

# UFS101

**2015 – 2017 EVALUATION REPORT**

**CENTRE FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING | UFS101  
UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE**

**LL Oosthuizen and HMVE Combrink**

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# Introduction

UFS101 was piloted in 2011 (with 200 students) on the Bloemfontein campus, and a full roll-out of the programme was implemented in 2012 (with 2000) students, on the Bloemfontein campus. The module was piloted on the QwaQwa campus (with 150 students) in 2013 and a full roll-out ensued in 2014 (with 400 students). Since 2012, UFS101 has been in a constant state of evolution in order to meet the needs of the students and to improve their experience of the module.

The programme was presented as a core curriculum module or big questions course in 2012 – 2014, similar to programmes of the same nature presented at Stanford University, the London School of Economics and the Chinese University of Hong Kong. In 2014, with 5080 students across three campuses (the Kimberley campus was included that year), the mode of delivery went through a major overhaul, moving from blended learning to a flipped classroom approach.

In 2015, with 5800 students between the Bloemfontein and QwaQwa campus, the module was re-curriculated, with the focus shifting from a core curriculum module to also include academic success skills. The module was then aligned with the aims of a first-year seminar. This change in the curriculum followed conference presentations at the Annual First Year Experience Conference in the US, as well as the annual module evaluations conducted from 2011-2014. The aim of the first semester was to teach the students academic success skills, and then teach them how to look at problems from multi-disciplinary perspectives in the second semester.

In 2016 and 2017, the content in the second semester was further refined to include case studies and examples that were relevant to students so that they were able to better engage with the content. Also, there was a shift in 2017 to include more African sources in the content, and the History unit was the first unit to move completely in the direction of a decolonised curriculum.

The purpose of this report is to highlight student experiences of the module from 2015 to 2017, in order to provide their perspectives on the attainment of module outcomes, what they learned for the first time in UFS101, what they applied in the rest of their courses, and the value of the module for them. Recommendations will be made for 2018, both in terms of curriculum design, as well as alignment with the institutional integrated transformation plan.

The researchers have opted for a condensed report to highlight the most salient information – additional information can be provided upon request.

# Research methodology

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## First semester & second semester 2015

The purpose of the 2015 evaluations were to assess what students found most and least valuable in the module. Additionally, the challenges students were faced with, as well as how UFS101 addressed those challenges, were measured.

### Sample size

First semester  
BFN (n = 3612)  
QQ (n = 672)

Second semester  
BFN (n = 919)  
QQ (n = 212)

The first semester questionnaire were quantitative and based around measuring the skills students acquired and what students learned for the first time in UFS101. The second semester questionnaire contained both quantitative and qualitative questions to gain deeper insight into the student experience, and the challenges students experienced within their first six months of university. Each Teaching Assistant had to collect a minimum of 70 questionnaires and capture the data.

#### What worked?

- Large sample size in the first semester.
- Quantitative data were easy to interpret.

#### Challenges:

- Time spent capturing data.
- Time spent validating the captured data.
- Due to student protests, the sample size was compromised in the second semester.

## First semester & second semester 2016

The purpose of the 2016 evaluations was to assess the most transferrable skills students say they learned in the module, as well as critically assess the content presented within the second semester. This was to determine both the pitch and relevance of content to students. The open ended questions focused on gaining perspective from students over what specifically helped them to be successful in their first year.

### Sample size

First semester  
BFN (n = 2321)  
QQ (n = 938)

Second semester  
BFN (n = 1976)  
QQ (n = 233)

The questionnaires for both semesters were mixed method. The quantitative items used in 2016 were developed based on the responses of the 2015 open ended questions. The main reason for this was to delve into the data to pinpoint key areas within the module that assist a students transition into university and assist students in the broadening of their perspectives.

Students completed the questionnaires online. The completion of the questionnaires was incentivized by providing a bonus attendance to students who completed them.

#### What worked?

- Data captured live, as respondents completed the questionnaire.
- No additional data validation was required.

#### Challenges

- Students who did not have access to electronic platforms off campus did not complete the questionnaires.
- Due to protests on the QQ campus, the sample size was affected in the second semester.

## First semester 2017

After analysing data from 2015 and 2016, it became apparent that the questionnaire data alone was insufficient to answer research questions related to the needs of the students, and how UFS101 addresses those needs. The open ended items from the questionnaires that ran in 2015 and 2016 formed the basis of the questions asked in the semi-structured focus groups that were conducted during both semesters in 2017.

### Sample size of focus groups (total)

BFN (n = 84)

QQ (n = 42)

Students were asked how they were applying the skills they learned in UFS101 in their courses, as well as how UFS101 assisted their transition into university. They were also asked about how the content presented in the second semester, with the focus on solving problems from multi-disciplinary perspectives, had broadened their perspectives. The semi-structured nature of the focus groups allowed for a deeper understanding of the needs students present with in the first year, as well as how UFS101 could address those needs.

#### What worked?

- Deeper insight into the quantitative data previously evaluated could be provided.
- Additional information that was not previously measured arose during the focus groups, which gave insight into matters important to student success.

#### Challenges:

- Time spent on transcribing
- Time spent validating the captured data

## Second semester 2017

Based on the responses from the first semester focus groups, as well as the data from the 2015 and 2016 questionnaires, four unit specific questionnaire were constructed for the second semester of 2017. These questionnaires were designed to measure the content, what students found most and least useful, where students might apply the content, and what the value of the content was to students. The questionnaires were distributed online, and students were awarded a bonus attendance if they completed all four questionnaires. The questionnaires were designed to be completed on a mobile device, and no larger than 100kb.

### Sample size of questionnaires

#### Unit 1

BFN (n = 3243)

QQ (n = 946)

#### Unit 2

BFN (n = 2030)

QQ (n = 806)

#### Unit 3

BFN (n = 1797)

QQ (n = 568)

#### Unit 4

BFN (n = 1194)

QQ (n = 321)

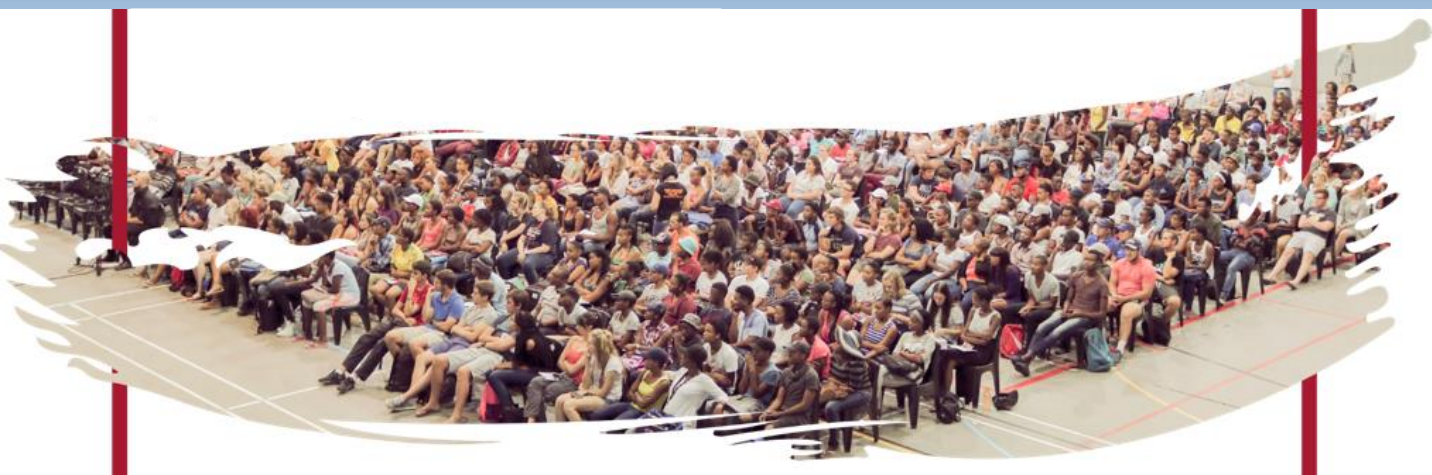
#### What worked?

- Data was captured live, which meant the presenters of the units could receive student feedback relatively soon after presenting the content.

#### Challenge:

- As the semester progressed, the response rate decreased for each evaluation.

# **ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN UFS101 2015-2017**



# Academic performance

In order to successfully complete UFS101, students should attend 70% of their classes and achieve an average of 50% for assessment.

The assessment design in UFS101 is continuous – in line with the flipped classroom approach, students prepare for class and complete quizzes on Blackboard to grade their preparation before class. After class, they complete written assessments – in 2015 and 2016 there was one written assessment per semester that students could work on throughout the semester. In 2017, there was one assessment per unit. Students were required to complete the written assessments online – this was particularly useful during the student disruptions in 2015 and 2016. The UFS101 Teaching Assistants facilitate small class discussions and they also mark the written assessments. Extensive training, as well as a detailed rubric, is provided to ensure standardisation in the marking. The assessments are also moderated for further standardisation.

From 2012-2016, biometric scanners were used to capture attendance. In 2017, barcode scanners were used instead, to scan student cards. The access to the campuses became more strict as a result of the protests, which meant students could not access the campuses without their student card. Thus the cards could be used for attendance capturing – this system has been more accurate than the biometric scanners, and considerably more cost effective.

The following three pages highlight the success rate for UFS101 in 2015 - 2017.

