STUDENT AFFAIRS
STRATEGIC PLAN **2019 – 2022**

VERSION 4

Inspiring excellence. Transforming lives.

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

UFS·UV
STUDENT AFFAIRS
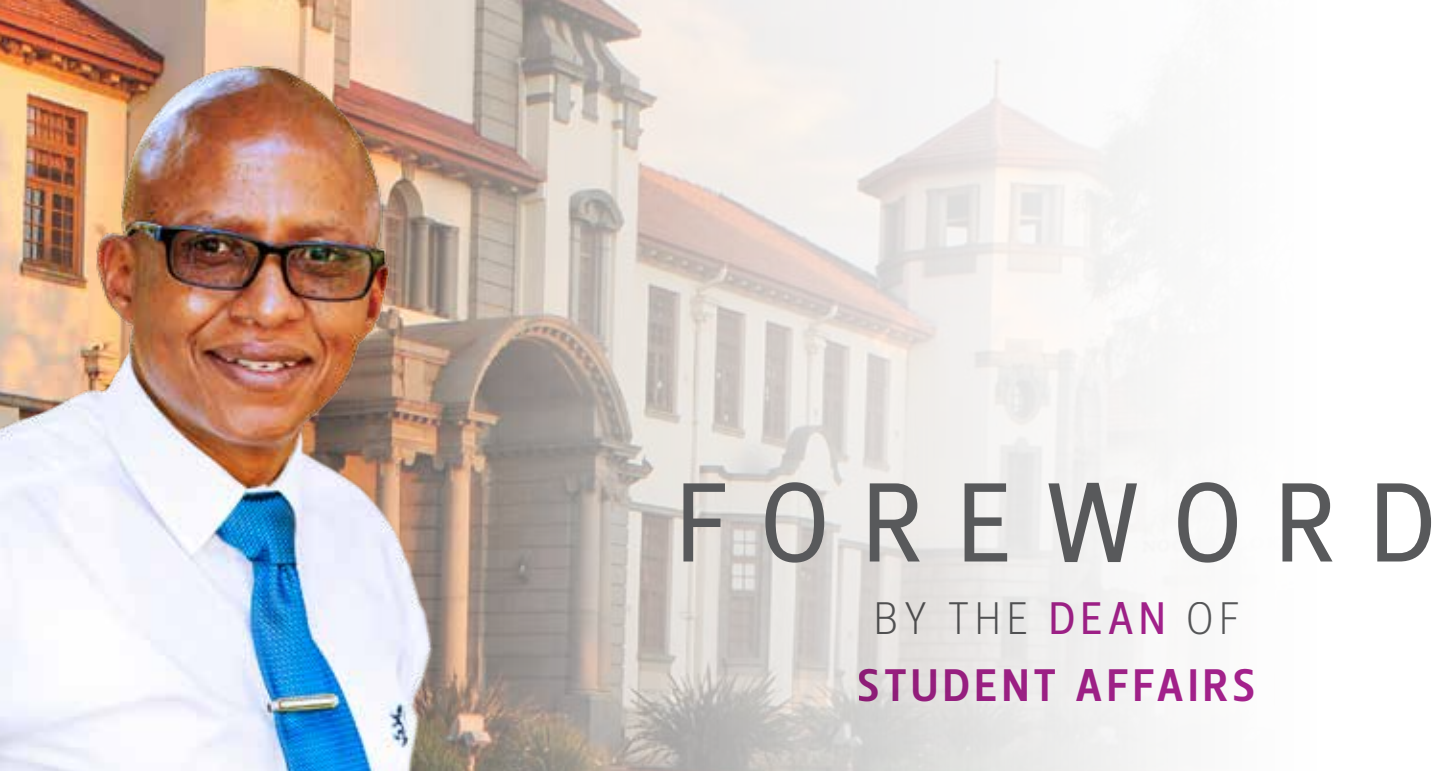
F O R E W O R D

BY THE DEAN OF
STUDENT AFFAIRS

The Student Affairs Humanising Strategy 2022 (HS 2022) echoes the spirit of the University of the Free State (UFS) Strategy 2018-2022, which identifies seven strategic goals (and objectives): *goal 1 - improve student success and wellbeing; goal 2 - renew and transform the curriculum; goal 3 - increase UFS contribution to local, regional and global knowledge; goal 4 - support development and social justice through engaged scholarship; goal 5 - increase the efficiency and effectiveness of governance and support systems; goal 6 - achieve financial sustainability; goal 7 - advance an institutional culture that demonstrates the values of the UFS.*

HS 2022 is committed to the UFS Integrated Transformation Plan (ITP). The ITP imagines a transformed university in South Africa as: *"...one which will strive for social justice in everything it does. It will be an institution where its diverse people feel a sense of common purpose and where the symbols and spaces, systems and daily practices all reflect commitment to openness and engagement. It will respond to the needs of the local community, while at the same time participating in global knowledge production. It will be an institution that engages actively with its colonial and apartheid legacies and recognises its common humanity and the universal nature*

of intellectual endeavour. A transformed university will be a place for competing views, disagreements, and sometimes even discomfort" (ITP: 2017, p. 2).

The collaboratively developed ITP Framework indicates that *"...transformation in South Africa means the dismantling of the legacy of apartheid and colonialism at political, social, economic, and intellectual levels in order to adopt new practices, modes of organisation, and values capable of delivering social justice"* (p. 2). So, in the end, 10 work streams, grouped into three broad areas, were chosen: **Core University Functions** - *Teaching and Learning, Research, Internationalisation and Innovation, and Engaged Scholarship;* **University Culture** - *Student Experience, Staff Experience and Composition, Names, Symbols, and Spaces, and Universal Access;* **Structural Issues** - *Financial Framework (Size & Shape), Governance, Systems, Policy, and Administration and The Multi-Campus Model.*

HS 2022 assists Student Affairs in reimagining its role, aims and objectives. The intersectionality framework has been chosen to articulate and address the reality that the Academic Project and the Human Project cannot be separated. We believe that HS 2022, which is built with the ITP as our foundation, will enhance the holistic development of students and humanise their lived experiences.

In addition, we realise that Student Affairs can only enhance the impact of implementing its mandate through existing (and new) collaborations and partnerships with other UFS departments and divisions.

