topic** of the session (90%).
- Although session engagement was rated favourably across faculties, a slightly **lower proportion of students in the Faculties of Economic and Management Sciences and Natural and Agricultural Sciences** (slightly less than 80%) than students in other faculties agreed to some extent that their **questions were satisfactorily answered** during this Gateway session, and that this session was **interactive and interesting**.
- In contrast to the overall trend, compared to students in the other faculties a somewhat **lower proportion of students in the Faculty of Education (49%)** and a somewhat **higher proportion of students in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences (55%)** engaged with new peers during this Gateway session.
- At least eight out of ten students in all Faculties indicated that this Gateway session **made them feel welcome and assisted with their integration into the university culture**.
- Although all aspects related to session logistics were rated positively across faculties, students were especially positive about the Gateway staff members, with **more than 85% of students in each Faculty indicating that the staff members were present, friendly and helpful during this Gateway session**.
- Once again in line with the overall trend, compared to students in the other faculties, a somewhat higher proportion of students in the **Faculties of Education (89%) and Humanities (87%)** were satisfied to some extent with the developmental impact of this Gateway session.
- Students across all faculties were positive about the venue for this Gateway session, with more than **85% of students in each faculty indicating that they were satisfied to some extent with the venue**.
- Although the differences between on- and off-campus students were slight, **off-campus students were more positive than on-campus students about all aspects related to this Gateway session**, except for a slightly higher proportion of on-campus than off-campus students agreeing to some extent that they were **informed in time about this Gateway session in order to attend**.

Independent observers at the Service Learning Two sessions rated the session on a scale from 1 to 3 (where 1 is most positive and 3 is least positive). The following aspects were rated (i) the introduction to the session, (ii) the described purposes of the session, (iii) the presenters knowledge of the content, (iv) the flexibility of the presenter, (v) the presenter's communication skills and assertiveness, (vi) the relevance of the content, as well as whether it was presented in a focussed and logical manner, (vi) whether the session was presented creatively and innovatively, and (vii) how the students responded and engaged during the session. The ratings from the observers are summarised below. Comments provided by the observers are included to elucidate the quantitative ratings.

Elements rated	Average rating (1-3)	Comments
Introduction	1.2	Presenter was very late for one of the sessions
Purpose of session explained	1.5	
Presenter knowledge of content	1.5	
Presenter initiative and flexibility	1.5	Presenter adapted presentation to each session and the context
Presenter communications skills	1.6	
Presenter assertiveness	2.3	
Content relevance	1.7	The relevance of the content is explained to the students
Presenter dynamic & innovative	1.7	Creative and effective use of media
Content focused & logical	1.3	Some of the content was a repetition from session one
Response from students	1.7	
Engagement of students	1.2	Student chanting was noted as disruptive

# QUALITATIVE FEEDBACK



Qualitative feedback to supplement the quantitative data from the students was obtained from several sources. These included:

- Open ended questions on the evaluation surveys,
- Focus groups in each Faculty,
- Feedback from Gateway buddies about their stations and experiences,
- Notes from planning meetings with Gateway Buddies
- Feedback from off-campus students in the off-campus inclusivity study.

## What worked or did not work in Gateway 2018?

Qualitative feedback from the above noted sources was collated and thematically analysed to identify elements of Gateway 2018 that worked well and aspects in need of improvement.

### Gateway Buddy System

**Gateway Buddies were generally well trained and equipped to fulfil their roles:** Several buddies mentioned that the training which they were provided was useful and equipped them to be effective in their role during the Gateway programme. Some Buddies even noted that they learnt about resources available on campus that they were not aware of before their participation. An evaluation of the training by the library staff (completed by 196 trainees) confirmed the quality of the training provided to the Gateway Buddies. More than 80% of the trainees agreed (to some extent) that the trainer was well prepared for the session and showed significant knowledge of the contents presented. Seven out of 10 trainees agreed that their questions were answered during the session and that they were encouraged to participate actively in the training. As many as nine out of 10 trainees found the training valuable and relevant, and close to 90% rated the training materials positively.

**Gateway Buddies were mostly successful in providing support to off-campus first year students.** In the off-campus inclusivity study several students identified the Gateway Buddies as one of the success factors in Gateway 2018. They were seen as highly valuable in their role in helping students navigate the campus in the first days and also valued as mentors within the Whatsapp groups. Only a handful of students had negative experiences with the Gateway Buddies, for example that the Buddies gave them incorrect information or that they were not available to assist students.