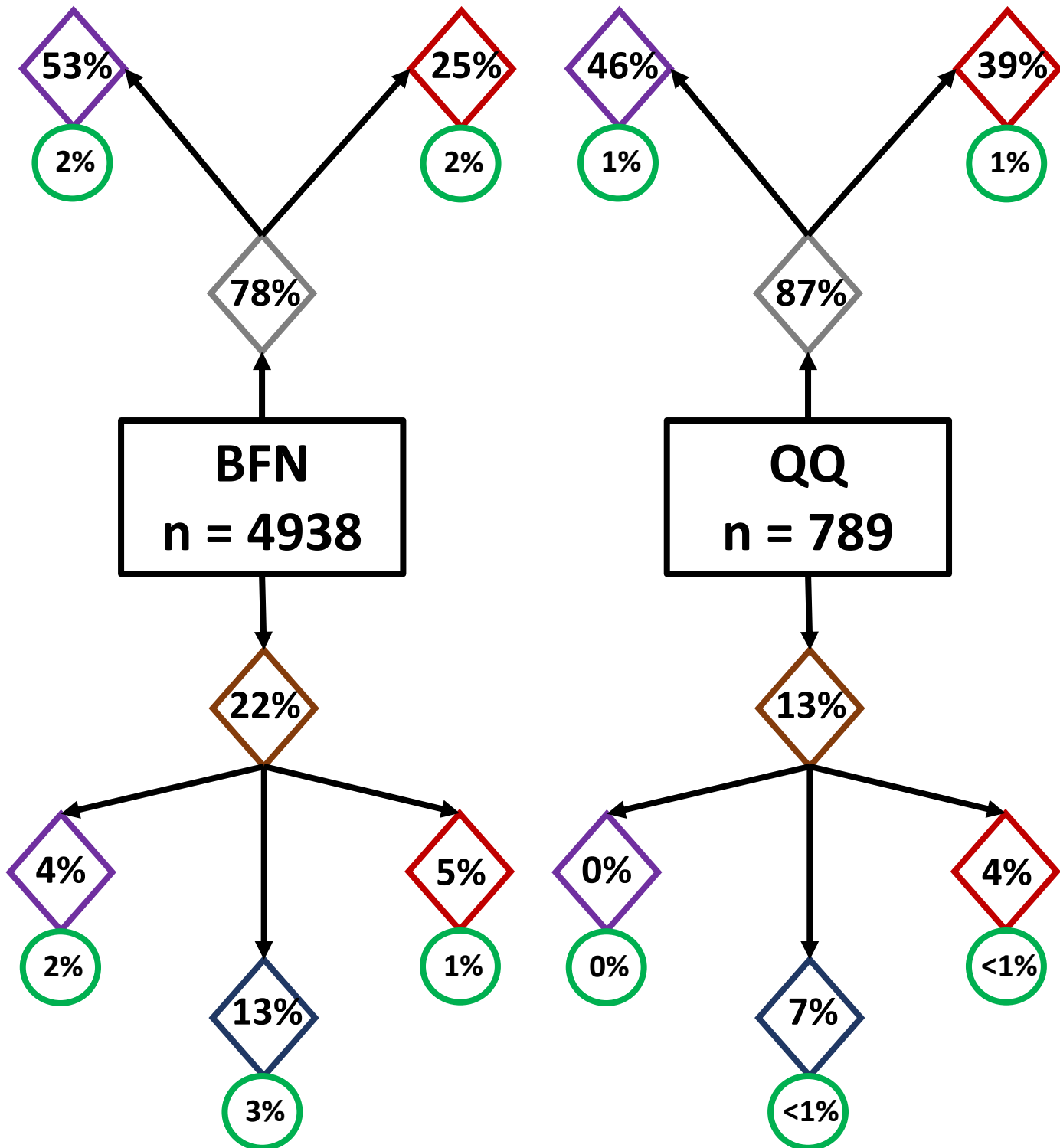


# Success rate 2015

8

- Passed UFS101 with a distinction (>75%)
- Passed UFS101 (50%-74%)
- Overall pass for 2015
- Repeaters of the module

All of the indicated percentages are a percentage of the total n (BFN = 4938; QQ = 789)



- Failed on attendance (<70%)
- Failed on assessment (<50%)
- Failed on both attendance AND assessment
- Overall fail for 2015
- Repeaters of the module

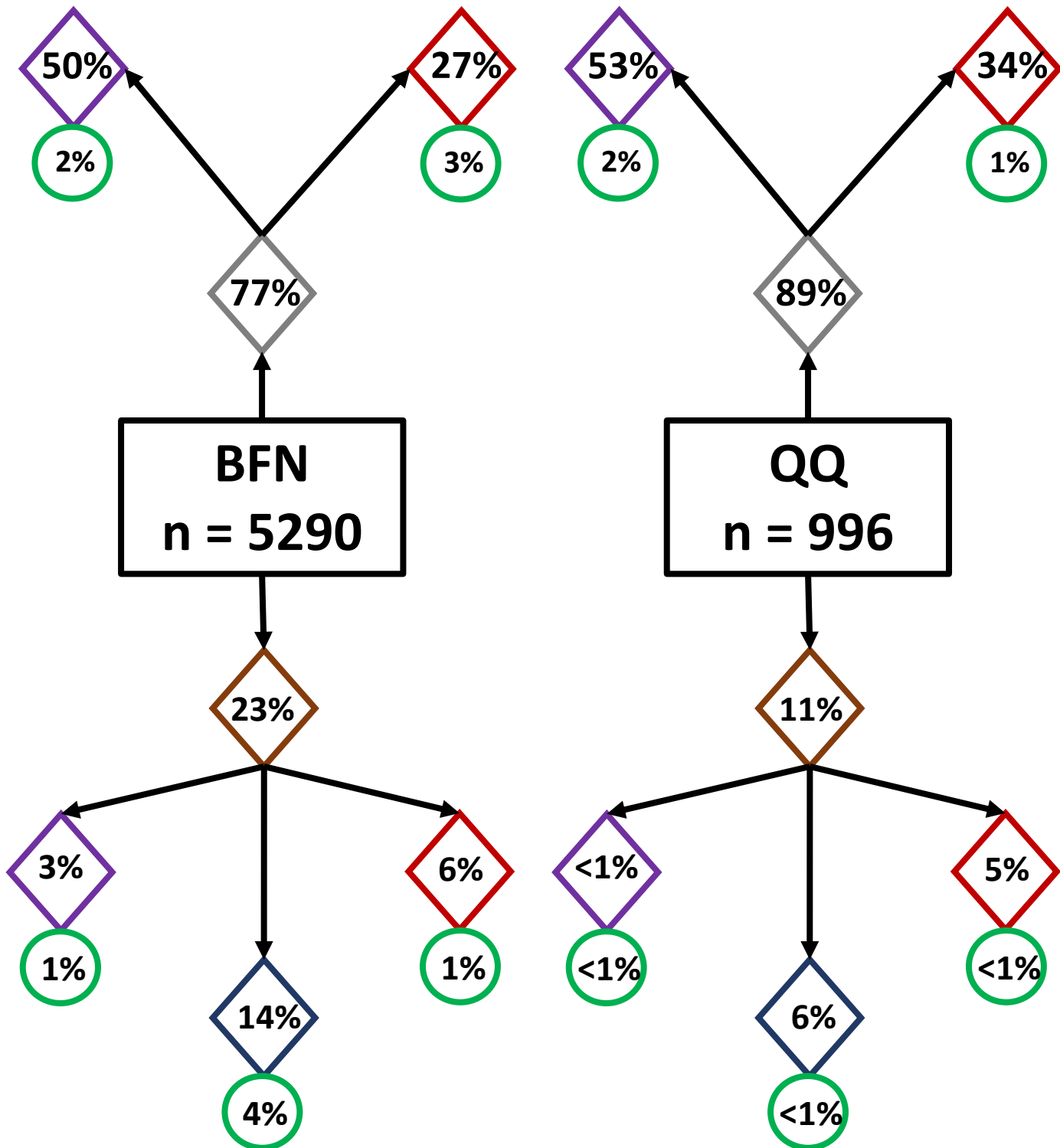


# Success rate 2016

9

- Passed UFS101 with a distinction (>75%)
- Passed UFS101 (50%-74%)
- Overall pass for 2016
- Repeaters of the module

All of the indicated percentages are a percentage of the total n (BFN = 5290; QQ = 996)



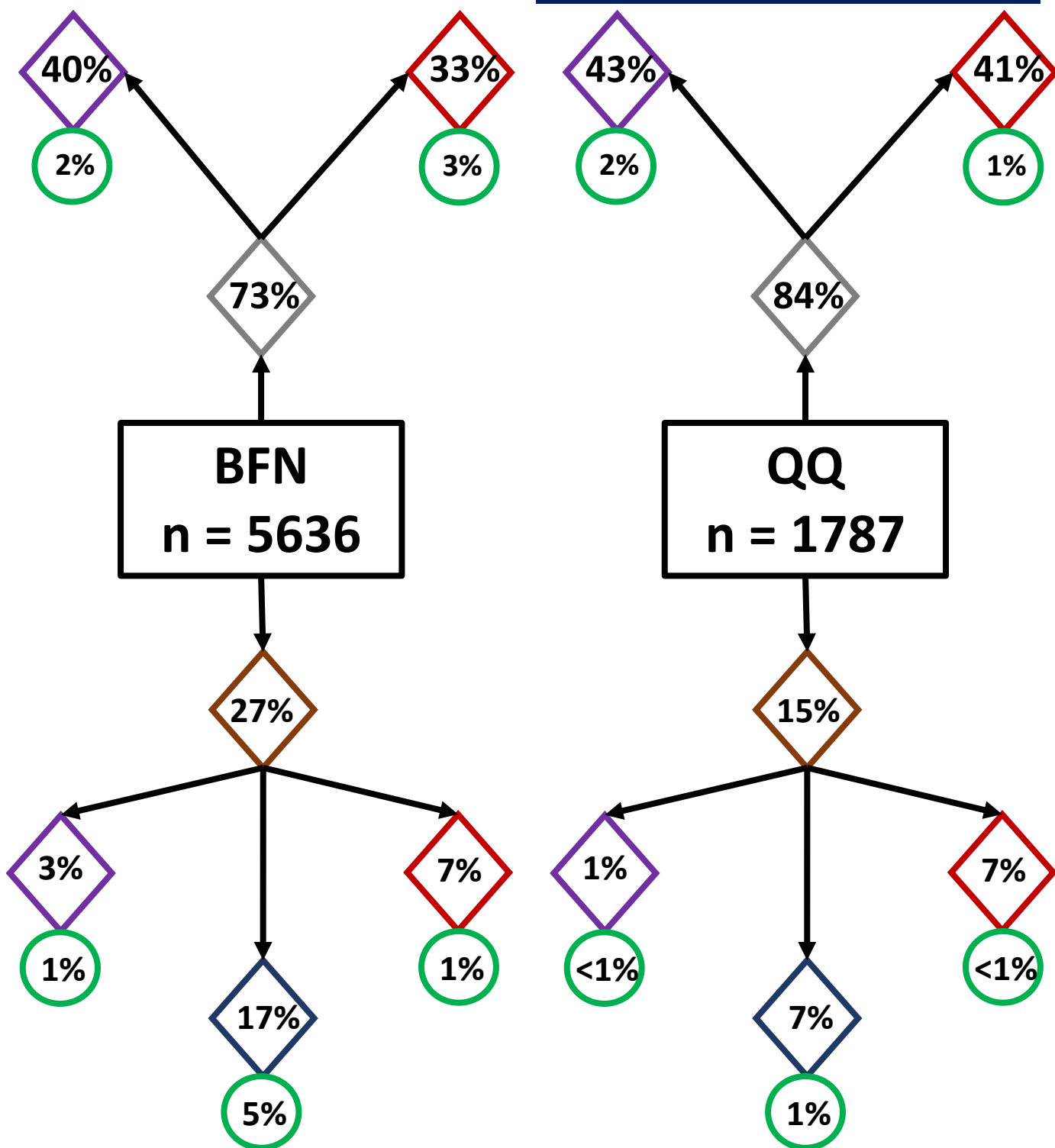
- Failed on attendance (<70%)
- Failed on assessment (<50%)
- Failed on both attendance AND assessment
- Overall fail for 2016
- Repeaters of the module

