



Kovsies[®]
Advice

Hello

FIRST-
YEAR



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

UNIVERSITY OF THE
FREE STATE
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE
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UFS
CENTRE FOR TEACHING
AND LEARNING (CTL)

- 
- 4** Values matter - advise with knowledge, act with conviction
 - 6** Values Academic Advisors live by
 - 7** Standing on the shoulders of giants
 - 9** Innovative solutions for changing times
 - 10** Is inclusivity the new buzzword?
 - 11** Results-driven advice
 - 13** Respect as student currency
 - 14** Empowering you to achieve greatness
 - 16** The value of sharing
 - 17** Student voice - success awaits us
 - 18** Student leaders' poems on student success

CONTENT

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.
- These staff members 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).
- Advisors provide advice to students who have not yet decided on their final choice of study. They also help you 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.
- Peer advisors 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 prepared to support you and help you excel, belong, and reach your full potential.

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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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VALUES MATTER

Advise with **knowledge**, act with **conviction**

by **Masabata Mosoeu**
Senior Academic Advisor, CTL

Hello **First-Year!**

As you continue to settle into university, you will begin to acquire knowledge on a variety of subject matter, you will solidify your understanding of this subject matter through assessments, and you will play around with the idea of how to one day make your mark in society. Our hope for you, therefore, is that you maintain your “carriers of meaning”, also known as “values”. Defined as “broad desirable goals that motivate people’s actions and serve as guiding principles in their lives, values are there to help shape how we want to continue living our lives...when your academic goals are not what you anticipate, lean back into remembering what has brought you to where you are now” (Stassen, 2019).

The Central Academic Advisors have values that help guide our practice. These values firmly uphold the importance of ensuring that you leave university having experienced meaning while obtaining your qualification. We use our knowledge, skills, and expertise to guide you in your academic journey, providing support when the ground shakes beneath you. We are your cheerleaders, encouraging you to stay strong, persevere, and continue to show grit in the face of adversity.

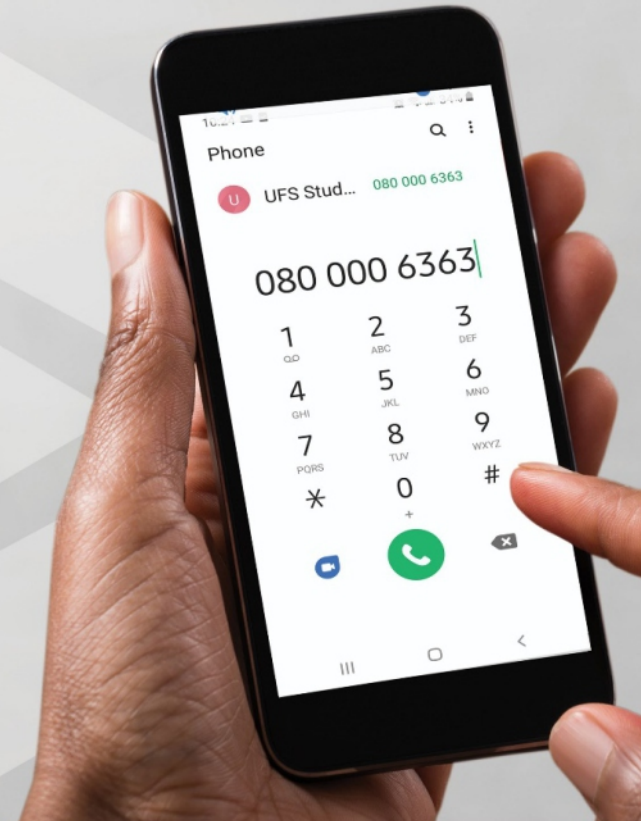
We are determined to work with you in co-creating a future that is unique to who you are and what you want to accomplish; we are committed to seeing you succeed. We help you align your personal, academic, and career interests, and we advise you with the vision that you will one day become the leaders of tomorrow. Prof. Petersen eloquently supports this by saying “While they are gracing our campuses, we need to contribute towards instilling ethical values in our leaders of tomorrow and equipping them with a vision that is much broader than just individual needs and wants, but that encompasses the needs of our society as a whole”(Peterson, 2023).

