



# Res Life and College Communities

T: +27 51 401 9111 | E: [info@ufs.ac.za](mailto:info@ufs.ac.za) | [www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za)

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

# Living-Learning Communities

## Fostering Student Wellbeing



T: +27 51 401 9111 | E: [info@ufs.ac.za](mailto:info@ufs.ac.za) | [www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za)

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

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



# BACKGROUND

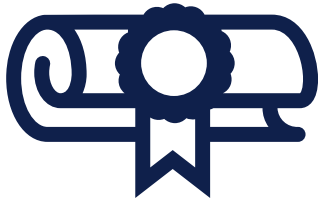
## Aim

- Residence Life is central in shaping the student experience outside the classroom. to promote holistic student development within student communities by ensuring that residence students become actively involved in formally organized residence-related activities and programs, which forms both the core of student life, as well as a foundation of a healthy campus culture.
- The development of students and the management of the residences are driven by the vision, mission and values of the University, Student Affairs as well as the vision and mission of the Division Housing and Residence Affairs.

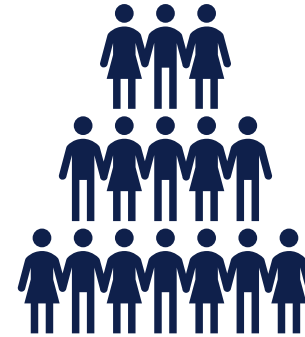
T: +27 51 401 9111 | E: [info@ufs.ac.za](mailto:info@ufs.ac.za) | [www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za)

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

# Student Success



RL fosters a supportive living environment that helps FY students adjust to university life, develop attributes that persists through graduation.



Research consonantly shows, students who live in well-managed residences have higher retention and success rates.

T: +27 51 401 9111 | E: [info@ufs.ac.za](mailto:info@ufs.ac.za) | [www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za)

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

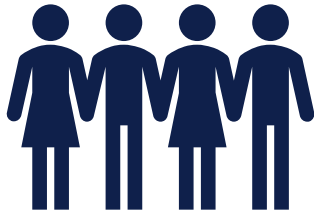
# UFS Context Living-Learning at Work



T: +27 51 401 9111 | E: [info@ufs.ac.za](mailto:info@ufs.ac.za) | [www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za)

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

# Sense of Belonging



A strong RL programme creates a sense of community, inclusion and belonging.



This is especially important for FTEN orientation, international and marginalized students who may face challenges adjusting to university.

T: +27 51 401 9111 | E: [info@ufs.ac.za](mailto:info@ufs.ac.za) | [www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za)

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



# Sense of Belonging

- **Inclusive Environment:** Create a welcoming and inclusive environment that respects diversity and celebrates individual differences.
- **Student Leadership:** Train and empower students to take ownership of their living community by involving them in decision-making processes and leadership. Leadership roles like RC/RA, peer mentors, HRA, disciplinary committees
- **Value driven Residences:** A value-driven approach emphasizes the importance of shared values and principles in shaping the community's culture and practices.
  - It creates a supportive and inclusive environment where residents feel valued, respected, and can thrive personally and academically.
  - By prioritizing values, residence communities create a more positive and enriching experience for students, contributing to their overall well-being and academic success

T: +27 51 401 9111 | E: [info@ufs.ac.za](mailto:info@ufs.ac.za) | [www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za)

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

# Promote Academic Success

- **Academic Support:** Offer tutoring, study groups, and workshops focused on academic skills development.  
Academic advising and support by CTL.
- **Faculty Involvement:** Encourage faculty to interact with students outside of the classroom, such as holding office hours in the residence halls or participating in community events.
- **Learning-Focused Environments:** Integrate academic themes and learning activities into the residence environment. Spaces like study rooms and academic hours in residences promote an academic environment.

T: +27 51 401 9111 | E: [info@ufs.ac.za](mailto:info@ufs.ac.za) | [www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za)

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



# Supportive and Safe Environment



RL contributes to student well-being through value driven communities, mental health support, mentor support and RC/RA support.



RH and RC/RAs are generally first responders to interpersonal conflict and mental health crises.