# Success rate 2017

10

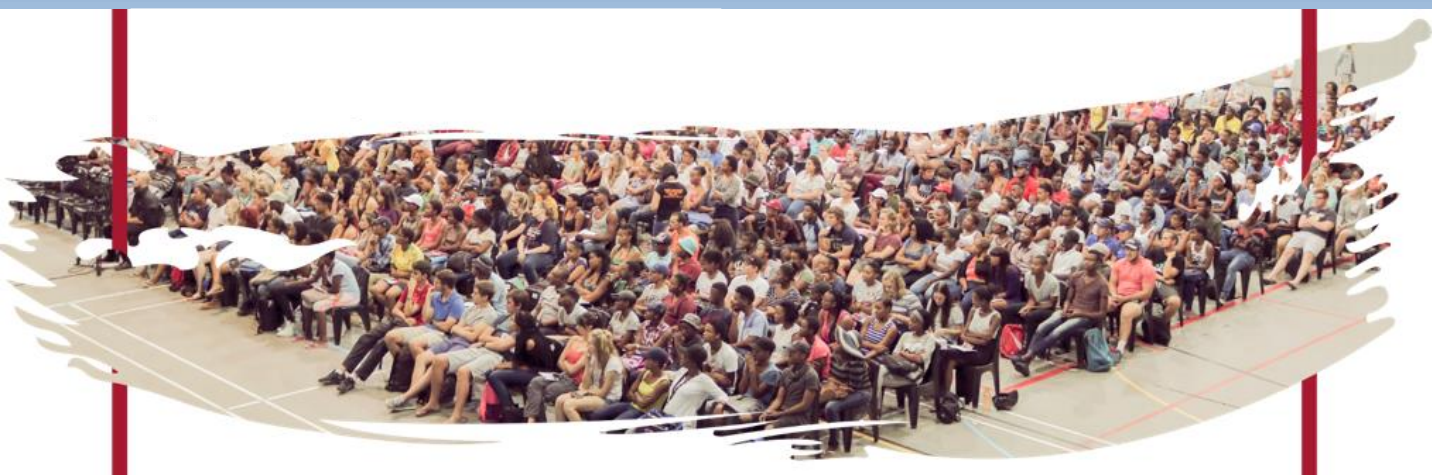
- Passed UFS101 with a distinction (>75%)
- Passed UFS101 (50%-74%)
- Overall pass for 2017
- Repeaters of the module

All of the indicated percentages are a percentage of the total n (BFN = 5636; QQ = 1787)



- Failed on attendance (<70%)
- Failed on assessment (<50%)
- Failed on both attendance AND assessment
- Overall fail for 2017
- Repeaters of the module

# FIRST SEMESTER 2015 – 2017 STUDENT EXPERIENCE



# First semester content overview

## 2015-2017

The aim in the first semester was to enable students to function in an environment that requires computer literacy, articulate to students the benefits of a higher education, and enhance students' critical thinking skills. These skills were addressed through three units.

The outcomes and content for the first semester remained the same for 2015-2017. There were, however, changes in delivery, in order to ensure the skills were transferable, as well as improvements in the online design of the content.

### Module outcomes

After successful completion of this semester, you should be able to:

- Demonstrate practical knowledge in the use of technological resources at a university;
- Apply their knowledge of self, goal setting and the undergraduate experience to actual situations; and
- Demonstrate academic reading, creative thinking, decision-making and memory skills.

### Unit 1 learning outcomes

After successful completion of this unit, you should be able to:

- navigate the intranet;
- navigate Blackboard;
- navigate a UFS101 eGuide;
- create a Word document;
- create a PowerPoint; and
- search for and reference academic resources.

### Unit 2 learning outcomes

After successful completion of this unit, you should be able to:

- analyse your priorities;
- demonstrate a basic understanding of self;
- describe the characteristics of a successful student;
- set goals related to your undergraduate degree;
- create strategies to achieve goals;
- discuss the undergraduate experience, after a simulation of the undergraduate experience in class; and
- express a basic comprehension of the world of work.

### Unit 3 learning outcomes

After successful completion of this unit, you should be able to:

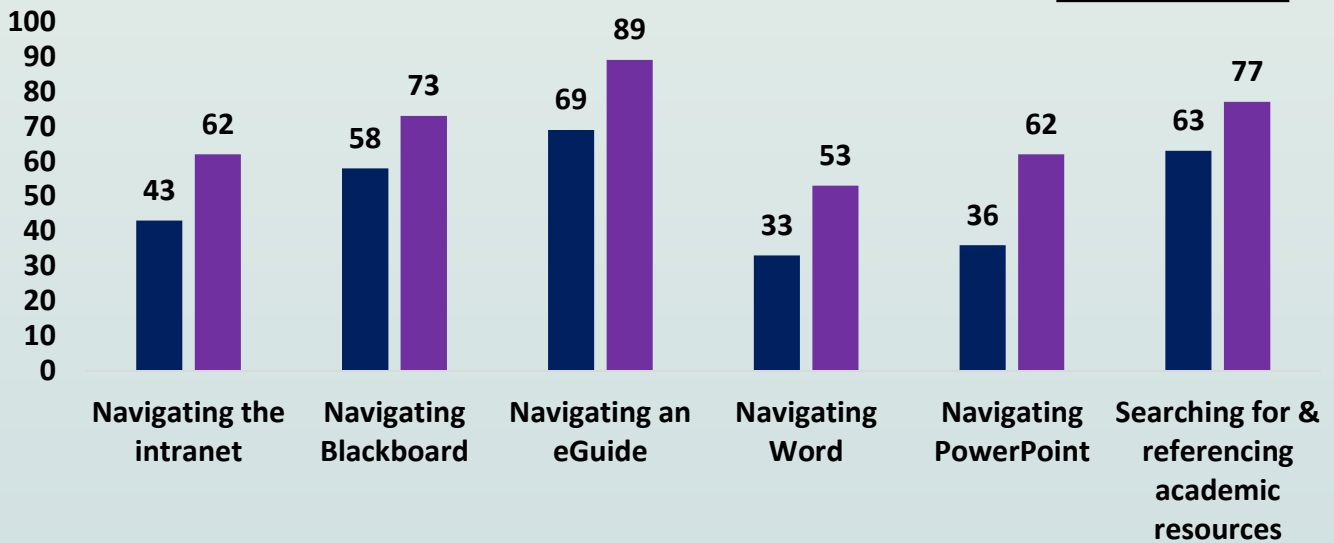
- identify main points in an academic article;
- demonstrate creative thinking by thinking in new ways about problem-solving;
- demonstrate decision-making skills; and
- demonstrate memory skills.

# Acquired and transferable skills from unit 1

## Skills acquired in UFS101 for the first time

BFN (n = 3612)

QQ (n = 673)

2015

## Most transferrable skills from unit 1

BFN (n = 2303)

QQ (n = 938)

2016

### Searching for academic resources



### Navigating Blackboard



# Most important information

## Most important information according to students

(ordered in a nominal group setting)

# 1

Referencing and academic resources

# 2

Navigating Blackboard

# 3

Navigating the UFS101 eGuide

# 4

Microsoft Word and PowerPoint



# 2017



## What students said

**There was a trend observed between students who knew some of the content, but who learned how to apply it for the first time in UFS101**

*"I learnt about the importance of referencing and how to use the different research forms when conducting research instead of just going to google it which isn't helpful and I also learnt about google scholar and different types of research forms."*

*"Is said the basics help like the blackboard. Because if you are not taught how to use blackboard then you are lost. Because everything is on blackboard. So blackboard definitely was the most important one for me."*

**There was a trend observed between students who did not know any of the content, and learned about it for the first time in UFS101**

*"...very important and I think also the eGuides the actually made the whole module easier cause you knew where exactly where to find certain things for MCQs so could do it without having to struggle and you could also like for example pre-preparation you knew what was going to be done when so it was also easy for you , well if you like Planning ahead then it was also very essential that you have the eGuide to know exactly what to expect..."*

*"PowerPoint like I was, I was so confused at PowerPoint in High School, but specifically they show you the basics obviously the basics it helped a lot"*

*"I think certain people may have may need a little extra time on how to use technology.... I literally sat next to somebody form experience. This person didn't know a lot...."*

*"Microsoft was really helpful because I couldn't type, I couldn't do anything So it was really helpful, "*

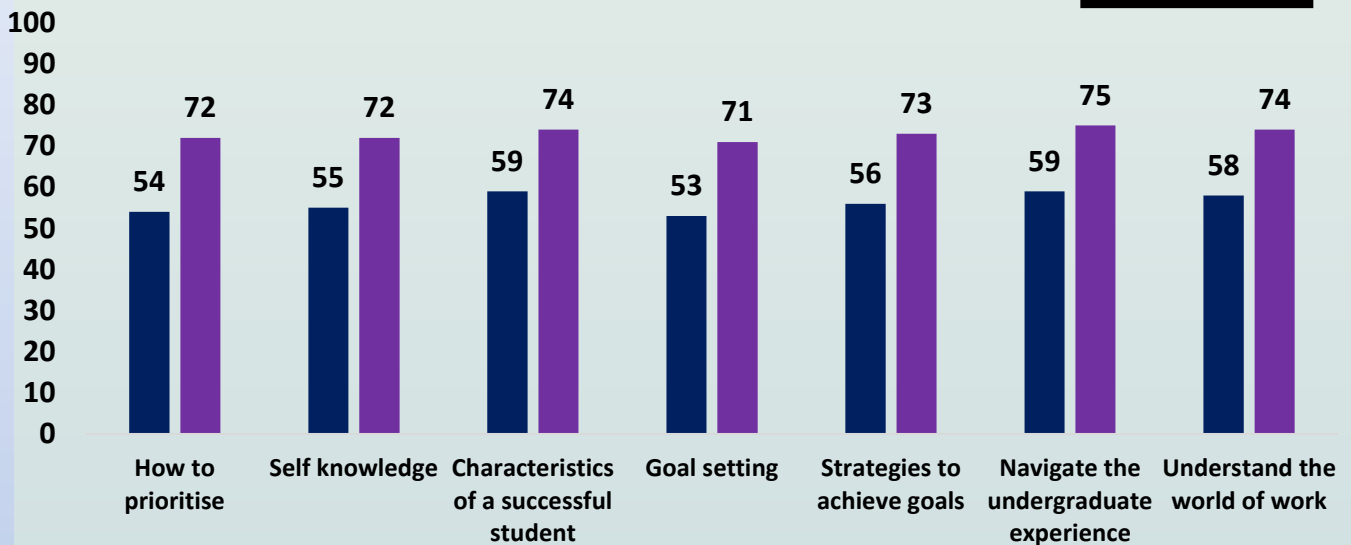
*"...not exposed to technology before so using computers is a new thing and like during that short time people are confused..."*

# Acquired and transferable skills from unit 2

## Skills acquired in UFS101 for the first time

BFN (n = 3612)

QQ (n = 673)

2015

## Most transferrable skills from unit 2

BFN (n = 2303)

QQ (n = 938)

2016

Goal setting



Characteristics of a successful student





# Most important information

## Most important information according to students

(ordered in a nominal group setting)

# 1

Goal setting

# 2

Navigating the undergraduate experience

# 3

Characteristics of a successful student

# 4

Prioritising



# 2017



## What students said

Students acknowledged that the importance of this unit assisted them to transition into university.