The Student Affairs Division will contribute or add value to the UFS through:

• *Co-curricular programmes and activities (Academic Project). These programmes and activities will be presented through the College of Student Affairs.*
• *The two pedagogies (the humanising pedagogy and the pedagogy of discomfort) and universal access. These pedagogies, in our view, advance the aspirations of the Human Project.*
• *The intersectionality framework. This framework recognises the intersectionality of lived student and staff experiences. Our students do not live single lives; therefore, we cannot use single strategies to address multiple issues. The intersectionality framework allows us to address the multiple identities embodied by our students.*

This strategic plan articulates the commitment of all Student Affairs departments, captures the vision of the team, and aligns itself with the larger UFS strategy and the ITP for the next five years. The spirit of commitment and enthusiasm evident in the team, the positive energy characterising our interactions, the emphasis on appreciative

inquiry, and the two abovementioned pedagogies permeate the five key areas that together form the cornerstone and focal point of the Strategic Plan, namely:

• *Professionalisation*
• *High-impact practices*
• *Student communities and structures*
• *Intersectionality, partnerships and collaboration*
• *Integrated Transformation Plan – Institutional Change: Social Justice, Social Cohesion, Critical Diversity*

The departments will continue to pursue their particular mandates in order to translate them into service deliverables within the context of their specific work areas, taking account of the five aforementioned key areas. This plan is the direct result of the discussions conducted at the first Strategic Planning Workshop held from 24 to 26 October 2016 and the Strategic Plan Review Workshop held from 29 November to 1 December 2017 and it seeks to facilitate the implementation of the ideas related to the five key areas. Student Affairs will continue to receive inputs from our three campuses to make our strategy of humanising the student lived experience a reality.

Mr Pura Mgolombane
DEAN OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

CONTENTS

1 | VISION & MISSION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

1.1. VISION

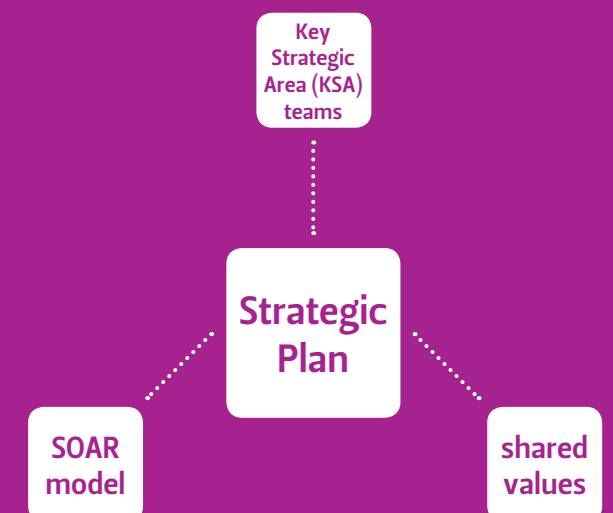To be a data-driven, evidence-based co-curricular environment.

1.2. MISSION

- To base the University of the Free State's (UFS) institutional culture on values, humanising behaviour, human rights and socially just principles;
- To advocate prosocial student behaviour, student engagement and an inclusive institutional culture;
- To provide support for student well-being;
- To develop effective student governance and leadership excellence. leadership excellence.

2 | THE ANCHORS OF THE STUDENT AFFAIRS STRATEGIC PLAN

The DSA values will be based on the five core institutional values, namely:

The Student Affairs strategic plan is anchored in three ways, namely: (1) shared values; (2) Key Strategic Area (KSA) teams; and (3) the SOAR model for strategic planning/renewal.

The purpose of these three anchors is to create creative tension so that the strategic plan remains relevant to changes in the current student population, is aligned with institutional imperatives and is implemented in ways that uphold high professional standards.

The diagram below illustrates how these aspects anchor the Student Affairs strategic plan in a dynamic way:

Key
Strategic
Area (KSA)
teams

Strategic
Plan

SOAR
model

shared
values

3 | VALUES OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

The purpose of the shared values of Student Affairs (as elaborately defined in the Values Charter for Humanising Lived Experiences) is to align the Student Affairs strategy to that of the Institutional Transformation Plan (ITP) of the University of the Free State (UFS). This document highlights an ethical praxis founded on a notion which emphasises reason in answering the question of how life should be lived according to one's actions, behaviours and choices. Thus, the value proposition of Student Affairs is to create a socially just student life experience that is conducive to student academic success, student engagement and critical thinking. Accordingly, Student Affairs' thoughts, intentions, actions and reflections will be based on the following values:

HUMANITY
· Student Affairs emphasises treating all students and staff with dignity and respect.

ETHICS
· It is critically important that students and staff be guided by ethical principles. Thus, all students and staff members are encouraged to strive to do what is ethically good for oneself, others, the institution and society in general.

CRITICAL DIVERSITY LITERACY
· All Student Affairs programmes and activities emphasise a way of thinking that seeks to identify, deconstruct and disrupt power structures in order to create possibilities for social justice. In this regard, Student Affairs facilitates the ability of all students and staff members to play a meaningful role in the transformation of the UFS to create a culturally inclusive institution.

SOCIAL JUSTICE
· All students and staff members are guided by an intersectionality framework that encourages a deeper understanding of the value of critical diversity. In this way, Student Affairs facilitates humanising lived student experiences.

INTEGRITY
· Integrity is a value of the highest importance. It is only through this fundamental value that a socially just society will be possible. This principle emphasises the promotion of honesty, truthfulness, trustworthiness, reliability and virtuousness among students and staff members alike.

INNOVATION
· The Department of Student Affairs (DSA) recognises innovation as a key ingredient to success and excellence in the 21st century. Accordingly, DSA encourages students and staff to innovate as part of their daily activities, practices and projects.

The DSA believes that **integrity** is a **value of the highest importance**. Although we accept that rules, regulations, policies and procedures are necessary to enforce minimum standards of human behaviour, we also believe that all these efforts will come to nothing without **personal integrity.**

4 | REFLECTING ON PROGRESS

The Student Affairs Humanising Strategy 2022 (HS 2022) is based on the revised UFS Strategy of 2019-2022, which identifies the following strategic goals and objectives:

- Improve student success and well-being by humanising students and serving as advocates for this process;
- Renew and transform the curriculum;
- Increase the UFS's contribution to local, regional and global knowledge in conjunction with defined UFS goals;
- Support the development of social justice through engaged scholarship, thus promoting the development of 'self' in addition to encouraging engagement;
- Increase efficiency and effectiveness of governance and support systems, thus advocating for positive change;
- Achieve financial sustainability;
- Advance the institutional culture that demonstrates the values of the UFS by emphasising values that represent both the institution and its diverse student population.

