

Get back into the Academic Groove

KEEP MOVING

Kovsies[®]
Advice



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

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



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



UFS
CENTRE FOR TEACHING
AND LEARNING (CTL)



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Still not sure who your Academic Advisors are?

"Good advising may be the single most underestimated characteristic of a successful university experience" - R.J Light

Faculty or Curriculum Advisor

Get to better understand the 3 types of academic advisors at the UFS:

- Faculty managers, Faculty academic advisors, and Programme directors
 - They provide curriculum-specific advice and help you select and define your curriculum and majors (select modules)
- Advisors at the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL)
 - They provide advice to students who have not yet decided on their final choice of study and help navigate your academic career in relation to your career dreams. They assist you to decide, commit to, and connect to the institution in order to get where you want to be.
- They include Student Life peer mentors, Gateway buddies, Tutors, Teaching assistants, etc.
 - They help you connect to the campus and understand how to excel academically and socially.

Central Advisors

Peer Advisors

All UFS advisors are geared to support to help you excel, belong and reach your full potential.



Connect with and participate in all UFS Academic Advising initiatives:

- Like our Facebook page "**UFS Academic Advising**"
- Chat with us: **WhatsApp/Telegram** on **+27 87 240 6370**
- Email for an appointment **Advising@ufs.ac.za** (BFN), **AdvisingQQ@ufs.ac.za** (Qwaqwa), or **AdvisingSC@ufs.ac.za** (South)

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A woman with glasses and a light-colored shirt is sitting on a grey tufted sofa. She is looking out a window with white curtains, her hands clasped and arms raised in a thoughtful or reflective pose. A laptop is open on her lap. In the background, there is a bookshelf with books and a potted plant.

Reflection

By: Natalia De Abreu

Going into the second semester (and anytime for that matter), is a good time to pause and reflect on your experiences so far. Reflective practice allows you to look at the bigger picture and plays a key role in growth and development. The intention of reflection is to integrate new understanding into one's experience.

WHAT IS REFLECTION

Imagine you could jump on a time machine and go back to the beginning of the year with the knowledge that you have now. What would you have done differently? Reflective practice is the act of thinking about our experiences in order to learn from them for the future.

REFLECTION ACTIVITY

Think about your experience in the first semester and work through the following questions based on Gibbs reflective cycle:

Description

- What happened?
- What experiences stood out?
- What did I do?
- What didn't I do?
- What did others do?
- Which struggles did I encounter and how did I deal with it?

Evaluation and Analysis

- What went well?
- What did not go so well?
- Did I give it my best effort?
- What was easy?
- What was difficult?
- What assumptions did I make?
- What insights are now available to me?
- What lessons did I learn from failure?

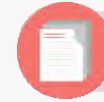
Feelings

- What feelings did I experience?
- Why did I feel the way I did?
- What was a cause of frustration for me?
- What brought me the most satisfaction and why?
- What am I most proud of?

Conclusion and Action Plan

- How can I improve in the future?
- What can I do differently in the second semester?
- What are my goals and intentions for the second semester?
- What skills do I need to develop to achieve this?
- Do I need any support or advice going into the second semester?
- Who and what can support me in this?

You can record your answers in any manner that is most convenient for you. Reflection is a very personal thing. There is no one 'correct' way of how it should be done as a lot of this will depend on your own circumstances. Be creative and choose a method that best suits your needs.



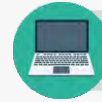
Write an essay



Journal



Reflect on a poem



Reflect on your Computer



Use story telling



Create a video



Talk to someone



Reflect in the shower



HELP STARTS HERE

Call the UFS Student Mental Health Careline at **0800 00 6363** or **text 43302**
24/7 | FREE | CONFIDENTIAL for all registered UFS students.



**Your mental health matters
and taking care of your mental
health is like brushing teeth –
you need to do it daily.**

The UFS Student Mental Health Careline is exclusively available to all UFS students. A mental health professional is awaiting your call and the Careline is available 24/7, at no cost, and all calls are confidential.

Don't wait – invest in your mental health today!