*"...because on a first semester they help, UFS help you to set your goals and then to introduce you to the University and know how it operates in University because some of students come to the University with that mindset that they are still learners but then they are students.... so UFS101 helped them to know to set your goals to be prepared not to procrastinate and then its helped them to know that whatever is going on here they are whatever is going on with their module they're responsible for that because now they are students they must do everything..."*

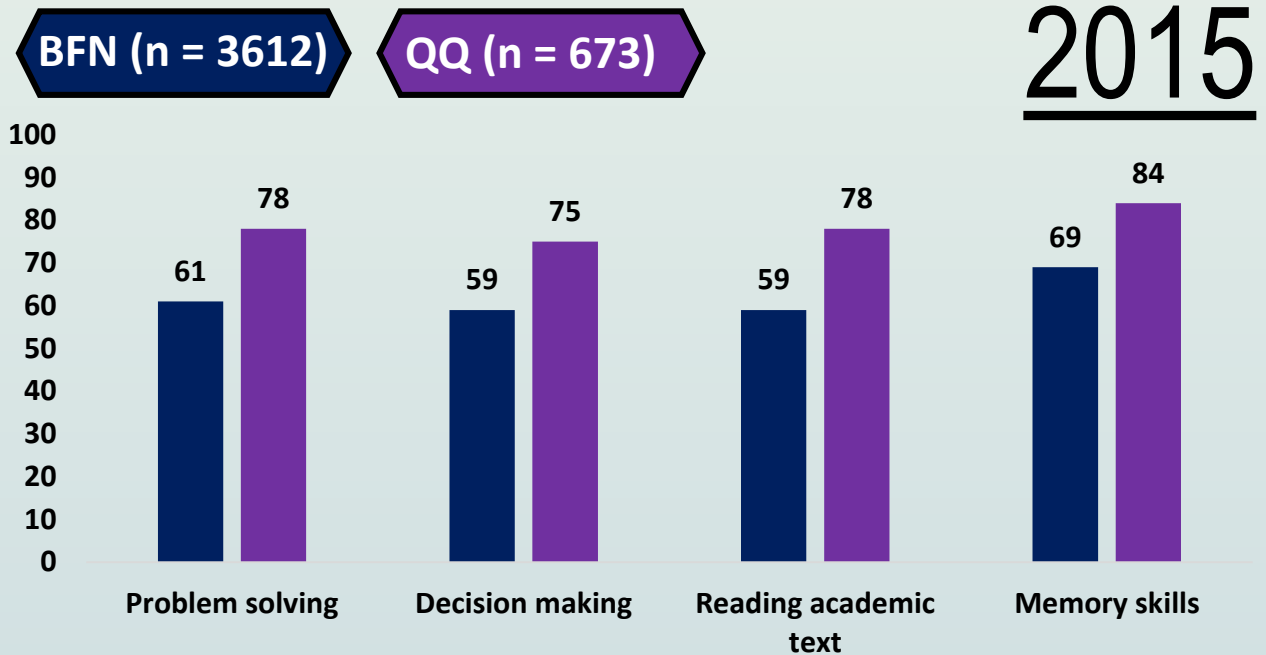
*"...because when you are a first year you are in a new environment and what UFS does it really it gives you how to apply it gives you certain principles that you can apply when you are in this institution and really it really prolong your understanding..."*

*"...it was also needed because some needed to get refreshed into this is how you do, like how to control your workload and everything, with regards to now there are more, the workload that is in University..."*

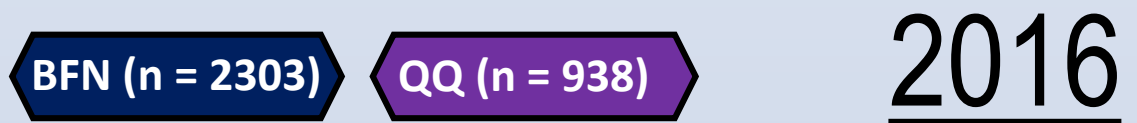
*"...were taught how to prioritize which was very important because I couldn't prioritise very well, soccer was my first thing then the rest, the rest before me. But then after the lessons that I had at UFS101, I managed to set my priorities straight..."*

# Acquired and transferable skills from unit 3

## Skills acquired in UFS101 for the first time



## Most transferrable skills from unit 3



Memory skills



Reading academic text



# Most important information

## Most important information according to students

(ordered in a nominal group setting)

# 1

Memory skills

# 2

Group work

# 3

Critical thinking

# 4

Reading academic text



# 2017



## What students said

Students responded positively toward the content taught within this unit, and expressed that they learned a lot from the content presented within this unit – more than any other unit presented within the first semester.

*“I would say in terms of like memory skills and planning well everything does help in every part doesn’t matter what you studying. ... but in terms of like memory skills and planning yeah it did help a lot and, I’m quiet a person, who usually likes thinking, so I feel like it kinda like opened a lot of perspectives ...”*

*“...working in groups, sharing opinions. Most of the time the groups that I had it was like from different people, different languages do you understand? So it helped me like to communicate...”*

*“...like think out of the box and be and educated someone. So that really inspired me so now I see like. I see life in a very different perspective. I like to learn new things...”*

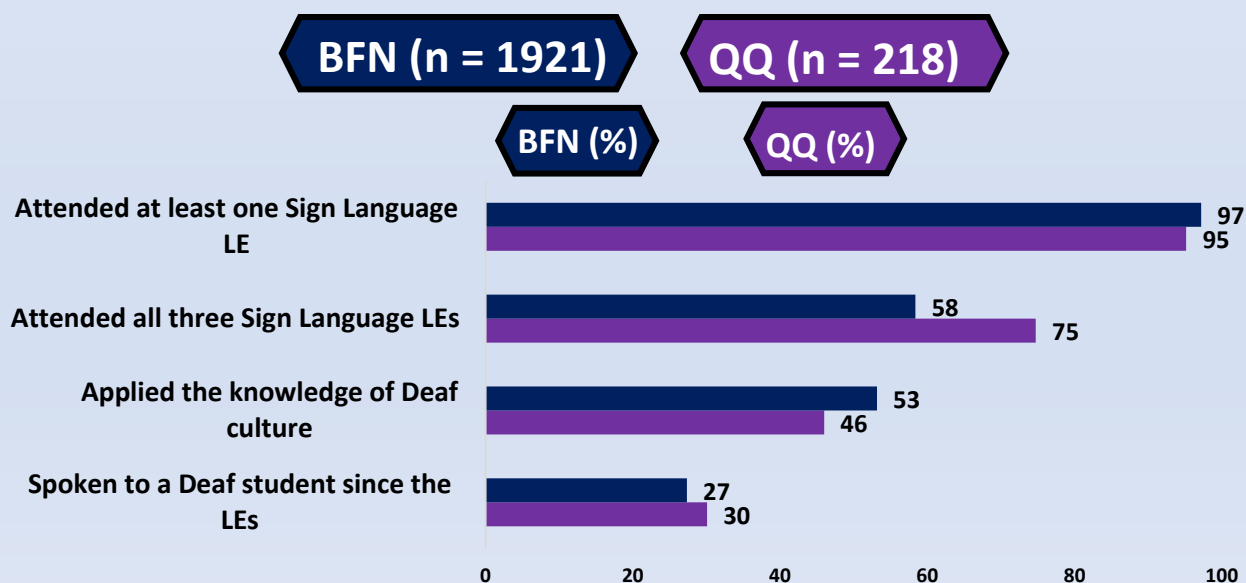
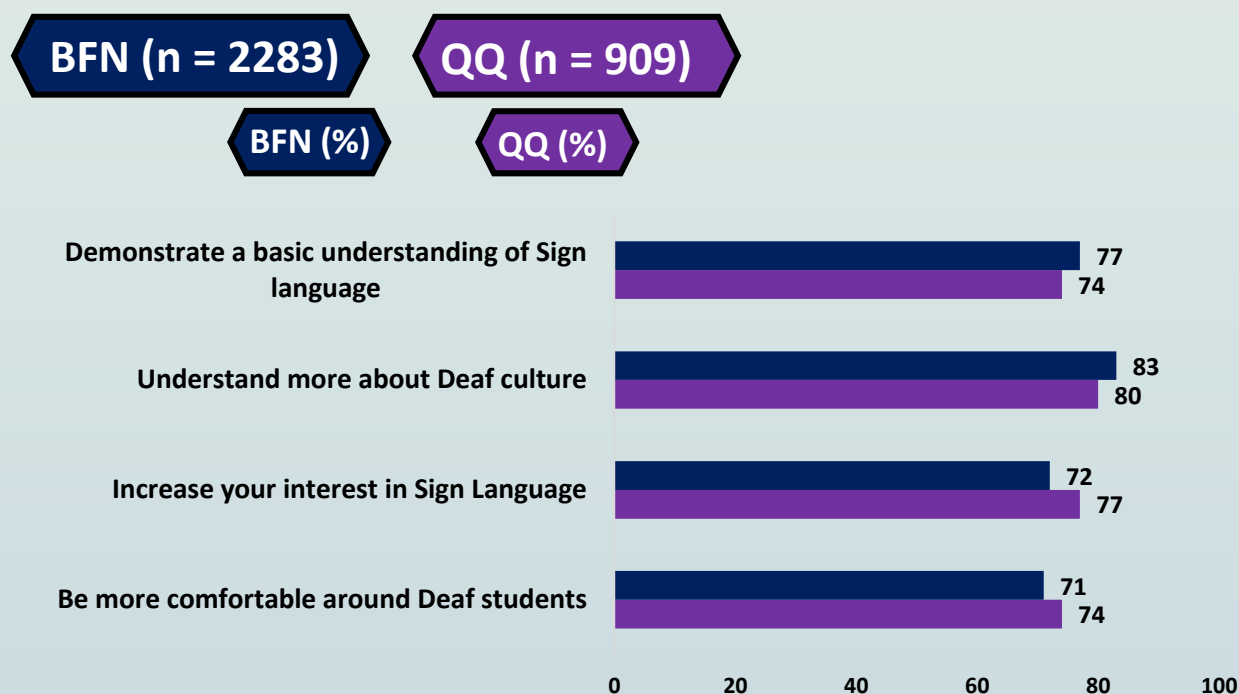
*“...it helped me with like where to go, whom to consult and then with the workload as he mentioned earlier like the CTL is also there in case like we have a problem with writing there are people who can help you there for free also and the reading skills ...”*