So, we encourage you to see this new journey as an adventure; as an opportunity to navigate and define your world and your values on your terms, all the while shaping your own future. As we help to connect you to the institution, we also connect you to the values that advisors live by, and how these values can help shape your first-year experience.

Resource: https://www.ted.com/talks/jan_stassen_why_values_matter_jan_2019
Peterson, Francis. *A culture of acceptance could be our country's greatest threat*. Accessed on 16 March 2023, <https://www.ufs.ac.za/templates/news-archive-item/campus-news/2023/march/a-culture-of-acceptance-could-be-our-country-s-greatest-threat>

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 your
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. All calls are confidential.

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

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

VALUES **ACADEMIC ADVISORS** LIVE BY

Collaboration – Together we're stronger

by: **Mary Masiloane**

Department of Public Administration and Management



Dear **First-year** student,

Congratulations! You have made it to university and have taken the first step towards building your bright future. Building networks and collaborating with your fellow students and the broader university community will be paramount to your success.


What is collaboration, you ask? Collaboration is the mutual engagement of people in a coordinated effort to solve a problem together. Collaborative interactions are characterised by mutual goals, a balance of structure, and a high degree of cooperation, interaction, and interdependence. These relations are particularly valuable for improving student learning and the university experience (Lai, 2011).

I encourage you, therefore, to collaborate with your fellow students by forming study groups, partaking in extracurricular activities, and forming friendships, camaraderie, and companionship with others. Having a network of peers you can approach for moral support, encouragement, reassurance, and a literal shoulder to cry on when times get tough will greatly benefit you.

Likewise, collaborate with the broader university community by engaging with your lecturers, academic advisors, career counsellors, and the university student support structures. These support structures, such as the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), are committed to reciprocal relationships with you, developed through consultation, to build strong learning communities. They are there to assist and guide you in whatever way you need to reach your goals.

I want to leave you with this quote:

So, go out there, and build those meaningful relations that will propel you to even greater heights!



"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."
- *Helen Keller.*

Standing on the shoulders of giants –

Academic **integrity** in writing

by: **Michelle Joubert**
Subject Specialist, CTL



What does “academic integrity” mean to you? Is it a feeling? A way of acting? A way of being in the world?

Academic integrity is a commitment to six fundamental values, even when faced with adversity: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage (TEQSA, 2023). It is “the moral code of academia. It involves using, generating, and communicating information in an ethical, honest, and responsible manner” (Monash University, 2013). In other words, we stand on the shoulders of giants – those academics, researchers, lecturers, and students who came before us. We learn from them and build on the knowledge they created. But to build upon knowledge responsibly, we need to credit those thinkers and researchers who came before us.

Resource: <https://www.buzzsprout.com/1874672>

Luckily, there are several things you can do to make sure that you write (and read) with academic integrity. Firstly, remember that you always need to reference anything that is not your own! Whenever you use someone else’s ideas, words, or images, you need to reference them. This includes anything taken from journal articles, textbooks, and internet sources; it even includes images, paintings, field notes, music, etc.

While you read and do your research, take notes of key information *in your own words*. Secondly, whenever you make a note of information, write down the FULL reference too! Make sure to always keep track of where information comes from; this will ensure that you don’t forget where the information came from, and can thus reference it properly. Finally, be sure to always reference properly. There are many referencing systems out there, but a useful starting point is: <https://purdueglobalwriting.center/writing-with-integrity/>.

There is a lot of information out there about how to reference, but if you’re ever unsure, then feel free to make a booking at the Write Site. We’re always there to help you with your academic writing!

References

- Guidance Note. 2023. *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency*. Online available: <https://bit.ly/43Cm3Sj> Accessed on 14 March 2023.
- Monash University. (2013). *Student Academic Integrity Policy*, Monash University Policy Bank.