The UFS ITP is formulated according to a framework which emphasises the dismantling of a legacy of colonialism at a political, social, economic and intellectual level. This allows for the adaptation of Student Affairs to new practices and models of organisation, while also instituting values capable of delivering social justice.

Thus, Student Affairs acknowledges three core areas of focus:

- The core university function of teaching and learning, research, internationalisation, innovation and engaged scholarship;
- A university culture comprised of student and staff experiences, composition (names, symbols and spaces) as well as universal access;
- Structural issues, specifically the financial framework, governance, systems, policies and administration.

5 | STUDENT AFFAIRS KEY STRATEGIC AREAS

The SOAR Model was used as a blueprint for strategic engagement. "Like the original [Appreciative Inquiry] (AI) 4-D model, the AI approach to strategic planning starts with an inquiry -- using unconditional positive questions to discovery the organization's core values, vision, strengths, and potential opportunities. The inquiry is a time of reflection into the strengths of the past and how these have been constructed with an eye towards creating the change we may desire (i.e. step 1 and 2). Next, the participants enter the imagination phase, in which time is spent dreaming and co-constructing the preferred future. At this transformation point, values are affirmed and long-term objectives and strategic alternatives and recommendations are presented in this phase. The next phase is a time of innovation to begin the strategic design of objectives, tactical and functional plans, integrated programmes, structures, and systems to best achieve the desired future. To ensure that measurable results are achieved, the AI approach and SOAR framework recognize that [we] must be inspired through authentic recognition and reward systems. In short, the process of assessment, planning, implementation, and control is replaced with the concepts of 'inquire', 'imagine', 'innovate', and 'inspire'" (Stavros, Cooperrider & Kelley, 2003).

The SOAR model has assisted Student Affairs in identifying its Key Strategic Areas (KSA) as follows:

KSA 1 | PROFESSIONALISATION

We care deeply about the professionalisation of Student Affairs and aspire to prioritise research in order to ensure that our praxis remains data-driven. We passionately want to develop Student Affairs staff in such a way that they remain relevant to the developmental needs of students and exhibit a competitive edge within the higher-education sector.

We recognise that the continuous professional development of staff in key competency areas presents itself as a definite opportunity to professionalise Student Affairs at the UFS even further. The opportunity to build a strong partnership with Human Resources and to establish a system of recognition for the professional achievements of staff is therefore important. The reimagining of roles and responsibilities in order to create a more effective structure is also seen as an important prospect to pursue.

We wish to build on our current strengths and successes. Past experiences with the Odyssey and Tipping Points programmes have created a firm foundation for the professionalisation of Student Affairs. Furthermore, the existing culture of ownership and accountability and our willingness to be proactive are considered huge assets in the current environment. The way in which the Student Affairs research desk functions also helps to strengthen this professionalisation.

GOAL STATEMENTS
- Enhance research outputs with a distinct scholarly focus;
- Increase the visibility of Student Affairs as a profession;
- Foster the continuous professional development of staff;
- Actively link and contribute to Student Affairs organisations and professional bodies;
- Design and implement a Student Affairs-specific orientation platform.

KSA 2 | HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICES
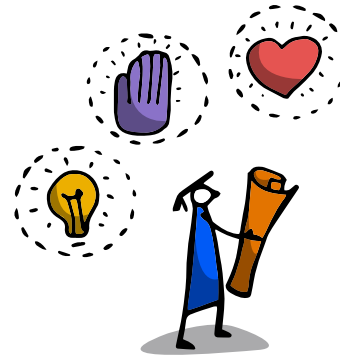
We care deeply about the employability of our graduates, and are therefore passionate about developing graduate attributes through co-curricular programmes and high-impact practices. In this regard, the various student communities are seen as bodies that provide access to the co-curriculum. Because we want our students to develop as global leaders in their fields, it is vital that our co-curricular programmes and activities become internationally recognised. This makes the seamless integration of in-class and out-of-class student experiences an important aspiration, something which points towards the academic reconfiguration of Student Life Colleges.

A distinct opportunity exists to create an academic-development committee for Student Affairs. The reconfiguration of existing programmes and activities in order to purposefully align them with specific developmental outcomes is therefore considered an important strategic opportunity. Additionally, the fostering of internal and external partnerships, and the professional development of personnel are also important strategic prospects to pursue.

Current programmes and activities have a number of strengths that can help to effectively develop graduate attributes through co-curricular programmes and high-impact practices. The current systems encourage active student participation. Although over-involvement can become counterproductive, active engagement currently forms a strong basis to work from. Also, the current way in which programmes and activities are assessed and evaluated forms a good foundation for future research. In this regard, an opportunity exists to relate data more effectively to the theory of student development, and to produce applicable research outputs. The involvement of students in annual planning and feedback conversations on co-curricular programmes creates a culture in which students become actively engaged in these programmes

and, consequently, receive proper recognition for them, something that is integral to creating student buy-in. Leadership development is considered a particular strength in this regard.

GOAL STATEMENTS
- Align identified programmes with graduate attributes and programme outcomes and dimensions;
- Make all programmes purposeful and ensure they are data-driven and evidence-based (include evaluations);
- Investigate co-curricular platforms;
- Employ an external expert to assist in the consultation of co-curricular record development;
- Investigate the accreditation process.

KSA 3 | STUDENT COMMUNITIES AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

We care deeply about creating inclusive student communities that embrace students in all their diversity, and we provide opportunities for all to access developmental co-curricular programmes and activities. The wellness of all students, whether on campus or off campus, is important to us and, through active involvement in student communities, all students will have the opportunity to develop individually and collectively.

We acknowledge that these aspirations cannot be achieved in isolation, and we therefore aim to collaborate closely with strategic partners, internally and externally. Furthermore, we see the development of personnel and student competencies as an opportunity to establish the kind of environment we aspire to. We also recognise the growth of commuter-student

engagement in student communities as a particular opportunity to pursue. Social media and other forms of communication can also be used to achieve our goals.