T: +27 51 401 9111 | E: [info@ufs.ac.za](mailto:info@ufs.ac.za) | [www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za)

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

# Provide Access and Resources to Support

- **Counselling Services:** Make counselling services readily available to students and promote mental health awareness.
- **Health and Wellness Programs:** Offer programs that address physical and mental health, such as fitness classes, workshops on stress management, and healthy eating advice.
- **Resource Referrals:** Provide information and referrals to other campus resources, such as career services, disability services, and financial aid.
- **Training of Residence Heads and RCs/RAs:** Empowering leadership through training, workshops and information sessions on management and referral of student well-being challenges (personal, academic , mental)

T: +27 51 401 9111 | E: [info@ufs.ac.za](mailto:info@ufs.ac.za) | [www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za)

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

# Integrated Programming

- **Pre-orientation and Orientation Programs:**

Utilize pre-orientation sessions, orientation events, and workshops to introduce students to available well-being resources and foster a sense of belonging.

**Community Engagement:**

Create opportunities for students to engage with the wider campus community through volunteer opportunities, campus events, and partnerships with local organizations.

**Student Health and Wellness Programmes**

T: +27 51 401 9111 | E: [info@ufs.ac.za](mailto:info@ufs.ac.za) | [www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za)

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

# Student Health & Wellness

This includes exploring ways in which:

*Living and learning environments can enhance and support **adequate** sleep, **nutrition**, **exercise**, **recreation**, **positive coping strategies**, **healthy social and sexual relationships**, and **a sense of belonging** within residences.*



T: +27 51 401 9111 | E: [info@ufs.ac.za](mailto:info@ufs.ac.za) | [www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za)

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

# The Wellness Wheel



- Physical
- Emotional
- Social
- Financial
- Environmental
- Occupational
- Spiritual
- Intellectual
- \*Mental

T: +27 51 401 9111 | E: [info@ufs.ac.za](mailto:info@ufs.ac.za) | [www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za)

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

# The Wellness Wheel

- Provides **insight** into activities that help enhance students' wellness.
- Each **dimension** is interrelated, and the development of each dimension can promote wellbeing and health.
- We recognise that students who **develop** holistically usually thrive and feel better equipped to manage their lives.

T: +27 51 401 9111 | E: [info@ufs.ac.za](mailto:info@ufs.ac.za) | [www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za)

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



# UFS Context



**INTENTIONAL DESIGN –  
SELECT THEMES BASED  
ON STUDENT NEEDS.**



**PARTNERSHIPS – SCD,  
CTL, CUADS, ACADEMIC  
DEPARTMENTS.**



**STUDENT LEADERSHIP –  
RAS, HOUSE  
COMMITTEES, PEER  
MENTORS.**



**CONTINUOUS FEEDBACK  
– SURVEYS, FOCUS  
GROUPS, ADAPTIVE  
PROGRAMMING.**

T: +27 51 401 9111 | E: [info@ufs.ac.za](mailto:info@ufs.ac.za) | [www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za)

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

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



# Student Voices

- **“Living in a community where everyone shares the same passion made me feel like I finally belonged.”**
- **“The support I received in my residence helped me thrive both academically and mentally.”**

T: +27 51 401 9111 | E: [info@ufs.ac.za](mailto:info@ufs.ac.za) | [www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za)

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

# UFS Context Living-Learning at Work



Reimagine residence life as a transformative ecosystem.



“When students feel a sense of belonging, they thrive. When they thrive, they graduate. When they graduate, they change the world.”

T: +27 51 401 9111 | E: [info@ufs.ac.za](mailto:info@ufs.ac.za) | [www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za)

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

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



# Thank you

**Chantal Kader**

**Assistant Director: Residence Life and College Communities**

**[kadercb@ufs.ac.za](mailto:kadercb@ufs.ac.za)**

**Ms Juvinia Sekoe**

**Helath and Wellness Coordinator**

**[sekoejg@ufs.ac.za](mailto:sekoejg@ufs.ac.za)**

T: +27 51 401 9111 | E: [info@ufs.ac.za](mailto:info@ufs.ac.za) | [www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za)

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

# Discussion

T: +27 51 401 9111 | E: [info@ufs.ac.za](mailto:info@ufs.ac.za) | [www.ufs.ac.za](http://www.ufs.ac.za)

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