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**

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Innovative solutions for changing times

by: **Teli Mothabeng (Tels)**
Student Recruitment Services

The job market has become a global battlefield, where young and talented individuals from all corners of the world compete for limited opportunities. The rise of modern-day technology has disrupted traditional industries and led to the creation of specialised jobs that require unique skills and knowledge. It's no secret that universities have always been perceived as institutions where students go to get their degrees. However, what many people fail to realise is that education is not just about obtaining a degree; it's about becoming someone who can make a significant impact in the world.

In today's world, technology has made it possible for anyone to become an entrepreneur or even a world leader. The playing field has been levelled, and the tools of the trade have been democratised. As a result, we should adopt a new perspective when it comes to pursuing higher education. Instead of viewing it as a way to "have something to fall back on", we should look at it as a means of becoming innovative and making a difference. Innovation is not just about creating something new; it's a mindset that requires constant growth, improvement, and a willingness to fail. It's about understanding the world and finding ways to make it a better place. Successful entrepreneurs are born when they use their expertise and grit to solve problems. And let's face it, every problem is a business opportunity waiting to be discovered.

Therefore, let's embrace the idea that attaining a university qualification is not just about gaining knowledge. It is also about developing a mindset that fosters innovation. Universities are places of knowledge, curiosity, research, critical thinking, and innovation. By using the skills and knowledge obtained through higher education, we can make a significant impact in the world and become the innovators of tomorrow. So ask yourself, "how can you use your higher education experience and qualification to make the world a better place?" The answer to that question might just lead you to become the next great entrepreneur or world leader.

Resource: *Podcast - Mind's Your Business - by Teli Like It Is (Tels)*



A pair of hands is shown holding a circle of colorful paper figures, symbolizing inclusivity and community. The figures are in various colors (green, orange, blue, purple, pink, yellow) and are holding hands, forming a circle. The hands are positioned at the top and bottom of the circle, suggesting they are supporting or presenting it. The background is a dark, textured surface.

Is inclusivity the new buzzword?

by: **Munita Dunn-Coetzee**
Student Counselling and Development



Being a first-year at the University of the Free State (UFS) gives you the opportunity to learn about so many new things: you get to meet new people; you are exposed to large volumes of literature and knowledge; you need to manage your own time; and, if you live alone, you will need to do your own washing and cooking. These new skills can be both exciting and terrifying at the same time. At times, you might feel as though you are speaking a new language, or that you are struggling to keep up with all the new information and concepts you are learning.

One of the words that you are probably hearing a lot is “inclusivity”. Have you wondered what this really means at the university level? Is this yet another buzzword? Being inclusive is about welcoming, developing, and advancing a diverse group of people. The idea is to ensure that everyone feels valued and that their opinion matters, no matter how different we are. The reality is that we all have blind spots – we tend to switch to auto-pilot when dealing with certain matters, and that guides our behaviour, thoughts, and reactions.

Have you noticed your own blind spots? An example might be that you are a male student and when you get to class, you immediately join a group of

other male students. They might also speak the same language and be the same race as you. By being on autopilot, you constantly surround yourself with people who are the same as you. Have you thought to reach out to some of the other students in your class and start a conversation? Diversity enhances self-awareness; by exposing ourselves to people who have different backgrounds and experiences, we gain insight into our own thought processes, life experiences, and values.

Attending university is a journey, and it is up to you what you make of this journey. Will you grab opportunities to challenge yourself and learn more about other students? This will enable you to become an independent thinker, who tries to really understand the realities of our changing world. It will also enable you to become an agent of social change. As a student, you can impact others' lives by embracing diversity as healthy, possible, and inspirational.

Are you up to the challenge of ensuring that inclusivity is more than just a buzzword at the UFS? Let's do it!