**Being a Gateway Buddy is a developmental opportunity.** Some of the Buddies noted ways that being involved in the programme had helped them to develop and grow. Specifically, they mentioned that their interpersonal and communication skills had improved, as well as their leadership ability. The Gateway Buddies spoke of the teamwork and camaraderie amongst themselves and considered this a positive and successful element of the programme. Several mentioned the positive relationships between them which had been built during the Gateway programme.

### Improved participation of off-campus students

Several Gateway Buddies perceived that **the Buddy system was a key success factor in helping to communicate information about Gateway to off-campus students** (through the Whatsapp groups) and that this had positively influenced off-campus students to participate in the programme. Comparison of the participation data from Gateway 2017 with the participation data from Gateway 2018 confirms that the proportion of off-campus students participating has increased significantly. In 2017 74% of participants were living on-campus, whilst in 2018 this proportion decreased to 53%. Although off-campus students constitute close to 80% of the first-year student population and they are thus still proportionally underrepresented in Gateway this is a significant shift in the profile of participants.

**Regardless of these improvements there is still a need to improve ways of communicating with off-campus students,** increase their participation in Gateway and create a sense of community among all students. In their qualitative responses on the Gateway session evaluation forms several students commented on the need to better integrate students not living on campus nor in day residences into the programme. They mentioned the need for better communication with off-campus students to ensure that they are informed of the sessions in time, and the need to ensure that session content is equally relevant to all students regardless of where they reside. They suggested that off-campus students should also have t-shirts that they could wear to sessions, making them feel more included and a part of the bigger community of first-years.

## Creating a sense of community

**The Gateway Buddy system helped to create a sense of community for first-year students.** The ability to help create this sense of community was enabled to a large extent through the creation of the Whatsapp groups where students could engage with the Buddies – asking questions but also receiving important information. Gateway Buddies reported that these personal connections helped students to feel welcomed and integrated into the community creating a sense that they were not just another number. Buddies saw themselves as collaborators in helping new students transition into higher education.

In their qualitative feedback in the off-campus inclusivity study, student feedback from off-campus students confirmed that the Gateway Buddies did indeed play an important role in helping students feel integrated into the UFS community.

## Navigating the UFS campus

**Having Gateway Buddies assigned to a station in “the buddy-chain” around the campus was seen as one of the success factors in Gateway 2018.** The Buddies were highly visible, and it was easy to direct people to where they needed to go. These easily identifiable points of reference are useful to help reduce anxieties when students arrive on campus and need help navigating the physical environment. Both the Gateway Buddies and students confirmed that this was one of the successful elements of Gateway 2018.

The Gateway Buddies also mentioned that the campus and library tours were important in helping orientate students to campus and considered this element of the programme successful. In the qualitative feedback in the off-campus inclusivity study the most frequently mentioned response to “what worked in Gateway 2018” was the campus tours.

## Logistics

In their qualitative responses on the Gateway session evaluation forms many students commented on various logistical elements of the Gateway programme.

**Timing of sessions:** A number of students suggested that the sessions should not be scheduled to start at 08h00, but rather at 09h00 or even 10h00. Several of these students noted that they were very tired (some due to residence activities the night before). Other students noted that they were very tired in sessions after lunch or later in the day. A handful of students mentioned that they were unable to attend or were late for sessions as they needed to register.

**Length of sessions:** One of the most frequent feedback points from students was that the sessions needed to be shorter in duration.

**Time management of sessions:** Some students were dissatisfied that not all sessions started on time, and that no immediate contingency plan was in place when a speaker was not ready on time.

**Quality of audio and visuals in sessions:** A limited number of students commented on the poor quality of sound in their sessions, specifically mentioning that the sound of the computer connecting and disconnecting needs to be fixed. Technical difficulties were also mentioned by some of the independent observers in the sessions.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

Late in 2016, the Student Affairs Division finalised its Strategic Plan for the period 2017-2022. This strategy seeks to reimagine the role, aims and objectives of Student Affairs at the Institution. The strategy envisages Student Affairs' contribution at the UFS to be, firstly, through the co-curricular programmes and activities (Academic Project). Secondly, it will add value through two pedagogies (i.e. humanising pedagogy and the pedagogy of discomfort). These pedagogies will advance the aspirations of the Human Project. Lastly, it will contribute through the intersectionality framework. The intersectionality framework recognises the intersectionality of lived experiences. Because people do not live single lives, we cannot use single strategies to address multiple issues. Four KSA's in the strategic plan are specifically relevant to Gateway.