In all of this, we wish to build on our current strengths and successes. The diversity of our student communities and the sense of belonging that has been created (through the nesting of smaller systems in larger systems) are seen as particular strengths. The establishment of a conversational culture (and the way in which it has helped to address stereotypical thinking) has laid a firm foundation for future discussions and the continuous transformation of student communities. The value-driven approach provides strength and direction to students, and the way in which residences share resources with one another builds strong student communities. Also, the encouragement of student engagement in programmes and activities enhances individual and collective development. The current peer mentor programme, with its mediated learning approach, is also a tremendous asset.

GOAL STATEMENTS
- Increase participation, especially amongst the commuter populations, in student communities and governance structures;
- Embed student life colleges as umbrella structures for student communities on all three campuses to foster interconnectedness;
- Strengthen and align all student governance structures across all three campuses with the Institutional Student Representative Council (ISRC) Constitution;
- Facilitate the intentional engagement of governance structures for different student communities in Student Affairs programmes and activities (be the 'bridge'), i.e. advocate an inclusive institutional culture;
- Establish student communities that are sensitive and responsive to the lived experiences of students.

KSA 4 | MULTI-CAMPUS MODEL (COLLABORATION)
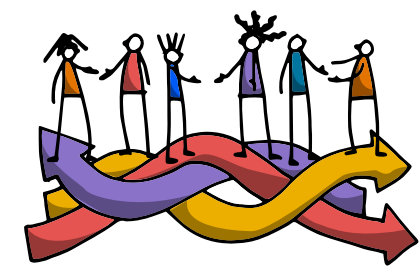
We care deeply about creating intersections between different programmes, departments, groups and campuses. We recognise that growth and development happen at the place of discomfort and therefore aspire to create a disequilibrium through interconnections.

In this regard, we consider the fostering of partnerships and collaborations within Student Affairs, the university and the wider community as a distinct opportunity to establish this ethos in the whole environment.

The current intersectional framework, the pedagogy of discomfort and the humanising pedagogy form a firm foundation for creating this kind of environment.

GOAL STATEMENTS
• Increase the impact of programmes: ensure programmes are data-driven and evidence-based, diverse and inclusive;
• Foster and strengthen internal and external partnerships;
• Strengthen staff collegiality between and within all three campuses.

KSA 5 | INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION PLAN (ITP):
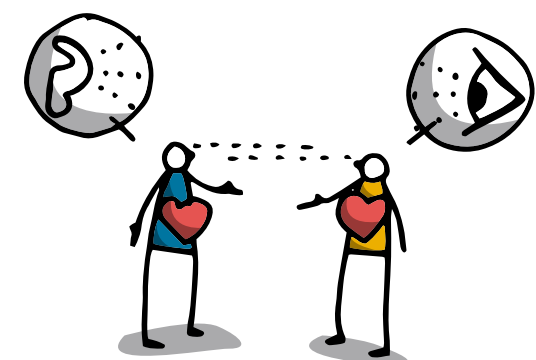
Institutional Change, Social Justice, Social Cohesion and Critical Diversity

We care deeply about and commit ourselves to creating a campus climate that is socially just. We recognise that this can be achieved through our understanding of the value of diversity and through our collective efforts to interrupt and eradicate all forms of unearned power and privilege, internalised oppression, internalised domination and discrimination. Through the pursuit of social justice and critical diversity, we aspire towards creating a socially cohesive student body, student life and UFS community. The ideal is that the UFS community uses its power and privileged position to ensure humanising lived experiences for those who are less privileged (i.e. socially, economically, politically, religiously, sexually, culturally and with regards to disability, class, origin and language, etc.)

We will work with various institutional governance structures of the university (SRC, Institutional Forum, Senate and Council), university management, faculties and departments. This will be done through the Integrated Transformation Plan (ITP).

In this regard, we consider the fostering of partnerships and collaborations between Student Affairs, the university and the wider community as a distinct opportunity to establish the ethos, as set out in this document, in the whole environment.

The current intersectional framework, the pedagogy of discomfort and the humanising pedagogy form a firm foundation for transformation. The ITP will facilitate the creation of socially just, humanising, lived experiences for members of the university community. It is important that these members be critical of their positions of power and privilege and that they intentionally work towards ensuring social justice and social cohesion.

GOAL STATEMENTS
• Launch themed and imagined advocacy and awareness programmes;
• Host critical contemporary conversations and dialogues;
• Host seminars and summits;
• Develop value-driven conversations in student residences;
• Develop value-driven conversations and dialogues for the broader UFS community;
• Host themed critical conversations for Student Affairs staff (Tipping Points), on all three campuses.

6 | IMPLEMENTATION

The objectives of each Key Strategic Area are implemented by cross-sectional teams, called KSA teams. Additionally, each division within Student Affairs has to report on the ways in which it has advanced these strategic objectives. During implementation of the HS 2022, we will evaluate and monitor our delivery in Key Strategic Areas. We will also determine whether our programmes are aligned with the needs of the students we serve while sharply focusing on human capital. The intention is to provide a working environment conducive to job satisfaction, skills development and the implementation of the HS 2022.

The Department of Student Affairs will continue to integrate the activities and operations of various programmes in order to improve service levels and maximise limited resources. Student Affairs will also use its partnerships as a means to implement its strategies wherever they can make a positive difference.