Results-driven advice

by: **Evidence Based Change**, CTL

The Beginning University Survey of Student Engagement (BUSSE) asks first-years to share some of their academic background from high school. It also asks them what academic experiences they expect to encounter at university. These experiences relate to their academic engagement and success during their first year; understanding these experiences helps the university have a positive impact on all first-year students. The information that students share enables the university to help first-years with needs specific to them, such as the data shown below. For example, first-year students know that they will have to spend more time on their homework than they did in high school; they also need to spend less time relaxing and socialising than they did in high school. However, many first-years are still worried that they will find it difficult to manage their time. If you're one of these students, don't worry, because your advisors are ready to assist you with time management skills if you struggle. They can also help you with study skills when you are not certain how to study at a university level. We can put in place this kind of support because previous BUSSE participants helped us understand what challenges first-year students might have. You can help too! Help us to be even better prepared for future first-years by completing the BUSSE survey and sharing your voice with us.

Resources: [https://www.ufs.ac.za/ctl/home-page/teaching-resources/south-african-surveys-of-student-engagement-\(sasse\)](https://www.ufs.ac.za/ctl/home-page/teaching-resources/south-african-surveys-of-student-engagement-(sasse))



HELP US, HELP YOU!

Participate in the Beginning University Survey of Student Engagement (BUSSE)

The BUSSE helps us to understand first year students and their needs. Did you know that first year Kowsies spent:

10
hours per
week

Average time spent on homework in secondary school.



11
hours per
week

Average time expected to spend on homework in first year of university.



5
hours per
week

Average time spent relaxing in secondary school.



4
hours per
week

Average time expected to spend relaxing in first year of university.



6
10

Students are worried that they will not be able to manage their time during their first year of study...
We have developed support to assist.



2
10

Students do not think they will be able to study when there are other interesting things to do... *We assist you to develop this level of focus.*



Check your UFS4life email (from *University of the Free State* <feedback@questback.net>) for the link to the BUSSE survey and add your voice so we can support you.





Respect as student currency

by: **Thando Ngwelingwe**
Junior Academic Advisor, CTL

Congratulations first-year student! You are now a Kovsie; you made it. On your journey as a student, there will be many occasions for you to practice being respectful. Being a respectful student can make you a favourable candidate when opportunities come knocking. It can take you far, so keep in mind the following: Firstly, respect the **reason** you are here. For some students, being at university is a dream come true. For others, it may be a second or third option. What matters, however, is that you are here. Respect the reason you are here, and never forget it. Secondly, respect the **opportunity** you have been given to be a part of the university. Keep in mind that this opportunity was granted to you for a reason. Thirdly, respect **time** and use it wisely. Time is of the essence. Before you know it, your time at university will be over; make it count. Fourthly, respect your **academics**. To attain academic success, you need to hold it in high regard; as the saying goes: “respect paves the way to success”. Fifthly, respect **people**. Be considerate of others and do right by them; be a good peer to your fellow students. Respect your lecturers, seniors, and everyone you encounter, since any one of those people might be exactly who you need to get you to where you need to be. Lastly, respect **yourself**. You are your own most useful commodity; you are worthy and deserving of respect. Respect your mind, body, and soul. You have come a long way, so respect yourself.

Make respect a value you stand for, and see how it opens doors for you. From here onward make respect a part of who you are, and it will light your path and lead you to success. Good luck first-year student.