First, KSA#2 – High Impact Practices which has four goals (each with several objectives)

- **Establish outcome-based co-curricular programmes**, and constructively align all co-curricular programmes and activities with developmental outcomes.
- **Enhance access and participation**, including capturing student participation in co-curriculum programme to provide E-portfolio for student upon graduation.
- Enhance quality through **monitoring and evaluation**.
- Establish a **system that is responsive to the environment** that is driven by a code of ethics and a values-driven culture.

Second, the objective to advocate for an inclusive institutional culture in KSA#3 through the promotion of social justice, human rights and humanising lived experience. Third, KSA#4 which focuses on intersectionality, including intersecting with other programmes and departments on campus. Finally, KSA#5 Transformation: Social Justice-Social Cohesion-Critical Diversity including to create co-curricular programmes that critically address themes such as social justice, critical diversity, transformation, citizenship, human rights, democracy, intersectionality, pedagogy of discomfort, humanising pedagogy and social cohesion.

In line with the strategy, the following principles have been set for informing the design and delivery of Gateway.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Prioritising Registration.                        | 7. Partnerships and Collaborations.                    |
| 2. No Gateway events in the evenings (SAFETY).       | 8. Faculty-based peer mentoring.                       |
| 3. Faculty Focus.                                    | 9. Alignments with community- one system (3 campuses). |
| 4. Entire student experience (Per Year-2019).        | 10. Fun and Engagement.                                |
| 5. Incorporation of off campus students- SITES.      | 11. Outcome based.                                     |
| 6. Data driven practice (monitoring and evaluation). | 12. Leadership development.                            |

In line with the principle of data drive practice, qualitative feedback was collated and thematically analysed to identify suggestions and recommendations as to how the Gateway Programme can be even further strengthened moving forward.

## Gateway Buddies

A limited number of suggestions emerged in the qualitative data on improving the Gateway Buddy System. These are summarised below:

- **Clarification of roles:** It is important to provide clarity on the roles of the P3Mentors and the Gateway Buddies, as well ensuring that all Buddies and P3Mentors know what their roles and responsibilities are.
- **Training:** It was suggested that a longer training period, with shorter hours per day of training be considered. It was also noted that the current period for the Gateway Buddy training was a challenge for students in the Faculty



of Education as they are doing their practical at this time. A limited number of requests to conduct Gateway Buddy training earlier were noted (even as early as the end of the prior year).

- **Buddy stations:** The station positions should be carefully thought through to ensure that they are optimally positioned. The number of Buddies positioned at a station should be based on the estimated “traffic” expected, with more Buddies allocated to busy locations.
- **Visibility:** The Gateway Buddy t-shirts should clearly indicate which Faculty they are part of (written out as many students do not know their symbols) and they should also clearly state “Gateway Buddy”.
- **Logistics:** Given the costs of transport it would be appreciated if accommodation could be offered to the Gateway Buddies during the programme.

From 2019 the Gateway Buddies will not be remunerated financially. Feedback from the 2018 Buddies was obtained to determine what incentives could be provided to motivate Gateway Buddies to participate regardless of this change. The following suggestions were provided:

- Recognition of Gateway Buddies as a leadership position at the UFS;
- Sponsorships or vouchers from local vendors and stores (for example Van Schaicks);
- Job references;
- Certificates of participation or for completion of Gateway Buddy training;
- Free tickets to the KopsieACT concert;
- Food during Gateway;
- Accommodation and/or transport costs covered during Gateway;
- Opportunity to purchase the t-shirt at a lower cost;
- Data vouchers to cover costs of communicating with the mentees in their groups;
- Team building events;
- Connection to or collaboration with SRC (EC) or other student affairs portfolios.

Ideas were also sought from the Gateway Buddies as to what type of reward system could be implemented. The reward system would take the form of a limited number of special awards for outstanding Buddies. In their feedback Gateway Buddies indicated that the following categories could be considered for award:

- Gateway Buddy that embodied a team spirit in terms of accountability and availability,
- Most diligent Buddy in terms of their willingness and dedication in performing assigned tasks,
- Most Loyal Buddy,
- Best all-rounder Buddy,
- Buddy demonstrating outstanding leadership,
- Most present,
- Most competent,
- Most creative,
- Going the Extra Mile Buddy, and
- Academic Excellence.

## Increasing participation in Gateway activities

Gateway Buddies were asked to make suggestions as to how they believed the overall participation in Gateway could be improved; their suggestions focussed on better marketing and providing incentives.

It was suggested that Gateway should be marketed in the prospectus, and that a personalised mobile phone marketing campaign should be undertaken. From their qualitative feedback, it was clear that different students have different preferences for and access to different forms of communication. Some students expressed a clear preference for email communication, whilst others noted that they had no internet access of campus and thus preferred communication via



SMS. A diversified marketing strategy (that uses multiple platforms) should be undertaken. It is critical to ensure that information communicated on the different platforms should be consistent so that all students are able to access the necessary information.