1. APPENDICES

I. OPERATIONAL PLAN 2019

	PROJECTS			
KSA 1: Professionalisation	KSA 2: High-Impact Practices	KSA 3: Student Communities and Governance Structures	KSA 4: Multi-Campus Model	KSA 5: Institutional Transformation Plan (ITP): Institutional Change, Social Justice, Social Cohesion and Critical Diversity
Distribute the Lynda.com playlist for skill development;	Collaborate with KSA 1 with respect to the Student Affairs Research Colloquium (to take place in June);	Relaunch the institutional conceptual framework for student communities (inter-college games). This is a year-long project;	Organise the intra-varsity games (to take place in the 3rd quarter);	Themes for the imagined advocacy and awareness programmes on the various campuses include: a. Bloemfontein Campus: Gender and Disability; b. QwaQwa Campus: Patriarchy and Disability with sub-themes of Ethnicity, Religion, Gender and Mental Well-being; c. South Campus: Citizenship and Food Sovereignty with sub-themes of Human Rights and Immigration;
Review the Student Affairs Award report template and conduct workshops oriented toward the better understanding and completion of the template;	Pilot programmes (Learning	Design a process for the developing and piloting framework for student learning communities (year-long project).	Develop and implement staff workshops on partnerships and collaboration (to take place from February until October);	Organise critical contemporary conversations and dialogues within a framework of ongoing bi-weekly conversations on both the Bloemfontein and South Campus. Themes will be provided and submitted to student associations with submission deadlines, while additional dates will be set for student and staff dialogue sessions;
Collaborate with KSA 2 with respect to Student Affairs Week (to take place in May), as well as the Student Affairs Research Colloquium (to take place in June) in designing and distributing a publication booklet, while also encouraging staff attendance at a writing retreat;	Implement the Alignment Canvas with all Student Affairs activities and programmes;		Design and implement a Staff Unity Programme (to take place in the 4th quarter).	Manage seminars and summits: a. Universal Access (to take place in the 1st quarter, Bloemfontein Campus); b. Mental Well-being (to take place in the 2nd quarter, QwaQwa Campus); c. Gender (to take place in the 3rd quarter, Bloemfontein Campus); d. Food Sovereignty (to take place in the 4th quarter, South Campus).
Make an enquiry into the SAP qualifications as offered by Wits;	Collaborate with KSA 1 in encouraging staff attendance and participation of the writing retreat, and encourage staff involvement in research development workshops offered by the Postgraduate School;			

Conduct Student Affairs KSA strategic sessions every quarter;	Develop and implement a co-curricular PeopleSoft and Blackboard platform.
Designate a task team for Student Affairs, and create division-specific branding and marketing plans;	
Compile short orientation videos for new staff;	
Implement Continued Professional Development (CPD) opportunities.	

I. SOAR MODEL OF STUDENT AFFAIRS STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT

STRENGTHS	S	OPPORTUNITIES	O	ASPIRATIONS	A	RESULTS	R
Tipping points discussions allowed for the finalisation of the values document and the implementation thereof;	The acquisition of Institutional Transformation Plan (ITP) funding and the establishment of workstreams;	Student success and the successful development of graduate attributes;	It is imperative that KSA teams refine submissions so as to clearly define activities and projects;
The attendance and participation of all staff across all three campuses allowed for inter-campus networking and collaboration;	The development and implementation of the Food Sovereignty programme as an additional unit for student social support;	Student employability;	Student Affairs emphasises a collective understanding of KSA goals and responsibilities to ensure all KSA teams function in a coherent manner and encourage the accountability of all Student Affairs divisions;
The Student Affairs Awards actively recognise staff achievements and encourage staff to continuously perform well;	A strong thrust for policy development based on newly implemented institutional and governance-structured policies;	The social support of students in terms of student wellness and social responsiveness;	Financial sustainability is a key concern. Thus, Student Affairs divisions need to be cognisant of divisional budgets that should be used effectively and sustainably;
The Research Colloquium is a data-driven and evidence-based platform that encourages research-focused writing;	The development and implementation of Alignment Canvas Programmes across all three campuses;	Student Affairs' contribution toward research output (publications) through data-driven and evidence-based programmes, over and above ensuring effective programme impact on student development;	To ensure the professionalisation of Student Affairs, quarterly reports need to be provided to outline Student Affairs research outputs that are data-driven and evidence-based;

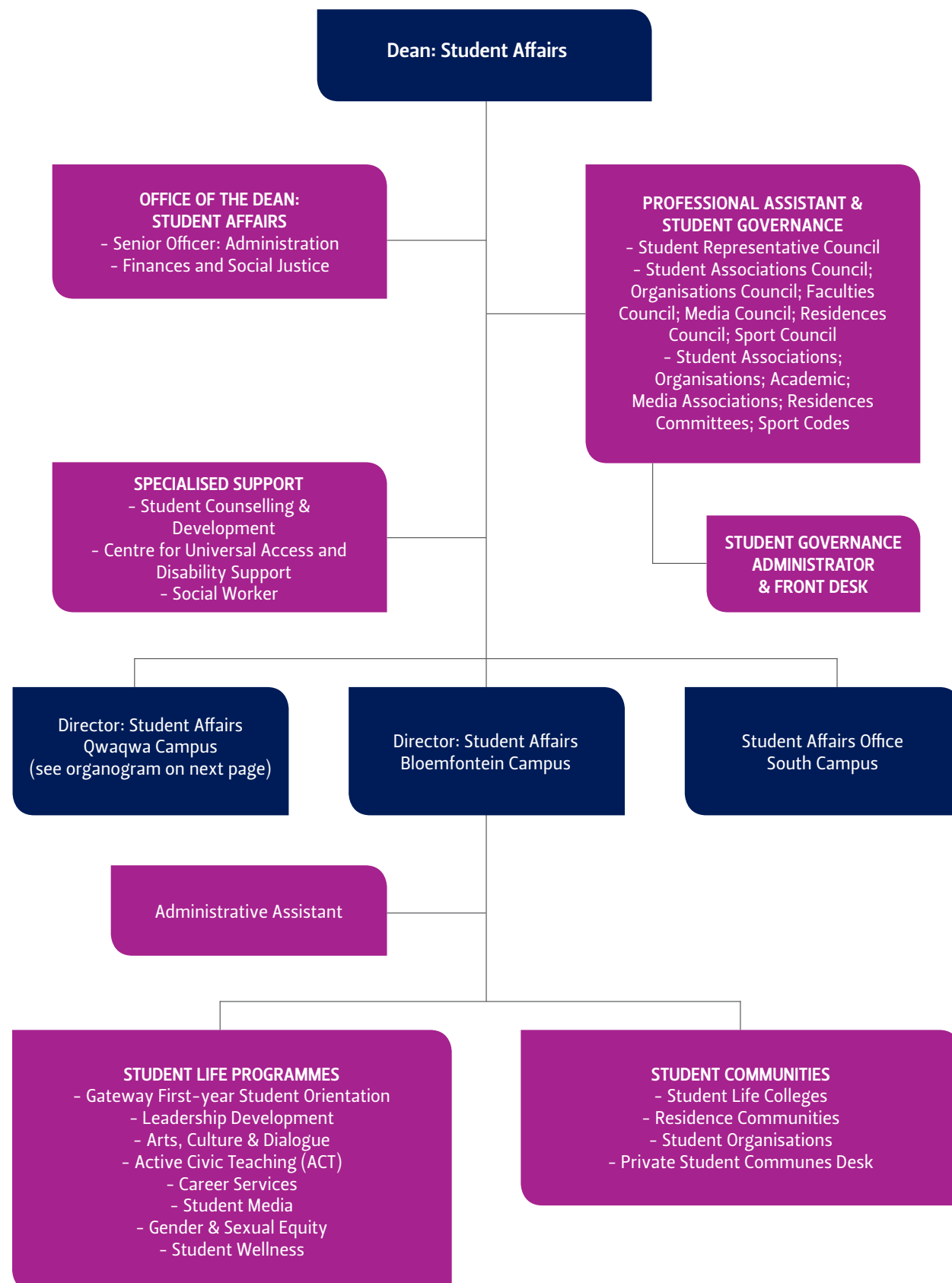|		
		Keeping student governance structures in mind, all reports will be publicised on online platforms for review.
The implementation of a tipping-points platform emphasises staff engagement and participation;	Establishing an increased focus on and promotion of Engaged Scholarship;	The adequate establishment of a Multi-Campus Model that allows for the development and implementation of Student Affairs activities and programmes on all three campuses, as well as ensuring and maintaining effective staff and divisional collaboration and co-operation;
The establishment of an interface platform allows for critical conversations and dialogues between staff and student governance;	The emphasis on programme development and implementation using a Multi-Campus Model to maintain student access and engagement on all three campuses;	A drive toward preserving a culturally diverse and inclusive student population that includes commuter students and students with disabilities;
The development and implementation of the Alignment Canvas will actively align all Student Affairs divisional activities and programmes with graduate attributes;	Making use of declining student apathy to increase student engagement and participation in Student Affairs activities and programmes;	A strive toward ensuring staff wellness through mentorship programmes, in addition to furthering staff development;
The Student Affairs Week survey provided valuable input regarding students' experiences across all three campuses;	Increasing commuter students' participation;	The professionalisation of Student Affairs through the development and establishment of a co-curricular programme that fosters student recognition for participation;
Awareness of Student Affairs practices actively contributed to the formation of a more socially just student culture;	Appointing a research officer to facilitate Student Affairs' focus on data-driven and evidence-based research outputs;	Student governance and corresponding student engagement and involvement through the establishment of critical conversation and dialogue platforms;
The establishment of Residence Life teams and colleges was beneficial;	The alignment of residence committees with student governance;	Increased engagement and participation of the commuter student population so as to foster a sense of belonging;