Empowering you to achieve greatness

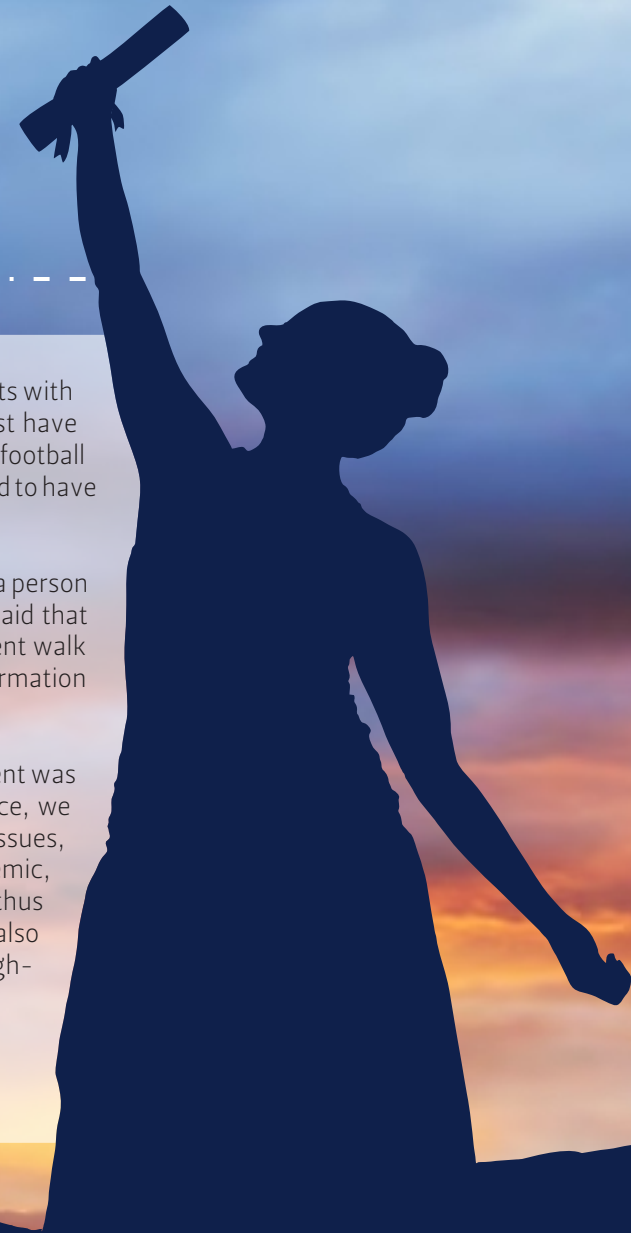
by: Katleho Lechoo; Angelo Arendsa and Tumi Radebe

Any attempt to truly empower an individual must come from the human value of care; equipping students with the necessary skills and confidence to succeed, is a process. To properly empower a student, you must have passion and an understanding of their different socio-economic backgrounds. According to the football management team, you need to be understanding of the current South African human condition; you need to have emotional intelligence and patience to have an impact on the growth of students.

You need the skills and expertise to help students formulate their vision for their university journeys. For a person to empower students, they need to be a true dream catcher. Indeed, the football management team said that “This process moves from a guided step-by-step process with support service to a confident independent walk where a student has confidence in the support services and the knowledge of how to source help and information needed for their academic journey”.

The vision for the Kovsie football team's “Empower Programme” started at a Christian home cell. The intent was to help grow and stimulate both the team and the individual spirit of the students. In this trusted space, we uncovered our students' daily fears, pressures, and frustrations. To assist students in coping with these issues, the University of the Free State decided to create a platform, which the students can utilise for academic, psychological, and career support services in order to foster their success. The project “Empower” was thus birthed. It is a project that shows that we care about our students' success and future. This platform also emphasises academics, career development, and the psychological well-being and balance of the high-performance student-athlete.

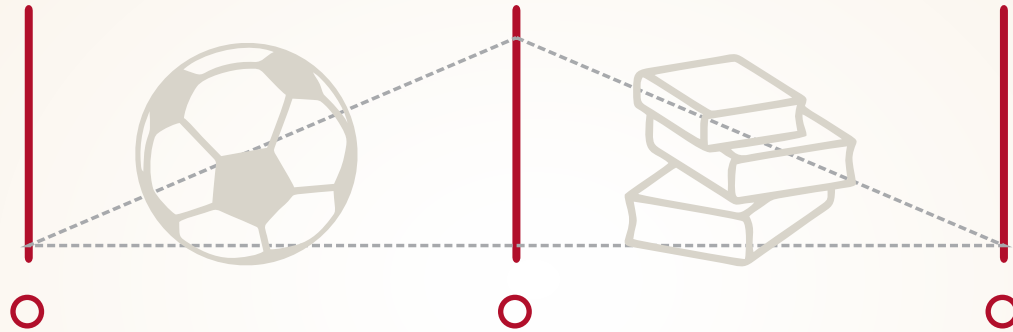
“For Kovsie Football it is a gift that we will keep on giving to our students while they are at the University.”