Incentives that were mentioned to increase participation were (i) giving students who attend all sessions a certificate of participation, (ii) providing refreshments (such as juice or apples), (iii) giving students physical items (such as a student card holder, stationery or bag), and (iv) finding a way to link Gateway attendance to UFS101 assessment and attendance criteria. By far the most frequent suggestion from students in the qualitative feedback on the session evaluation forms was for water and/or food to be provided in the sessions. Providing refreshments (perhaps even only water) would be highly appreciated by students and could serve as a form of incentive to attend sessions.

Linking a specific incentive to a specific session, e.g. attend the financial planning session and receive your Gateway Lanyard, brings an element of gamification to the incentive structure - attend four sessions and collect four incentives. A bonus incentive could be considered for students who attend all four sessions, for example a R50 voucher at the student centre. Once a co-curricular e-portfolio has been established, including Gateway participation in the portfolio will serve as an additional incentive for participation.

Several suggestions were made as to how the participation of off-campus students could be further improved. Feedback provided suggests that some elements of Gateway's design are still targeted at students who are living on-campus and that these aspects may deter off-campus students from participating. Specifically, it was noted that using the College format to structure Gateway limited the engagement of off-campus students. Although students not living in residences can join a day residence (which are included in the college activities), the costs associated with joining the day residences may be a deterrent for students. Finding ways to increase access and participation in sports activities and KovsieACT for students not associated with a day residence should receive attention. It was suggested that t-shirts for off-campus students should be made to help create a sense of belonging and that more information about day residences could be given to students during Gateway to encourage them to get involved. Holding all sessions that students should attend on a single day (or two days) would decrease the number of times that students have to incur costs travelling to campus for Gateway, possibly improving participation for off-campus students.

Ways to increase participation in the KovsieACT concert were also explored, and it was suggested that specific ways to increase off-campus student participation should be focussed on. Some ideas for new or improved activities at the event were provided, for example a fashion Parade of recycled materials, a colour run or making banners rather than floats. It was also suggested that the tag system should be removed and student cards should be used for access.

For wide-ranging reasons, it is probable that some students will not chose to or be able to attend Gateway. Suggestions on how to engage these students to ensure that they benefit from Gateway content was explored in some of the focus groups. Not many suggestions were provided, but the possibility of a second semester Gateway was mentioned. Another suggestion was to repeat the sessions once the Semester had started.

## Ensuring that Gateway is fun, engaging and relevant

In their qualitative responses on the Gateway session evaluation forms many students commented on the need to make sessions lively and exciting. Suggestions on how to do so included opportunities for students to interact with each other in the sessions, more question and answer time in the sessions and more/improved use of audio and visual aids in the sessions. Presenters should be encouraged not to simply read from their slides, but to engage with the audience during their presentations.

Ways to get students to interact with new peers (outside of their residence) should be identified. Quantitative data in this report has confirmed that although students feel as sense of integration and community through the sessions, their

opportunities to engage with new peers are limited. One student (in their qualitative feedback) suggested that residences should be encouraged/required not to sit together to enable more interaction.

In their focus groups, Gateway Buddies were asked to identify ways that the Gateway Programme (outside of the sessions) could be made more fun. They provided the list below:

- Hold a scavenger hunt (incorporated into the campus tour) or an amazing race around campus,
- Athletics events or swimming gala,
- Include a Bloemfontein tour,
- Have a games session (including Diketo, Karaoke or Skop die Bal) to help students get to know each other.

## Ensuring the smooth and cost-efficient implementation of Gateway

A few suggestions were provided as to how Gateway could be improved from a logistical perspective.

1. A simplified map and Gateway programme would make it easier for student to engage,
2. More direction boards on campus when students arrive in the first days,
3. The development of a Gateway app could help to market the programme, keep students informed of logistical details related to the programme and provide an accurate means to track student participation in Gateway.
4. The need for a Gateway Office on the South Campus was noted as this would decrease the travelling required from first years to the Bloemfontein campus.

Feedback and ideas on how to lower the costs of the Kopsie Diary were solicited in the focus groups. Suggestions provided related to how to improve the diary as well as how to lower the costs. Suggested improvements to the diary were that its contents should (i) include the UFS academic calendar, (ii) keep the building codes (e.g. FGG), and (iii) exclude the SRC and RCs, but include faculty information. Some suggested that the diary should be an electronic document, possibly with QR codes to help students access the electronic information quickly.