T: +27 51 401 2853 | +27 58 718 5032 | +27 51 505 1298 | scd@ufs.ac.za | scdq@ufs.ac.za | scdsouth@ufs.ac.za | www.ufs.ac.za/kovsiecounseling

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UFS
STUDENT AFFAIRS
STUDENTESAKE
DITABA TSA BAITHUTI
STUDENT COUNSELLING AND
DEVELOPMENT (SCD)



Unpacking the journey to **Academic Success**

By: **Kate Poen** and **Zanele Hlophe**

What is Academic Success?

The true measure of student success is how well students are prepared to accomplish their current and future academic, personal, and professional goals through the development of knowledge, a sense of responsibility and self-reliance, and a connection to the university and wider community.

To achieve academic success, it is very important to practice healthy and realistic habits as a student. The academic journey involves being surrounded by friends, enticements, being bombarded with assessments and heavy workload, therefore setting habits will enable your success.

Here are seven:

**Habit 1:
Curriculum
Check**

Always check (before closing date) with your faculty if the modules you are registered for are correct and that the credit load is accurate as well. By doing so you avoid registering for unnecessary modules and ensure that you graduate on time and avoid unnecessary financial expenses.

**Habit 2:
Some moments
require you to
prioritise rest**

Sleeping is the most important thing you can do for yourself, especially during recess and weekends. Binging on series until the early hours of the morning is not always the best "break" you need from academic activities.

**Habit 4:
Drink your water
and eat the right
foods**

Make sure you're fueling your brain and your body to succeed in the best way that you can. Visit the student success portal on Blackboard for more information on brain foods.

**Habit 6:
Make use of
university
services**

The university ensures holistic support to students at all levels, and it is important that you make use of those services as and when you need them to ensure academic success. These services include Student Counselling and Development (SCD), Social Worker, Centre for Universal Access, and Disability Support (CUADS), Health and Wellness (clinic) and Career Development. Depending on your need at a given time, make it a habit to consult with the relevant support system.

**Habit 3:
Know when the
best time is you
are most
productive**

Being aware of when you can focus and commit to studying enables you to deliver your best. Although, sometimes even when you do not feel like doing any academic work, you will have to do it anyway.

**Habit 5:
Always be
prepared to
adjust your
strategy**

If there is anything that the Covid-19 pandemic taught us, it is that your learning environment can always change. When that happens, apply study strategies that accommodate your environment. If you have all your learning materials, you should be able to study anywhere.

**Habit 7:
Communication
is key**

Communicating when you have a problem is important, always!! You may encounter challenges along your academic journey and communicating them as soon as possible with the relevant stakeholder is important. If you, have modules that are not appearing on your ADS, do not leave the matter to the end of the semester to rectify it. Attend to it ASAP! Read your university emails daily, to ensure that you are up to date on what is happening in the university community.



HOW TO BOOK A WRITE SITE CONSULTATION

STEP 1

MAKE A BOOKING

The first step is to visit our online booking system to book a consultation. The link to the booking system can be found on the Write Site BFN Support organisation on Blackboard. Remember, bookings need to be made **two working-days in advance**, so the system will only display available sessions for two working-days later.

- Visit the Online booking system
- Choose the year of module and module code
- Register for the preferred session

STEP 2

EMAIL YOUR ASSIGNMENT DOCUMENTS

Next, email us your **assignment instructions and draft** in PDF format at least **two working-days in advance** (prior to your scheduled session). This does NOT count as an official submission and will not be marked. Your consultant will use these documents to prepare for your consultation.

- Open your UFS student email
- Send a new email to WriteSite@ufs.ac.za
- Attach your assignment instructions and draft in PDF format
- Insert your name and surname, student number, module code and contact number

STEP 3

WAIT ON CONFIRMATION

The last step is to wait on a reply from us, at the Write Site. In our reply, we will provide important details regarding your session, so make sure to check the details carefully.