## Student experience

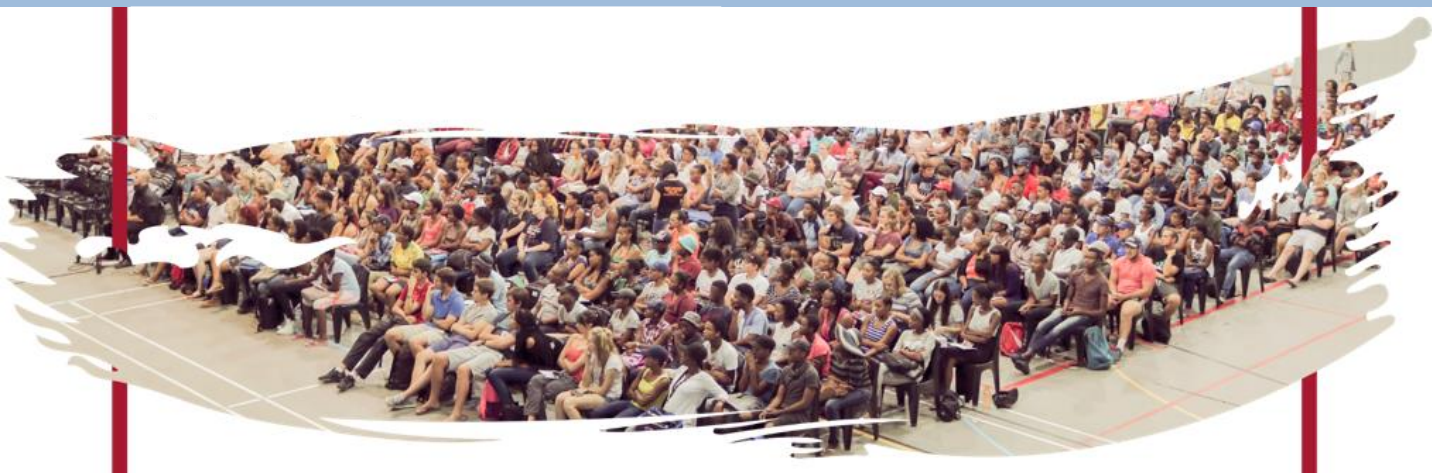
# Sign Language in UFS101

The initiative to teach Sign Language was incorporated in 2016, and was met with an overwhelmingly positive response from the students. The Department of Sign Language enjoyed the opportunity to teach basic Sign Language to the largest group of students enrolled for a course that includes Sign Language, on the African continent.

Sign Language was taught in three segments in UFS101 and positioned as large class learning experiences. Students were taught about deaf culture, Sign Language theory, as well as how to sign their names, exchange pleasantries, and have a basic conversation.



# SECOND SEMESTER 2015 – 2017 STUDENT EXPERIENCE



# Second semester content overview 2015-2017

Three combinations in 2015

Combo A	Combo B	Combo C
Economics*	Chemistry	Anthropology
Law	Astronomy	Social Psychology
History	Social Psychology*	Economics

In 2015, in order to accommodate seven units in the second semester, where each unit spans two weeks, the content was divided into three combinations. Students could sign up for the combo of their preference, and each combo was capped in order to allow for the appropriate logistical arrangements. The division of the content was of such a nature as to allow students to experience broader multi-disciplinary perspectives, even within the confines of the combo. The units that repeated were rated the most interesting and most relevant in 2014.

Three combinations in 2016

Combo A	Combo B	Combo C
Social Psychology	Agriculture	Anthropology
Law	Astronomy	History
History**	Economics**	Economics

Students appreciated the choice they were given regarding second semester content, but it was clear that it would be more pedagogically sound to establish links between units. In 2016, the units were therefore moved around based on links that could be made with the content. The Chemistry unit was replaced with a different science based unit, Agriculture. History and Economics was repeated in order to reach a larger group of first year students – this decision was made based on the nature of the content covered in these two units.

Two Combinations in 2017

Combo A	Combo B
Anthropology	Community Health
History	Agriculture
Social Psychology	Economics
Law***	Law

The constant change and improvement in content is as a direct result of student and teaching assistant feedback, as well as the need to stay current. Thus, in 2017, Community Health was added to address the issues of misuse and abuse of stimulants in order to cope (and excel) academically at university. The theme in 2017 was “how does university change me?”, and the content in each unit was aligned with that, as well as the issues that students are faced with – resulting in content that was highly relatable to students. The Law unit was repeated as students found it the most relevant, addressing the culture of protests in South Africa, and to have all students complete Law, the content for the second semester was divided into only two combos.

# UFS101 and broadening perspectives in 2015

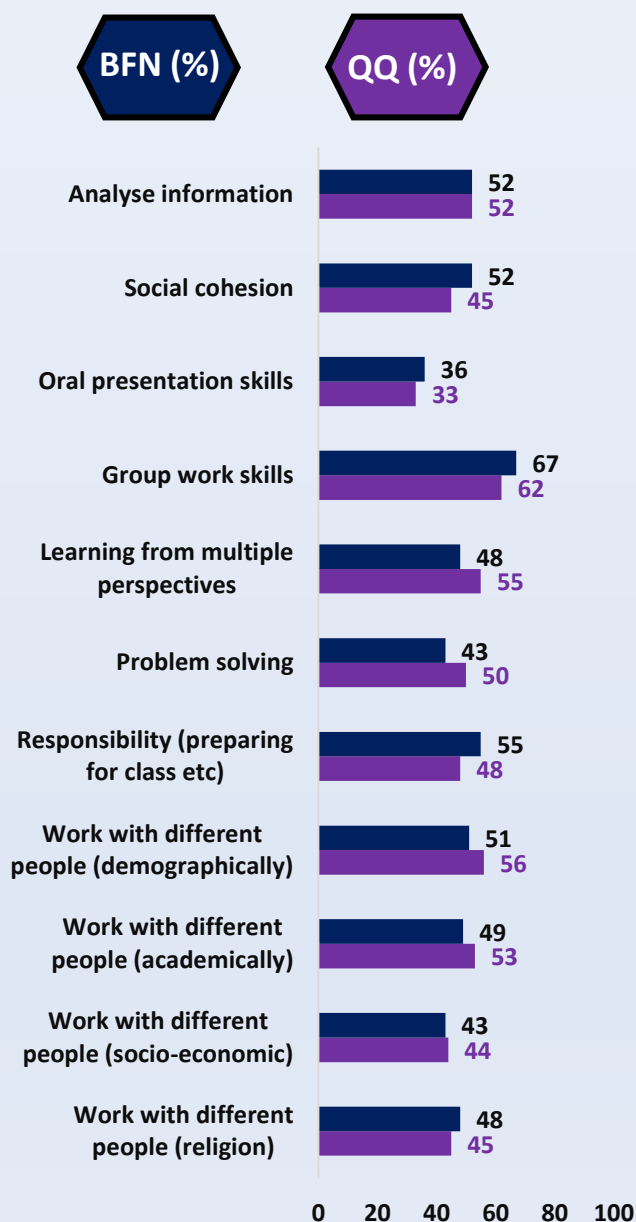
**BFN (n = 1915)**

**QQ (n = \*219)**

\* Low response rate due to student protests

The purpose of these questions was to gain insight on the skills students reported they acquired, as well as the value of the module for students. This data was collected through mixed method questionnaires and was circulated to students in both combos as the skills taught were present in both.

## Skills acquired in UFS101 discussion classes



## Value UFS101 provided to students

85% of first years indicated that the second semester content broadened their thinking about solving problems from multi-disciplinary perspectives.



# Student experience

## UFS101 Astronomy

**BFN (n = 660)**

**QQ (n = \*70)**

\* Low response rate due to student protests

The purpose of this unit was to introduce students to the planet Mars, and its position in our solar system and to view challenges that mankind will face on the Planet Mars.

The aim of this unit was to teach students about the characteristics of planet Earth and the possibility of life on Mars. Furthermore, to get students thinking about whether life could be supported on Mars? To explore this, students learned about the history of Astronomy, to illustrate the major strides that have been made in this field. Students were taught about the current discoveries of Earth-like planets in the known universe. The unit concluded with the possibility of Humans relocating to Mars, as it is one of the leading trajectories in the field of Astronomy.

