

LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES

VALUE PROPOSITION

The University of the Free State Library and Information Services (UFS LIS) serves as a core academic partner in the achievement of the University's goals of teaching, learning, research and community scholarship. These goals are geared towards the production of knowledge by both academics and students, knowledge aimed at developing South Africa as a nation. The UFS LIS, with the wealth of information it provides access to, and expert services delivered to support the goals, plays a critical role in realising the University's goals.

Our extensive and comprehensive collection supports the UFS community in a). academics turning students into specialist knowledgeable citizens and keeping abreast of developments in their fields; b). students achieving academic success and preparing for work excellence in the digital world; c). researchers producing knowledge for the development of the country; and d). providing support base to managers in their quest to successfully manage the University towards the realisation of its vision and mission. The collection serves as an extension to intellectual engagements through teaching, learning and conducting research. The Library, through its expertise in information and knowledge management, serves as a buffer for the UFS community, as the enormous available information can be daunting if not properly managed. Peer reviewed information is documented professionally, enhancing its discoverability, retrieval and usage using well thought automated processes.

Our professional and competent Librarians equip the University community with skills on "knowing how to learn", skills that are key in developing life-long learners of all times. These multi-literacy skills are value adding attributes for any learned citizen. They are applied in the legal and ethical manipulation and use of information resources, and serving as basic requirements for citizens of a developed country, the ultimate aim of any developing country like South Africa. Our contribution to the academic success of students is evident in the initial stages of assignment writing, where undergraduate students are guided in a). identifying key words, b). knowing and choosing different types of relevant information resources; c). using reference tools for acknowledgements, etc. to name but a few.

Our qualified Librarians are equipped with knowledge and skills applied in searching for relevant and peer reviewed information resources. The advent of technology has led to the production and distribution of information by anyone, with or without taking quality into consideration. Librarians save lecturers and researchers' valuable time through the application of advanced search strategies leading to relevant search

results. The quality of search results contributes to the University's reputation indirectly, leading to quality research output based on relevant information.

Our insightful knowledge in new trends in library research support assists postgraduate students and researchers in producing quality research output, the much-needed requirement for a research-led University. This insightful knowledge is critical in contributing towards building the reputation of the University locally and globally. The expertise and supportive environment is displayed in, *inter alia*, the following ways:

- In our open access drive that has publishing infrastructure that makes it possible for UFS scholarly output to a). be discoverable worldwide; b). increase chances of citations and thus raise impact assessment of the University and its scholars; c). increase chances of collaborations; d). be available sooner than later; and e). reduce the associated publishing costs.

- In our annual capacity building opportunities for postgraduate students and researchers, ensuring that researchers are familiar with new trends in information management. The annual Research and Open Access Weeks are our flagship projects strengthening users' competencies in a wide range of research-related capacities such as a). legal (copyright) and ethical (plagiarism) use of information; b). bibliometrics (impact assessment and measurement); c) open access platform (preservation and sharing); d). referencing tools, e). altmetrics (social media assessment), etc. rendering the Library as an indispensable, core academic service.

Our dedicated spaces and supportive environment affords especially undergraduate and postgraduate students with opportunities for intellectual engagement on current issues, studying for academic success, and for leisure reading. The infrastructure affords collaborative spaces conducive for igniting co-creation, analysis, visualisation and innovative design skills.

Our UFS LIS Service Charter serves as a commitment to the UFS community to expect quality and timely delivery of services. This is in acknowledgement of the core academic role the Library plays, and thus strives to be the best in realising its mandate – going the extra mile.