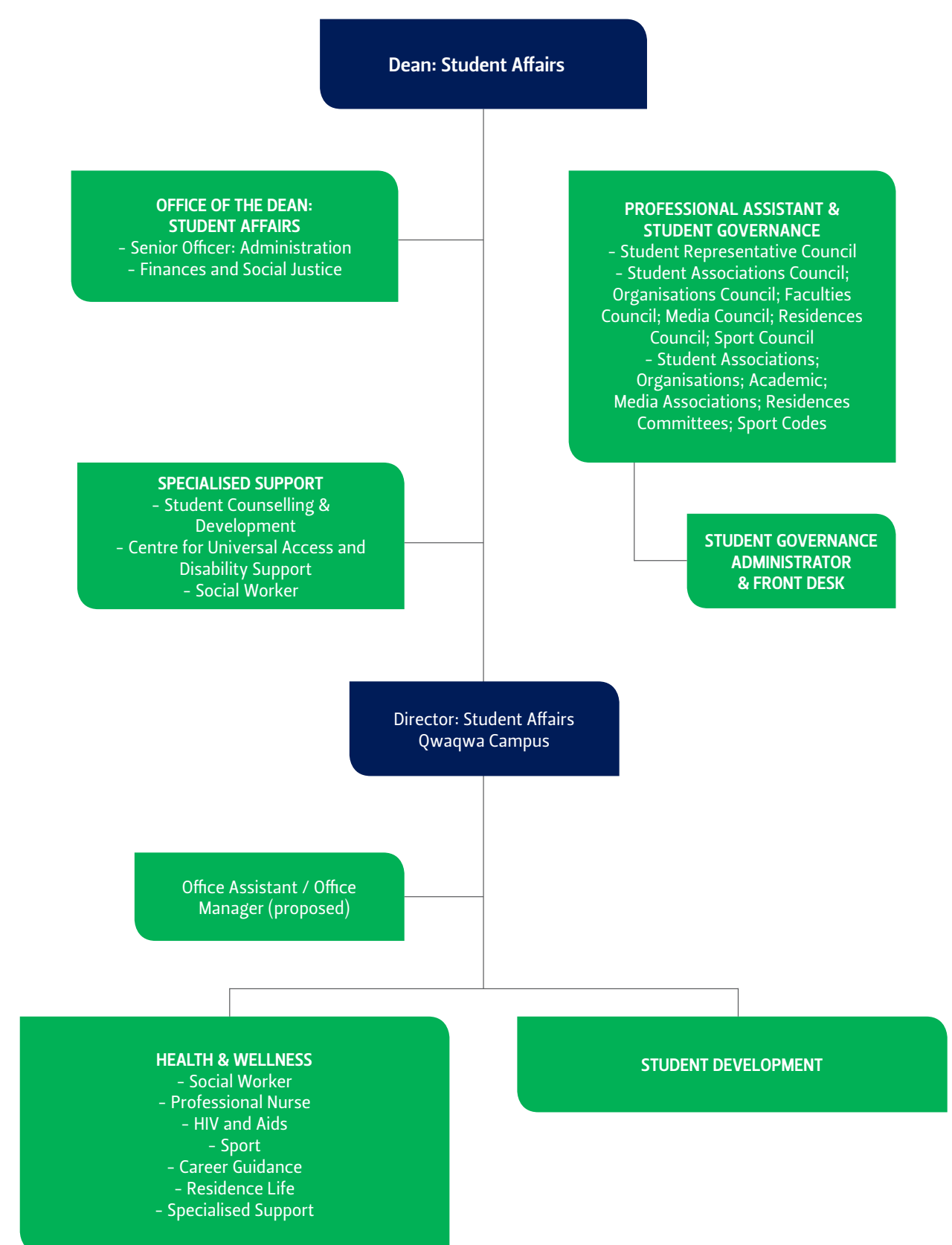|		
The execution and branding of Student Affairs events such as KBB, Intra-varsity and Open Day proved successful;	Developing day houses at the QwaQwa and South Campuses.	Advance policy consciousness;
Critical conversations and dialogues were had with student communities, pertaining to topics regarding student life departments;		Align Student Affairs with the Institutional Transformation Plan (ITP), and actively contribute to the advancement thereof.
Successful online marketing of Media, Arts and Wellness, and Leadership for Social Justice was achieved within student communities;		
The alignment of mentor programmes is a strength;		
Training continues for leaders of off-campus community providers, while also establishing contact with off-campus residences;		
In-house departmental partnerships have been established, as well as partnerships with external stakeholders;		
A secretariat has been appointed to assist with Institutional Transformation Plan (ITP) involvement;		