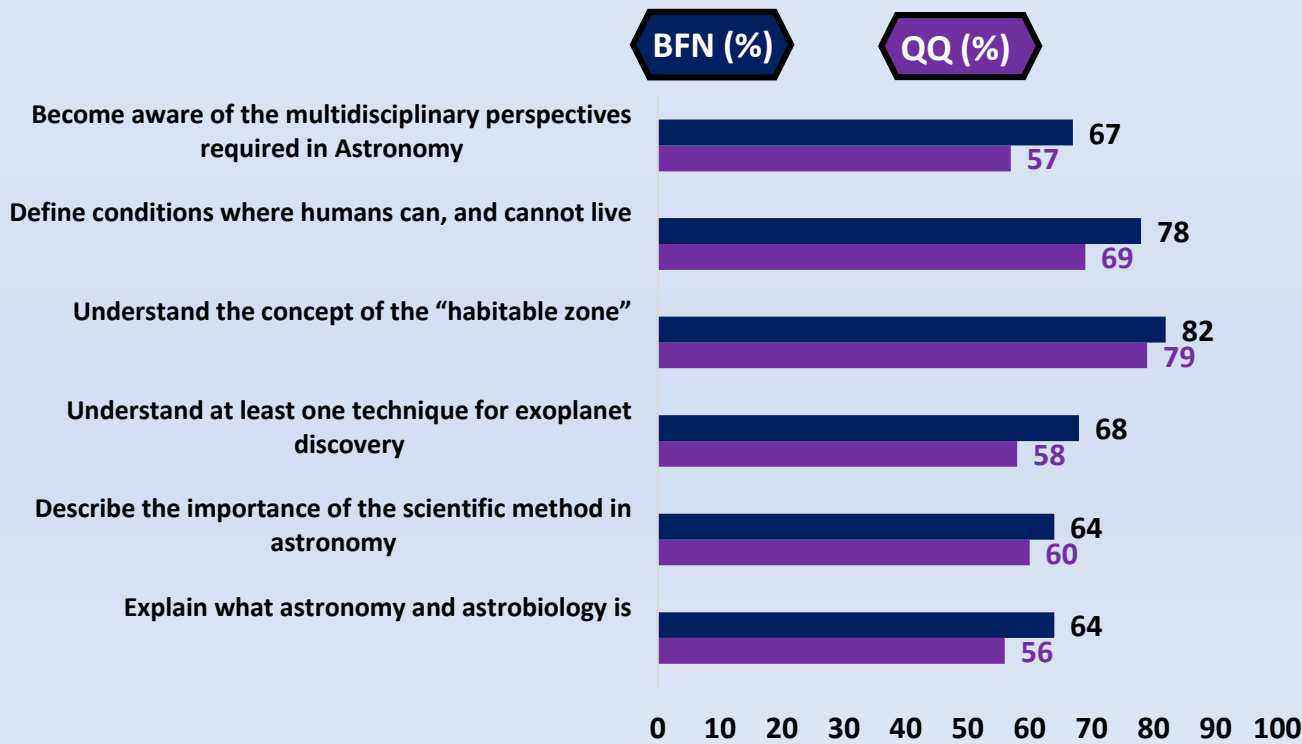
### Quotes from students



*“understanding that a person has to have certain characteristics to be able to be sent to Mars or outer space. Not everybody will be able to do it.”*

*“The fact that Mars is in the Habitable zone and that scientist are looking for ways to make human and plants to be able to survive on Mars.”*

## Student report of what they learned



# Agriculture content overview

## 2016 overview

As the world's population is growing, the demand for food production is increasing and farmlands are rapidly degrading as a result of over-use. Due to our continent's vast open landscapes, the world is turning to Africa and South Africa to address the reality of food scarcity. To ensure that farmlands are used optimally, sustainable agriculture is practiced in several areas with the focus on conservation of soil through farming methods, the optimal use of farmlands and water preservation.

The aim of this unit is structured to make students aware of the role that agriculture plays locally and globally and how sustainable agriculture is leading the way in addressing food scarcity.

### Unit outcomes:

After successful completion of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the social effects of food scarcity;
- classify the optimal use of resources such as water, soil and energy;
- explain the impact of technology of agriculture; and
- describe the social and economic impact of agriculture on the country.

In 2017, a new group of presenters came on board, and the content was revised as per their discipline foci, as well as the recommendations from students.

## 2017 overview

With the ever increasing global population, food, energy, and mineral resources have become more demanding than ever to support the growth of the human population. More and more people are becoming aware of their impact on not just the world, but their immediate ecosystems. In this unit, you will be introduced to concepts on the Ecological Footprint. After completion of this unit you should have a deeper understanding of your own ecological footprint on society, and how this affects Agriculture.

### Unit outcomes:

After successful completion of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the concept of ecosystems services;
- explain the concept of an ecological footprint;
- identify strategies on how to reduce a person's ecological footprint; and
- identify the role technology plays in agriculture to reduce the global ecological footprint.

# Student experience

## UFS101 Agriculture

### 2016

BFN (n = 662)

QQ (n = \*72)

\* Low response rate due to student protests

#### MOST NEW INFORMATION ACQUIRED

social effects of food scarcity

53% agree

49% agree

31%  
strongly agree

37%  
strongly agree

*"Agriculture unit actually it taught me about that approximately everything comes from agriculture and somehow the economy of the country is based on agriculture, last but not least is that most of folks are depending on agriculture to survive and that we have to grow our own gardens at home. lastly is that there are huge opportunities in agriculture sector."*

### 2017

BFN (n = 940)

QQ (n = 417)

#### MOST VALUABLE INFORMATION

Explain the ecological footprint concept

61%

63%

Strategies to reduce an ecological footprint

68%

67%

*"It was important because i did not know or i was not aware that technology do play a role to reduce the global ecological footprint. After attending ufs 101 discussion class I got some important information about technology, for example having fridge in our homes helps us not to waste food and that is a good example of the role of technology and in now a days you do not have to waste a lot of land when you want to plant there are some technological materials that you can use and that can also help to reduce water wastage.."*

#### LEAST VALUABLE INFORMATION

Explain the concept of ecosystems services

47%

50%

*"It is because most of the concept of ecosystem services I already taught about them from Agricultural and Life sciences at high school."*

*"because i already knew about the systems of the ecosystem"*

## Student experience

# Did the Agriculture content broaden perspectives?

BFN (n = 940)

QQ (n = 417)

Will students  
apply what  
they learned?

BFN

96%

QQ

98%

Said  
YES

Where did  
they say  
they will  
apply this?

With family and  
friends



50%

9%

In their community



54%

16%

In every day  
life



82%

59%

Students were asked if they  
matured because of what they  
learned in this unit?

89%

98%

Said  
YES

*"It made me aware of things that never crossed my mind before until it was introduced to me through UFS101. I won't just be a student that knows about the course I am studying instead I will have knowledge of various other important topics that form part of other degrees except mine."*

*"I am not in the agricultural department hence I found it challenging to pay attention in classes. The lessons have however helped my growth as an individual."*



*"The content of this Agriculture unit helped me be more self-aware and aware of my surroundings and the resources available to me, how not to abuse it but preserve it on a personal level."*

*"More knowledge and awareness made me feel more responsible and accountable for the choices I make. As a student I need to be aware of life around me and how my choices and way of living influence everything. It is important not just for my future, but for the future of our planet and all living things."*

*"That it may look like a drop in the ocean but it is really affecting a lot"*

# Anthropology content overview

In 2015, the purpose of this unit was to demonstrate how national identities are formed, through reflexive enquiry into the concept of South African citizenship. This unit facilitated the process of engaging critically with the key concepts, questions and issues regarding South African identity formation. Students were introduced to readings of Bettina von Lieres and Steven Robins on *Democracy and Citizenship*, as well as Benedict Anderson on the *Nation as Imagined Community*. The aim was for students, who are the bearers of the future of this country, to reflect on their civic responsibilities as individuals, but also as part of the South African collective to optimise the imagined future of South Africa.

In 2016, the content was revised, as is the norm every three years, as follows:

## 2016 and 2017 overview

In this unit, the process of engaging critically with the key concepts, questions and issues regarding South African identity formation is facilitated, through the study of sameness, difference and spheres of influence. Additionally, the aim is for students, who are the bearers of the future of this country, to reflect on their civic responsibilities in terms of active listening, democracy and social cohesion.

### Unit outcomes:

After successful completion of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the concepts of difference and sameness, within the context of this unit;
- explain spheres of influence and identify your own spheres of influence;
- apply spheres of influence to various case studies;
- discuss the concepts of active listening, democracy and social cohesion; and
- apply active listening, and relate it to democracy and social cohesion.

# Student experience

## UFS101 Anthropology

### 2016

BFN (n = 662)

QQ (n = \*72)

\* Low response rate due to student protests

#### MOST NEW INFORMATION ACQUIRED

apply active listening

41% agree

41% agree

44%  
strongly agree

48%  
strongly agree

*"Active listening. I am dumbfounded by the amount of people, myself included, that are not actively listening to others. We are always preparing an answer instead of listening. What was most shocking is that some students were doing this exact same thing in the discussion class about active listening. I think some will never be able to achieve this absolutely necessary life-skill. This is also the reason for a lot of conflict."*

### 2017

BFN (n = 1637)

QQ (n = 417)

#### MOST VALUABLE INFORMATION

discuss the concepts of difference and sameness

55%

55%

apply active listening

49%

35%

*"Helped me to realise how important difference as well as sameness is in a sense that vital opinions were raised by different people on how uniqueness and sameness can contribute positively to the society"*

*"Because we deal with different individuals and cultures everyday and tend to make assumptions of people which might not always be accurate"*

*"We need this info in today's life to work together"*

#### LEAST VALUABLE INFORMATION

discuss the concepts of difference and sameness

30%

30%

*"i do not think there is a connection between active listening and democracy"*

*"i felt no need to know about sameness and differences"*

*"I do not find a reason to know about it"*

*"because im not a good listener"*

# Student experience

## Did the Anthropology content broaden perspectives?

BFN (n = 1616)

QQ (n = 417)

Will students  
apply what they  
learned?

BFN

77%

QQ

87%

Said  
YES

Where did  
they say they  
will apply  
this?

While socialising



53%

19%

In their community



14%

33%

In every day  
life

20%

22%

Students were asked if they  
matured because of what they  
learned in this unit?

78%

81%

Said  
YES

*"I now have a positive view about mixing with different people and actually having an interest to mix with everyone no matter their culture in most of my engagements"*

*"IT MEDE ME BE ABLE TO RESPOND WITH UNDERSTANDING OF SOMEONE IDEAS AND RESPECT THAT IT IS NORMAL TO HAVE DIFFERENT IDEAS AS WE ARE NOT THE SAME"*

*"As said, I learnt that differences are not a bad thing. I am now excited to be with people who are different to me as I feel that it will only benefit me and increase my knowledge and understanding."*

*"It opened my eyes to be able to know that people aren't the same and that's why it's important to respect opinions of others."*

*"It assisted me to understand that it's important to listen to what others are saying. I now know that I should listen to understand and not just listen to reply"*



# UFS101 Community Health

## Overview

More often than not, people are unaware of the legal, ethical, and moral implications of their actions. In this unit, you will learn about your own moral code and the role it plays in your understanding of what is legal, ethical, and socially acceptable.

### Unit outcomes:

After successful completion of this unit students should be able to:

- apply the four pillars of ethics on a basic level;
- identify the role performance enhancers play in our lives at UFS;
- reflect on the legal, ethical and moral parameters presented in the case study; and
- plan a basic moral code.

## Student experience

BFN (n = 1526)

QQ (n = 402)

### MOST VALUABLE INFORMATION

Apply the four pillars of ethics

52%

45%

reflect on the legal, ethical and moral parameters

42%

35%

### LEAST VALUABLE INFORMATION

The role performance enhancers play in our lives

31%

21%

Plan a basic moral code

44%

26%

## Student experience

# Did the Community Health content broaden perspectives?

BFN (n = 1526)

QQ (n = 402)

Will students  
apply what they  
learned?