- Wait on a reply to your email
- Verify session details in the confirmation email sent by WriteSite@ufs.ac.za

NEED HELP? VISIT OUR **HELP SECTION** ON BLACKBOARD OR SEND AN EMAIL TO **WRITESITEUFS.AC.ZA**

E: writesite@ufs.ac.za | www.ufs.ac.za/ctl

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Senior **student success** initiative to **leverage support** for students

By: **Evodia Mohoanyane** and **Bonolo Mahlatsi**



Senior students, as we gradually return to normalcy, it is time to make the most of the second semester. The first semester came and presented numerous changes in the academic curriculum following a year of online learning. With the previous semester's encounters, you have all adjusted to the fashion of the academic style in 2022. This is the start of a new semester leading to the end of the academic year. Thus, the academic race continues. The race may be overwhelming and daunting at the beginning because of the need to re-orient yourselves, having new modules, assessment schedules, and imminent test weeks.

However, there is no need for students to fret as help is always available to them. The Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) at the University of the Free State (UFS), under the focus area of Student Success and Learning (SLS), has created a Senior Experience and Senior Student Success initiative. The initiative termed #SecureTheGrad (#STG) serves to promote student engagement, learning, and progress. Furthermore, it aims to create well-rounded students who are responsible and will, in turn, become productive citizens when they exit university. In that way, they will be able to deal with societal issues. #SecureTheGrad is an institutional programme available for all students across the three campuses.



#SecureTheGrad invites experts to share the value of their services with senior students in a conversation format. The programme's webinars and seminars aim to provide senior UFS students with an opportunity to network within the campus community as well as with key partners. In addition, the initiative aims to enable students to plan their professional development, establish realistic expectations aligned with those of the university, to foster a sense of belonging that enhances an experience towards graduation and transitioning into the entrepreneurial world of work. Thus, granting students the opportunity to have access to the support services (such as navigating campus, having access to academic support, career development, wellness, and personal success) available at the university is crucial for them to be successful in their studies, profession, and life.

The initiative is a pragmatic way to understand student and community engagement by familiarizing students with all departments and the services rendered to create well-rounded students. Since its inception, #SecureTheGrad has gained much momentum in the student community. In essence, the purpose of the initiative is to bring back the idea of graduation - the excitement of it - and, most importantly, the journey leading to #SecuringTheGrad! This is because graduation is a huge accomplishment and milestone for students: The great mark of success before becoming adults.

The second semester will be jampacked with exciting and intriguing activities to keep students engaged across the campuses. Communication of the events will be sent to students on their student emails and other official social media platforms.

Learning should be made fun with meaningful initiatives that tie in with teaching, learning, and ultimately students succeeding in their studies. At the end of the day, the idea is to create holistic student experiences that will enhance student success by having students that stay on track, and feel nurtured, connected, and engaged with the university.





STUDENT SUCCESS PORTAL

A wide array of resources, all in one place – Skills online, anytime, anywhere!



The student success portal is a collaborative Blackboard site that allows you to find valuable resources to support the development of crucial skills for your academic success, employability, computer competency and more! You can also connect with staff to help you succeed via the contact details for various student support services. This portal is just what you need as it not only offers you skills development but supports you to be a well-rounded UFS student.

“Every skill you acquire doubles your odds of success.” Scott Adams

Degree ≠ Career: Navigating my career

By: **Monique Schoeman**

Many of us dreamed of a specific job, like becoming a doctor, but what happens when my degree ≠ career or a specific job? The reality is that the vast majority of degrees do not lead to specific careers or jobs, but rather provide you with certain skills and basic knowledge that can be used in a variety of jobs. How you utilize your degree is up to you. Here are some basic steps to help you navigate your career:

Understand yourself

- Discover your strengths
- Identify what excites you
- Discover your interests and why those things interest you



If you need help at any point navigating your degree and career, contact your friendly Central Advisor at advising@ufs.ac.za (Bfn) or advisingqq@ufs.ac.za (QwaQwa).



Understand the world of work

- Discover sectors & jobs of interest
- Build your network & connect with people in those fields
- Visit career posting sites like LinkedIn Jobs & Careers24 to learn about different jobs

Map your journey

- Identify your A, B, and C jobs of interest
- Identify the responsibilities & skills for these jobs
- Take stock of your current skills
- Do a skills gap analysis (what skills you need, what you have & how you will develop those not yet attained)



A glowing neon speech bubble with a cyan-to-orange gradient. The text inside is white. The bubble has a tail pointing downwards and to the right, ending in a checkmark-like shape. The entire graphic is set against a dark blue background with a subtle gradient and a reflection effect at the bottom.

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