Kovsie Football



EMPOWER



CAREER
DEVELOPMENT



CENTRE FOR
TEACHING &
LEARNING



COUNSELLING

Kovsie Sport





The value of sharing

by: **Zizipho Kula**
Junior Academic Advisor, CTL



In this new year, in your first year, how about you make a difference in someone's life? Share the things you have with other people. This does not mean that you must give away everything you have, but it does mean that you can give away what you do not need, or whatever you can contribute. If you do not know where or how to start, the following are just a few ideas.

Share your food with others. If you know of someone who is struggling with funding or food, how about you share what you have with them? If you can, buy a loaf of bread for someone, or even canned foods (that's the best).

Share your time with others. Spend time with friends doing things that you enjoy, like going to the mall or playing sports.

Share your knowledge. If you know there is a module that you understand better than those around you, then share what you know. You may be surprised at the new things you can learn from others.

Share clothes that you no longer need. Some students aren't as privileged as others and may need some warm clothes, or shoes to wear. Make someone smile by sharing.

Sharing is not about making someone feel small, but it is about showing someone that people do care. Sharing is about exchanging in the spirit of generosity and respect; it's about building relationships and spreading the philosophy of Ubuntu.

So, make a difference in someone's life, and share.



STUDENT VOICE

Success awaits us

by: **Karabo Rasheane**

B.Soc.Sc majoring in Criminology and Psychology



Feeling like you don't belong in a new environment is common, but it's not actually as big a deal as we might think, and can be easily overcome. Finding a connection to something or someone can help alleviate this feeling of not belonging. It could be your favourite spot to relax, a quiet place to stargaze, or even a peaceful walk to class. These small things can provide a sense of comfort and familiarity, especially when you're feeling isolated or need a break.

For those who enjoy socialising, making friends can be the key to feeling a sense of belonging. While it may seem daunting to make friends in a new environment, it's often easier than it appears. Simply initiating a conversation with a classmate can be a good starting point. If the conversation flows and you feel comfortable, you may have found a new friend! If not, don't give up and keep trying until you find someone who clicks with you.

Every household has its own values that shape our identity, and it's essential to hold onto them in a new environment. Upholding your values can be the key to feeling a sense of belonging and completing the puzzle of your identity. The University values integrity, equity, and impartiality, amongst others, with integrity being the most crucial aspect of one's character. Honesty and moral values form the foundation of our personality. Without them, the university is hollow and meaningless, and its existence becomes pointless.

You'll be a part of this community for at least three years, so it's essential to adapt and make yourself at home. Your primary goal is to obtain your qualification, which is why you're here. University can be a life-changing experience that shapes your character, so seize the opportunity. Get your degree and start your new journey in life.

Student leaders' poems on student success

ALL RISE! (Law Tutors 2023)

*Thadeus Johannes, Bandile Moyo, Patrick Vilakazi, Morena Ramokoma,
Mbuso Mahlangu, Nathan Paul*

A student's success is a matter of time,
with patience and effort, it will surely shine.
Hard work and dedication, each day and night
brings closer the goal of a future so bright.
So, strive for excellence, put in your all
And success, my friend, will surely befall.

EDU GURUS (EMS Tutors 2023)

*Kgauhelo Seekane, Lutho Mdingi, Tshoma Amohelang, Adelia Chauque,
Londiwe Ntuli, Nomonde Boo*

Attending classes all day just to finesse
Going through all the content to progress
Doing all the activities to express
All roads lead to student success!

“ A highly developed
values system is like
a compass. It serves as
a guide to point you in
the right direction
when you are lost. ”
- Idowu Koyenikan