## Sponsorship and partnership

Focus groups were asked to identify potential sponsors for Gateway. A limited number of potential sponsors were mentioned – Van Schaick, McDonalds, ABSA, Standard Bank, Spur and Roots Butchery. Other participants mentioned that fundraising activities (such as a bake sale or movie night) should be undertaken to help raise funds. This could also include selling various goods during the Gateway programme to help cover costs.

Similarly, groups were asked to identify which external stakeholders Gateway should seek to build partnerships with. Participants mentioned the Department of Social Development, Pick and Pay, Interstate Transportation, Mr-P Sports (T-shirts) and banks.

## Identify ways of sustaining impact

Although information provision is an important goal of Gateway, presentations are easily forgotten, and students therefore need access to what they learnt throughout the course of the year. Ensuring that students can access the necessary information as needed means that the impact of the programme can be enhanced. Towards this end, the Gateway sessions will be recorded and put on Blackboard after Gateway. The Gateway manual, which should include relevant contact details and key information will also be available on Blackboard.



*The summary provided below is drawn from the QwaQwa Campus Gateway Evaluation Report.*

## Overview of programme

The Gateway programme on QwaQwa campus was divided into two sessions. The Faculties presentation session including Academic Advising and the Support Staff presentation session were conducted during the day and the evening programmes included the Step-Up-for Success, Amazing Race, SRC Activities, Residence Life Activities and Campus Protection (Safety & Security) services sessions.

The Student Development was solely responsible for coordinating the whole Gateway Orientation programme activities. More than 600 prospective 1<sup>st</sup> year prospective students attended the Gateway Orientation Programme and majority of them resided on campus.

## Student feedback on sessions

The majority of students provided positive feedback on various aspects of the Gateway programme on the campus.

The majority of the students (60%) indicated that they learnt more about the information needed to make a successful transition into the university, and a similar proportion indicated that they were confident about making the transition after Gateway. Furthermore, the majority (70%) indicated that partaking during the programme helped them to feel part of the UFS campus life.

Students were also positive about the presentations, with six out of 10 indicating that the presentations were productive and informative and that the presenters were well prepared. Most students (70%) would recommend the programme to other first year students.

Students indicated that the Amazing Race activity was exciting and gave them the opportunity to get to know various buildings around the campus and helped them to relate to each other. The students indicated that Step-up-for-Success preparation process gave them an opportunity to express their creativity. They enjoyed working in a group with different people and learnt more about individual's weaknesses and strengths.

## Challenges experienced

Staff implementing the programme on QwaQwa campus provided a summary of the challenges experience in 2018.

### 1. Programme challenges

**Amazing Race:** There is a need to buy teambuilding materials for the Amazing Race that can be utilized every year.

**Step-up-for-success:** At the last-minute staff responsible for the Step-up-for-Success were not able to participate in the activity. Since this happened for the second year in a row it was decided that next year the staff at Student Development and the Gateway mentors would take responsibility for this.

### 2. Gateway Orientation Budget

The budget was not allocated not in advance and the responsible staff member had to use their budget to meet all the Gateway Orientation costs. An entity reimbursement was done after the programme.

### **3. Gateway Orientation Manual**

The online manual was a challenge for students to access.

### **4. Maluti-A-Phofung Municipality Strike**

The strike nearly disrupted the whole Gateway Orientation programme and the campus was understaffed as not all employees were present as a result of safety concerns. It was also not clear what was expected from students attending Gateway (whether they should stay on campus or not). Improved mechanisms for communication in such situations are needed.

### **5. Logistical challenges**

T-Shirts for all 1st years for the official opening of the University as part of the Gateway finale came on the day of the event and the process of issuing the t-shirts impacted negatively on some of the other planned activities for the day.

## **Recommendations for Gateway on QwaQwa campus**

The QwaQwa Gateway Orientation Programme should be divided into two blocks. The first block during the registration process and the second after registration for students who successfully enrolled.

Academic Advising should be done continuously during and after registration to provide the 1<sup>st</sup> years with academic support as they begin their academic journeys.

All Gateway mentors must receive internal in-depth structured training beforehand and there should be a compulsory boot-camp that must be attended by selected mentors before the end of the year for preparation purposes.

The following logistical adjustments will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme:

- Gateway Orientation Budget allocation be done in advance on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January each year. All activities such as Amazing Race, Step-Up for Success, T-Shirts for Official Welcoming of 1<sup>st</sup> years should be budgeted for in advance.
- Gateway Manual should be available and delivered as hard copies before the beginning of the Gateway Orientation Programme and the website should only be used as an alternative.