A Social Support Unit, with a focus on Food Sovereignty, has been established;

Institutional implementation of policy audits has been achieved for the Mental Health Policy, Student Representative Council (SRC) Constitution, Anti-discrimination Policy, as well as the Sexual Harassment Policy;

A Government Sponsored Enterprise (GSE) has been appointed;

A Student Affairs value-driven document and culture has been developed, implemented and encouraged;

Student Affairs prides itself on the mentoring and exposure of students and staff to various positive environments and activities, which contribute to leadership and career opportunities;

Student Affairs governance structures are aligned with institutional structures, thus establishing collaborative leadership;

Student Affairs has membership to Higher Education Professional Bodies, International Research Partners and the Student Housing Training Institute;

The primary Social Work Unit has been established and is involved in various social support strategies to aid students;

There is a focus on maintaining a value-driven cultural context which emphasises student diversity;

Strategies aimed at financial relief, academic sponsorship and student social support have been established. These include the No Student Hungry [NSH] Programme, Food Sovereignty, the Prestige Scholarship Programme, and the Centre for Universal Access and Disability Support (CUADS), to name a few;

Student Affairs structures have been aligned to the Institutional Transformation Plan (ITP) as well as to student governance structures to maintain prominent focus on the overall student experience and universal access, while Student Affairs has also implemented vigorous safety campaigns and policies.

Student Affairs
Bloemfontein

Dean: Student Affairs

OFFICE OF THE DEAN:
STUDENT AFFAIRS
- Senior Officer: Administration
- Finances and Social Justice

PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANT &
STUDENT GOVERNANCE
- Student Representative Council
- Student Associations Council;
Organisations Council; Faculties
Council; Media Council; Residences
Council; Sport Council
- Student Associations;
Organisations; Academic;
Media Associations; Residences
Committees; Sport Codes

SPECIALISED SUPPORT
- Student Counselling &
Development
- Centre for Universal Access and
Disability Support
- Social Worker

STUDENT GOVERNANCE
ADMINISTRATOR
& FRONT DESK

Director: Student Affairs
Qwaqwa Campus
(see organogram on next page)

Director: Student Affairs
Bloemfontein Campus

Student Affairs Office
South Campus

Administrative Assistant

STUDENT LIFE PROGRAMMES
- Gateway First-year Student Orientation
- Leadership Development
- Arts, Culture & Dialogue
- Active Civic Teaching (ACT)
- Career Services
- Student Media
- Gender & Sexual Equity
- Student Wellness

STUDENT COMMUNITIES
- Student Life Colleges
- Residence Communities
- Student Organisations
- Private Student Communes Desk

Student Affairs
Qwaqwa

Dean: Student Affairs

OFFICE OF THE DEAN:
STUDENT AFFAIRS
- Senior Officer: Administration
- Finances and Social Justice

PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANT &
STUDENT GOVERNANCE
- Student Representative Council
- Student Associations Council;
Organisations Council; Faculties
Council; Media Council; Residences
Council; Sport Council
- Student Associations;
Organisations; Academic;
Media Associations; Residences
Committees; Sport Codes

SPECIALISED SUPPORT
- Student Counselling &
Development
- Centre for Universal Access and
Disability Support
- Social Worker

STUDENT GOVERNANCE
ADMINISTRATOR
& FRONT DESK

Director: Student Affairs
Qwaqwa Campus

Office Assistant / Office
Manager (proposed)

HEALTH & WELLNESS
- Social Worker
- Professional Nurse
- HIV and Aids
- Sport
- Career Guidance
- Residence Life
- Specialised Support

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

1 ◉ **We shall conduct our daily activities with due diligence**

We shall respect the physical and intellectual property of UFS and its partners ◉ **2**

3 ◉ We shall act with the utmost integrity when discharging our duties

We shall recognise the basic human dignity of others ◉ **4**

5 ◉ **We shall be ambassadors for the values of the UFS**

STUDENT AFFAIRS ETHICS CHARTER FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS PROFESSIONALS

UFS·UV
STUDENT AFFAIRS
STUDENTESAKE
DITABA TSA BAITHUTI

STUDENT AFFAIRS ETHICS CHARTER FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS PROFESSIONALS

INTRODUCTION

The building of an ethically responsible society in South Africa, and beyond, is a goal that is actively pursued by organisations like the Ethics Institute of South Africa and Ethics Monitor. As well as making significant contributions towards establishing ethics in different spheres of society, they also aim to build ethical leaders for the future.

This focus on the development of future leaders, especially in a higher education context, is something that the Global Ethics organisation specifically prioritises. It states that "higher education is leadership education" and that a substantial part of preparing future leaders depends on developing value-driven leadership in higher education students (Global Ethics 2017). Thus, this Student Affairs Ethics Charter (SAET) aims to align the Division of Student Affairs (DSA) at the University of the Free State (UFS) with these goals and objectives. This alignment is important, not only to develop ethically grounded student leaders at the UFS, but also to promote ethical standards for Student Affairs as a profession.

In this regard, the SAET (as an initiative to actively promote ethical standards in Student Affairs) should be seen as part of other initiatives to advance the professionalisation of Student Affairs at the UFS and beyond, namely: establishing a professional development route for staff (especially on post-graduate level); fostering data-driven praxis and research; upholding the theoretical underpinnings of Student Affairs praxis; and employing full-time staff members in different functional areas of Student Affairs.

It is against the backdrop of these overarching goals and objectives that the institutional purpose of the SAET becomes important.