BFN

77%

QQ

87%

Said  
YES

Where did  
they say they  
will apply  
this?

While socialising



20%

7%

In their community



6%

36%

Within their  
studies

59%

38%

Students were asked if they  
matured because of what they  
learned in this unit?

74%

92%

Said  
YES

*"I have learned that hard work pays off and that it is unfair and unethical to use stimulants in order to give yourself an advantage!"*

*"Learned to differentiate between morals and the law and see where these pillars of ethics can help me better my personal ways of doing things."*

*"It showed me that the easy way out might not always be the right way or the safest."*

*"I believe that I have learnt many new things in this module and I will be able to apply it in my life and I will be able to share this with my friends"*

*It is like an "aha" moment. I am greatly thankful for the exposure I got in the Community Health Unit as it informed me about ethical conduct. I now I more interest to pursue deeper understanding in such a field of expertise."*

# History content overview

The first aim of this unit was to introduce the student to the transfer of memory from one generation to the next and how it impacts our understanding of history and our present experiences. By understanding the impact of transferred memories on our present thoughts, attitudes and behaviours, students can grapple more meaningfully with how those memories, even if they are not lived experiences, can act as an anchor for trauma. The second aim of the unit was to teach students about the journey from trauma to forgiveness and reconciliation.

## Unit outcomes:

After successful completion of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the meaning of second-generation memory (the transfer of memory);
- relate second-generation memory to present experiences of trauma;
- place reason above emotion alone; and
- demonstrate greater balance in reasoning (to appreciate both sides of a complex argument), even when a strong position is eventually taken in favour of one or the other issue.

In 2017, the content was revised, in line with the move towards decolonising the curriculum.

## **2017 overview**

Africa lies at the centre of all human history. It is the continent from which the distant ancestors of every one of us, no matter who we are today, originally came. Yet traditional history books, ironically, have long treated the continent as if it were the exemplar of isolation and difference – all because of a few recent centuries marked by the events of the slave trade or colonialism. Through the lens of early African history in general and Southern African history in particular, this unit offered an alternative view of Africa and its peoples. It foregrounded early histories of African civilizations – with a particular focus on Mapungubwe and Zimbabwe cultures in Southern Africa, and ancient Ghana and Mali in West Africa.

## Unit outcomes:

After successful completion of this unit, you should be able to:

- describe pre-colonial societies in Africa;
- express an understanding of the complexities of pre-colonial societies in Africa;
- explain that African societies before 1500 were part of the international networks of trade;
- explain that African societies participated integrally in the transformation of world history centuries before the arrival of Europeans on the continent; and
- discuss the need for African history (or any production of knowledge on Africa) to be told (written) and interpreted from broader perspectives.

# Student experience

## UFS101 History

### 2016

BFN (n = 346)

QQ (n = \*68)

\* Low response rate due to student protests

#### MOST NEW INFORMATION ACQUIRED

Explain meaning of an historical event

46% agree

51% agree

34%  
strongly agree

35%  
strongly agree

*"The arguments that rose during class discussions. How much transferred memory affects future generations. How some people carry so much anger in their hearts for experiences they never experienced in person but experienced through transmission of memory from parents and grandparents. How unforgiving some people are. How important forgiveness is for one's well-being (Learning Experience with Candice Mama)"*

### 2017

BFN (n = 707)

QQ (n = 359)

#### MOST VALUABLE INFORMATION

discuss the need for African History

58%

53%

Describe pre-colonial societies in Africa

48%

44%

*"I learned about the history of my country and that raw materials are important for the improvement of our country. I also learned that there was life before colonisation."*

*"So that I can know where we come from and how everything was formed in the past."*

*"it gives me the idea that trading has been there for a long time"*

#### LEAST VALUABLE INFORMATION

Describe pre-colonial societies in Africa

41%

37%

*"I have already had background information"*

*"it was irrelevant to some extent"*

*"I knew already about pre-colonial societies and how the living conditions were to them"*

*"i already know pre-colonial societies which were in africa back then"*

## Student experience

# Did the History content broaden perspectives?

BFN (n = 707)

QQ (n = 359)

Will students  
apply what they  
learned?

BFN

76%

QQ

90%

Said  
YES

Where did  
they say they  
will apply  
this?

In their studies



39%

46%

In their community



38%

33%

Friends and  
family

33%

28%

Students were asked if they  
matured because of what they  
learned in this unit?

73%

89%

Said  
YES

*"Helped me regain my confidence as an African , i now now that colonization was not a salvation we were capable of maintaining our own economy and a whole lot of things before it. Also that it is not because of the arrival of Egyptians that were came to be and know certain things like for instance the extraction of gold, in Mapungubwe long before colonization African knew how to extract it even without the use of modern technology."*



*"I learnt that even before the colonialism began we were able to trade among ourselves and were able to build and do things ourselves. Also that the resources we had before they came we just did not know more about them and what to do with them"*

*"It broadened my knowledge of colonialism and the fall of Africa's great civilisations and how the monarchies are also to blame for demolishing the people's civilisation and corruption that prevailed in the tribes they ruled."*

*"I learnt about Africa in depth, it was brief but a lot was learnt."*

# Economics content overview

In 2015, the purpose of this unit was to demonstrate to students that the interconnectedness of the world, often described through the word globalisation, is crucial to understanding not only economics, but technology, education, culture and politics. National borders matter, of course, but crucial transactions take place on a cross-border scale in real time all the time, fundamentally altering social and economic relations across the world. It is important, therefore, to understand how an economic crisis in one country triggers a global collapse of interconnected financial systems. How do economists explain this phenomenon? What role does globalisation play? How could so many smart people have been wrong? And what are the limits of economics as explanatory framework?

In 2016, the content was revised, to include a focus on the drought as a national crisis, as well as the issue of youth unemployability, as follows:

## 2016 overview

There were two themes covered in the UFS101 Economics unit. Firstly, students were introduced to the topic of globalisation through the example of the current drought in South Africa and the effect this will have on the country's gross domestic product. During this part of the Economics unit, students had the opportunity to engage in discussions around global interconnectedness and the advantages and disadvantages thereof. Secondly, students were taught about the unemployment crisis on an international level as well as the youth unemployment problem in South Africa, through discussions around unemployment statistics on a local and global level. Students were also taught about various strategies that they can keep in mind to better their chances of employment.

In 2017, the content was revised again, in order to remain current. The focus shifted to the downgrading of the economy and South Africa's junk status.

## 2017 overview

Political instability in South Africa, and the financial credit degradation to junk status has a direct impact on all sectors of the South African economy. This means that our University, you as a student, and all parties involved in your studies, and potential employers are also affected by this. In this unit you will look at the impact that political instability and the degradation to junk status has on a student at the University of the Free State. Within this unit you will learn the immediate and long term problems that you might face as a student, and you will have the opportunity to learn more about the effect political instability and this degradation has on the South African economy, specifically with regard to job creation. Furthermore, during the reflection period of this unit, you will have the opportunity to come up with strategies which could strengthen the South African economy, as a student at the UFS, helping ourselves, others and our country.

# Student experience

## UFS101 Economics

### 2016

BFN (n = 347)

QQ (n = \*65)

\* Low response rate due to student protests

#### MOST NEW INFORMATION ACQUIRED

Explain globalisation

34% agree

34% agree

48%  
strongly agree

64%  
strongly agree

*"The unemployment rate. I never knew that the unemployment rate among young people were so high and that although you graduate with a degree you don't always find a job in the field that you studied for and that you should prepare yourself already to be more employable."*

*"The factors that lead to high unemployment and possible solutions to the crisis"*

### 2017

BFN (n = 824)

QQ (n = )

#### MOST VALUABLE INFORMATION

How the economy was downgraded to Junk status

68%

70%

How to strengthen the South African economy

55%

51%

*"this brought to my attention that there is a large unemployment rate among the youth of South Africa."*

*"More depth was given on understanding what junk status is actually all about, and certain rating agencies down grade different counties."*

*"s a student who is going to graduate and look to join the corporate world, I learned about the changing economy and how it could influence my future employment prospect."*

#### LEAST VALUABLE INFORMATION

Our role as responsible citizens

33%

33%

*"I felt like I would not have control over the implications whether I had the knowledge or not"*

*"I think its obvious the downgraded in our currency, so it wasn't something new to learn."*

*"I believe that economic growth should start at the top and we cant influence it as much."*



# Student experience

## Did the Economics content broaden perspectives?

BFN (n = 824)

QQ (n =)

Will students  
apply what they  
learned?

BFN

95%

QQ

97%

Said  
YES

Where did  
they say they  
will apply  
this?

In everyday life



72%

61%

In my studies



49%

8%

In my community



47%

10%

Students were asked if they  
matured because of what they  
learned in this unit?

87%

95%

Said  
YES

*"It gave me a new perspective on politics and economy made me see that actually I am affected by whats happening in the world of economics and should actually pay attention to such."*

*"I have economics as a subject, so I know a lot more detail than discussed, but what was discussed made me view some things from a different perspective, a bigger perspective which was discussed in the callie human by the questions asked by the guest speaker."*

*"I used to believe that economy of our country has nothing to do with what i do everyday. But after I learned my role in the economy, I now know that wasting money can have a huge impact in the economy. Take my studies seriously to get proper job in the future because if i drop out as a student it will have negative impact since 18% of individual in my age have the opportunity to study at university.."*

*"it helped me to make decisions on how to improve or come with strategies that can help boost the economy in future"*

# Social Psychology content overview

## 2015-2017 overview

In this unit, social psychology was used to explore and understand the influences that people and situations have upon the beliefs or behaviour of others. To understand change, students started by reflecting on how they see themselves. They then explored the boundaries of obedience and conformity and how being connected to others is critical to the individual as well as societal functioning. Students reflected on how situations can hinder and promote change in people. The focus then moved to social influence and persuasion, helping students to reflect on the ways in which mass media and different techniques are used to influence human behaviour, as well as the persuasion techniques that leaders use to try to get people to conform to their ideas and obey them in order to affect change.

### Unit outcomes:

After completion of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain what social psychology is;
- describe, by using conformity and obedience, why people join groups and do not change in certain circumstances;
- use social psychological research to explain how modern media creates expectations of how people should behave in relationships;
- explore how leaders use influence and persuasion to facilitate change through conformity and obedience; and
- reflect on how being at university is changing you and developing you as a leader?