7 | ETHICAL STANDARDS

- We shall conduct our daily activities with due diligence
- **TO ACHIEVE THIS, WE SHALL:**
- Act in accordance with the laws, policies and procedures of the UFS and the Student Affairs Ethics Charter;
- Undertake our duties with due care, commitment and enthusiasm;
- Be responsive to the legitimate expectations of all our stakeholders;
- Adhere to the principles of good corporate governance;
- Honour our obligations and deliver timeously on our promises;
- Behave in a fair and honest manner; and
- Respect others at all times.
- We shall respect the physical and intellectual property of UFS and its partners
- **IN THIS REGARD, WE SHALL:**
- Preserve and protect the assets of UFS in whatever form or nature; and
- Condemn any form of illegal and/or unethical conduct with regards to the property of the University.
- We shall act with the utmost integrity when discharging our duties
- **WE SHALL:**
- Be truthful and honest in all our dealings with staff, students, service providers and members of the public;
- Be honest in accounting for the work done and in reporting;
- Create conditions that will discourage unethical behavior;
- Support, protect and encourage staff, students, service providers and members of the public; and
- Pre-emptively declare, seek clarity and/or avoid circumstances and conditions that my lead to a conflict of interests.
- **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST MAY BE CAUSED BY:**
- Activities outside the University but related to the University;
- Relationships between staff, students, service providers and members of the public; and
- Accepting gifts in any form or nature and giving gifts in any form or nature.
- We shall recognise the basic human dignity of others
- **WE SHALL:**
- Advocate for the basic human rights of others as entrenched in the South African Constitution (especially those that relate to differences, i.e. gender, race, disability, class, sexual orientation, place of origin, religion etc.);
- Follow due process, where necessary, and report any staff, student, service provider or member of the public who disregards and/or violates or attempts to violate the basic human rights of others;
- Make UFS a safe and healthy space for staff, students, service providers, and members of the public; and
- Treat fellow colleagues, students, service providers and members of the public with dignity.
- We shall be ambassadors for the values of the UFS
- **WE SHALL:**
- Demonstrate imaginative and ethical behaviour in our daily lives;
- Show good character in how we approach our work and in our interactions with each other;
- Have honest and critical conversations on how to live ethical lifestyles as set out in the Student Affairs Ethics Charter; and
- Embrace an ethical lifestyle.
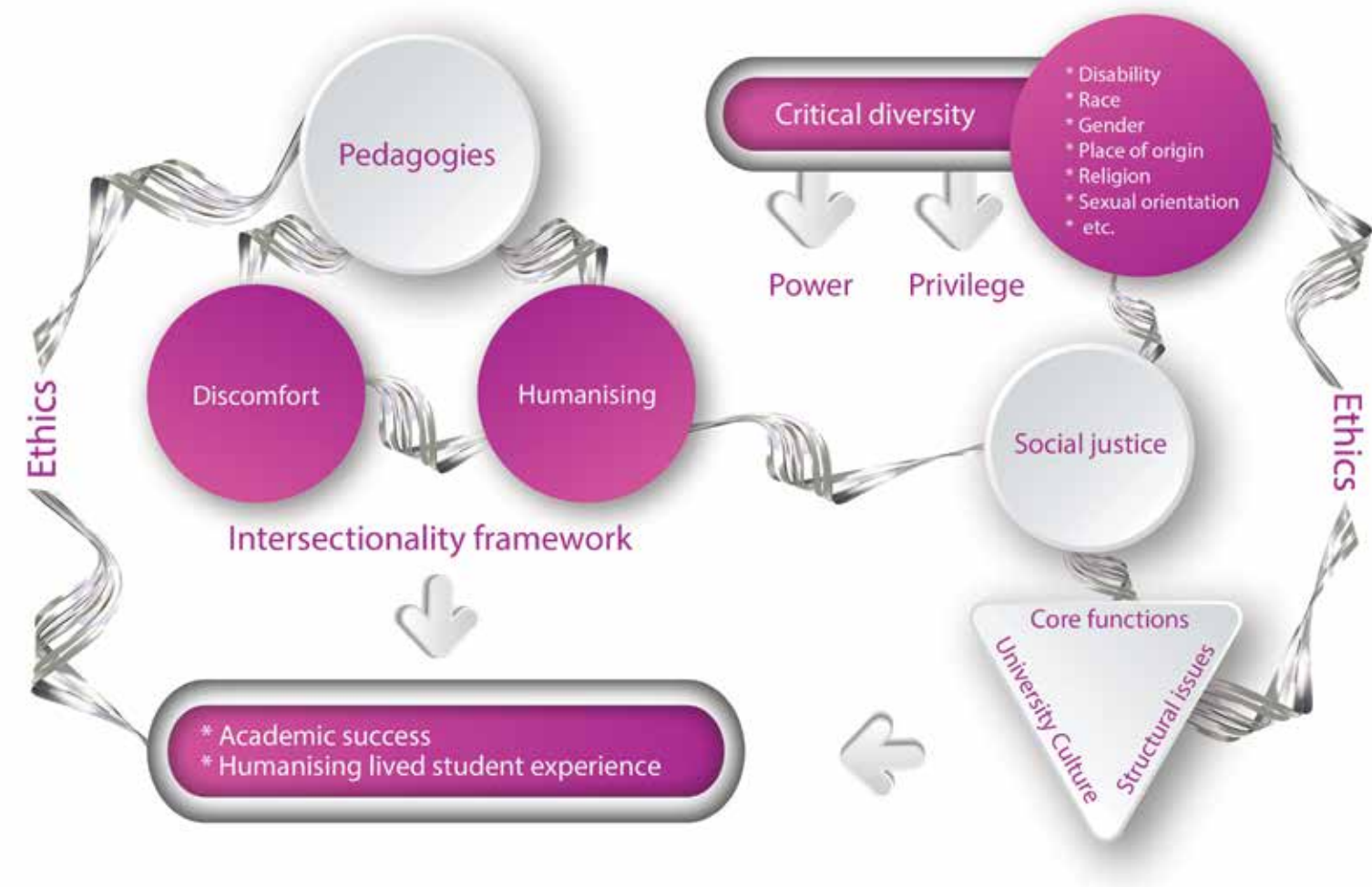
Key Strategic Areas
UFS Student Affairs

Certain about **uncertainty**
Comfortable with **discomfort**

CONTEXTUALISING
THE **STRATEGY**

Certain about **uncertainty**
Comfortable with **discomfort**

DSA Strategy Framework **2018–2022**