## Student experience

## UFS101 Social Psychology

2016

BFN (n = 905)

QQ (n = \*89)

\* Low response rate due  
to student protests

## MOST NEW INFORMATION ACQUIRED

Explain what social psychology is

45% agree

29% agree

28%  
strongly  
agree53%  
strongly  
agree

*"How complex the human mind works and world leaders in particular use it as a persuasion tactic, I also realised that, males and females have very different psychological aspects to their counter genders, this enabled me to reason my own behaviour in contrast to the behaviour of those around me"*

*"Leadership, because I am going to be a leader to the children at my school one day. I am going to make important decisions in the classroom one day"*

2017

BFN (n = 863)

QQ (n = 253)

## MOST VALUABLE INFORMATION

Explain what social  
psychology is

57%

60%

Why people conform

58%

53%

*"this brought to my attention that there is a large unemployment rate among the youth of South Africa."*

*"More depth was given on understanding what junk status is actually all about, and certain rating agencies down grade different counties."*

*"s a student who is going to graduate and look to join the corporate world, I learned about the changing economy and how it could influence my future employment prospect."*

## LEAST VALUABLE INFORMATION

How modern media creates  
expectations of relational behaviour

38%

28%

*"Because i personally am not a follower of media trends, therefor the media has little to no effect on me as an individual. i do not watch television nor part-take in any social media."*

*"Not everyone has the personality type for leadership or wants to become a leader."*

# Student experience

## Did the Social Psychology content broaden perspectives?

BFN (n =863)

QQ (n =253)

Will students  
apply what they  
learned?

BFN

96%

QQ

99%

Said  
YES

Where did  
they say they  
will apply  
this?

In everyday life



77%

72%

In my studies



44%

45%

While  
socialising

55%

43%

Students were asked if they  
matured because of what they  
learned in this unit?

89%

97%

Said  
YES

*"To be happy for who you are and never underestimate yourself, never allow people to make you feel not good enough and to loose your self esteem. Like when you are fat or plus size you do not have to slim be on diet to be a slender, being a plus size does not mean you are not important of good enough. Love yourself for who you are never let people change you.."*

*"The content that was given to me was comprehensible it was very easy for me to understand the content, when i read the article: the self i found the content to be fascinating it explained some of the questions i had and wanted clarity on. The article articulates that individuals should comprehend themselves: self-knowledge, self-awareness and self-behavior in that sense individuals will be able to co-exist in communities."*

*"It made me aware of the intentions of other people and taught me to never rely on other people more than I rely on myself. It also taught me that it is better to do the right thing and be liked by few, than to do the wrong thing and to be loved by many."*

# Law content overview

In 2015, the purpose of this unit was to introduce students to law and illustrate the *important* role of law to order society in a constitutional democracy.

As part of their broader education, students were not only introduced to law in South Africa but also to the notion of universal human rights and international and regional human rights mechanisms that protect human rights. South Africa is a member state of the United Nations and upholds the goal of the UN to protect universal human rights.

This unit aimed to make students aware of their rights and the rights of others, their duty towards adhering to the laws of South Africa and participating in processes related to law-making. There was also a focus on social media and the law, and how students should protect themselves and respect others in an online environment.

In 2016, in light of the national student protests, the content was revised to include a focus on the culture of protests.

## 2016 and 2017 overview

This unit aimed to make students aware of their rights and the rights of others with regards to protest actions, their duty towards adhering to the laws of South Africa and participating in processes related to law-making. There was also a focus on social media and the law, and how students should protect themselves for future employability and respect others in an online environment.

### Unit outcomes:

After successful completion of this unit, you should be able to:

- reflect on the Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) and the Regulations of Gatherings Act 205 of 1993;
- identify the processes involved in formulating a legal protest with reference to the sources;
- differentiate between the different types of protests;
- explain what a digital footprint is;
- identify how your social media posts can affect your future employability negatively; and
- clean up your digital footprint.

# Student experience

## UFS101 Law

# 2016

BFN (n = 928)

QQ (n = \*88)

\* Low response rate due to student protests

### MOST NEW INFORMATION ACQUIRED

#### Importance of human rights

52% agree

47% agree

35%  
strongly agree

47%  
strongly agree

*"The law unit was taught in a manner that referred to our current fees must fall situation. The learning experience helped me put things into perspective and understand the intensity of this situation. It also helped me look smart when engaging in topics about politics and the current situation in South Africa."*

*"I have learned that there are certain protocols that needs to be followed when it comes to law. people are also obligated to follow the law to avoid legal issues against them"*

# 2017

BFN (n =1175)

QQ (n =320)

### MOST VALUABLE INFORMATION

#### How social media affects employability

67%

58%

#### Clean your digital footprint

59%

52%

*"It is important because it helps me how to learn protest issues if i would like to protest in future and if i want a job how to clean up my profiles on social network.it also helps me to learn not to always put everything on social media as this is where employers usually look for our background information."*

*"The information about the social media made me alert that i should think twice about whatever I post on social media because it'll come back to me in the future when I'm looking for a job"*

### LEAST VALUABLE INFORMATION

#### Reflect on the constitution (Act 108 of 1996) and regulations of the gatherings act (Act 205 of 1993)

36%

35%

*"because am not usually involved in the protests,it is an important unit but not specifically for me personally."*

*"i already had an understanding about the differences in protests which are currently happening in South Africa and abroad."*

*"Already know the importance."*

# Student experience

## Did the Law content broaden perspectives?

BFN (n =1175)

QQ (n =320)

Will students  
apply what they  
learned?

BFN

95%

QQ

99%

Said  
YES

Where did  
they say they  
will apply  
this?

In everyday life



72%

72%

In my studies



40%

28%

While socialising



45%

34%

Students were asked if they  
matured because of what they  
learned in this unit?

90%

98%

Said  
YES

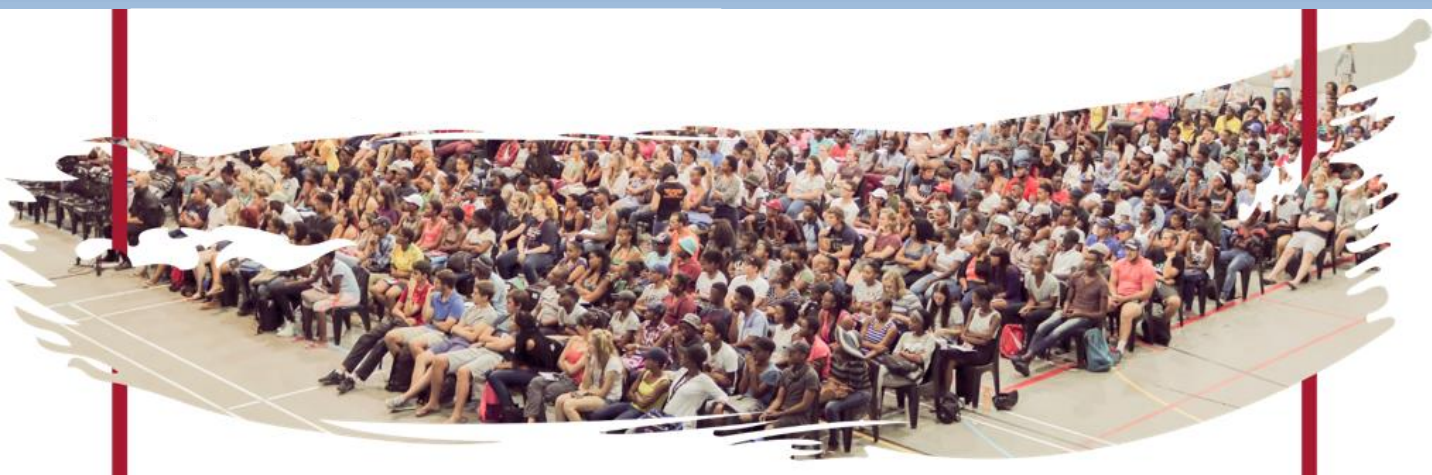
*"It helped me grow in a sense that i now understand my rights during protests and how can i approach protests in future whether during my school career or during my working experiences."*

*"It helped me grow as a student in the sense that now I can understand the motives behind people who protest, and also the different ways that their protests could have gone. It also taught me how to prepare myself for work opportunities in the future, by keeping my digital footprint clean."*

*"i used to look at protesting in other way. for example, fees must fall strike I never understood why student had to protest until i as a student with financial problem had no option but to support the strike. but not through violence and destruction but with the aim of being heard. and if i protest what right do i have"*

*"The content I learned in the Law Unit helped my growth as a student as I have I realized that I should be careful of what I post on social media and how I can voice out my concerns without inciting violence or bringing any harm to others."*

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2018





# Aligning with the ITP

The focus in 2018 will be on an intentional alignment with the institutional transformation plan. The following recommendations apply:

## Social justice and leadership

The theme or golden thread of UFS101 in 2017 was “how does university change me”. In 2018, the theme of the module will be social justice and leadership, and UFS101 will become the platform for all students at the university to realise an awareness of issues of social inclusion, and understand what it means to be a good leader. The Leadership for Social Justice programme will launch in 2018, and year 1 of this three year programme is UFS101. In the second and third year of the programme, students self-select to continue in the programme and will then receive the opportunity to be part of national and international projects in this field.

## Inclusivity

Students are taught about the culture of the deaf community, and basic Sign Language, in large face-to-face learning experiences in the first semester. This is the largest group of students on the continent to be taught Sign Language and is as such a major achievement. This learning experience allows for inclusivity as students become aware of our diverse student body, and are explicitly taught how to engage with each other and move towards social cohesion. The student voice is clear – students enjoyed the learning experiences and have asked that it should continue.

## Access and success

There have been requests from students and faculty members that UFS101 should be included in the extended programme – it is currently presented at the second year of the extended programme, and in the third year of the extended programme in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences. Before the re-curriculation in 2015, UFS101 was positioned in the second or third year of the extended programme to afford students the opportunity to complete their developmental modules before engaging with the big questions offered in UFS101. Given the change in the curriculum in terms of the teaching of academic success skills, it does make sense that at least the first semester of UFS101 is offered in the first year of the extended programme. This would allow the extended programme students to have the same exposure to skills in their first year of study as the mainstream students do in their first year of study.

## Innovation in the classroom

UFS101 has made major strides in how to teach a large class and successfully engage students in learning in this environment. The flipped classroom approach has also been successfully implemented since 2014. The move towards sharing content as open educational resources will showcase this work to other institutions, in addition to the showcasing that does take place through conferences and site visits. A large class teaching workshop has also been included in the academic staff development focus area in order to share the strategies for student engagement with academic staff at the university.

