




UFS in brief

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





205 Nelson Mandela Dr./rylaan
Park West/Parkwes
Bloemfontein
P.O. Box/Posbus 339
Free State/Vrystaat
South Africa/Suid-Afrika

T: +27(0)51 401 9111

www.ufs.ac.za

University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa

1

Vision

Quality, distinctiveness, and service in higher education.

Strategic priorities

Quality of education and research, quality of service delivery, quality of students and staff.

Competitiveness

The appointment of Prof. Jonathan Jansen as Vice-Chancellor and Rector on 1 July 2009, heralded a new era for the UFS. He is determined not only to lead the institution to become one of the best universities in the world, but also to distinguish this university from other universities.

The University of the Free State is for the first time poised to take a leading role in higher education and development in South Africa. It will be South Africa's university of the 21st century, and seeks to place itself in the company of leading universities in the world.

The UFS is not interested in simply doing what everybody else does. The agenda is set for distinctiveness in meeting

the demanding needs for human development and academic excellence in a country with a legacy of many problems from our past.

Significant role in central South Africa

With its Main Campus situated in Bloemfontein, in the heart of South Africa, the UFS is one of the oldest institutions of higher education in the country. It opened its doors in 1904 with a mere six students in the Humanities and has since grown to more than 30 000 students in seven faculties.

Bloemfontein is not only the birthplace of major political parties that shaped the political landscape in South Africa, but it has also produced numerous top minds in various fields in South Africa and abroad.

The university is a leader in Africa in shaping the future of sustainable food production. The many doctorates conferred on scholars from other African countries are proof of the UFS's high standing in this regard.



Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu

More about us

Most of our students attend classes on the Main Campus in Bloemfontein. We also have a vibrant campus in rural Qwaqwa in the Eastern Free State, and a smaller South Campus in Bloemfontein that provides alternative access to higher education for promising students who obtained poor marks in their final school examinations.

Our seven faculties – Health Sciences, Education, Natural and Agricultural Sciences, Law, Economic and Management Sciences, Theology, and the Humanities with a total of 97 departments – are served by more than 2000 academic staff members, supported by a strong support staff.

The university boasts modern technological infrastructure, which plays a pivotal role in teaching and learning. This infrastructure also links our three campuses. Our high-performance computer, which was substantially enlarged at the end of 2010 (making it one of the biggest high-performance computers for researchers in South Africa), assists our researchers in doing their job more effectively. With the formation of the National Research Grid, in which our university played a major role, our researchers now have access to national high-performance computing resources.

Main Campus

Our Main Campus is situated in the City of Bloemfontein – the capital of the Free State province. It is an attractive, leafy

campus where staff and students are encouraged to walk in order to enjoy the beautiful buildings, parks, lawns, and other infrastructure. Resources, planning and dedicated workmanship have been invested in developing the building and facility infrastructure, but in making the campus an attractive and user-friendly place.

Our Main Campus is regarded as the most racially integrated campus in South Africa.

Qwaqwa Campus

There is little doubt that our Qwaqwa campus in the Eastern Free State is one of the most picturesque in the country, nestled between sandstone mountains and the open veld.

The university (previously Uniqwa under the auspices of the University of the North) was built in 1980 and was taken over by our university in January 2003. Undergraduate and postgraduate courses, as well as diplomas – are offered on the same basis as on the Main Campus in Bloemfontein. The campus plays an important role in bringing higher education to the Eastern Free State.

South Campus

Our South Campus, situated to the south of Bloemfontein, offers the University Preparation Programme and other bridging courses to some 1100 students. The former Vista University campus was taken over by the UFS in January 2004. The facilities include a beautiful

administration building, a library, lecture rooms, and a large auditorium.

The Centre for Education Development, which offers education programmes to the education sector, moved from our Main Campus to this campus at the end of 2010.

Financial stability

The UFS is recognised nationally for its sound financial decisions. The budget of the UFS exceeds R1 billion annually.

The UFS is a major role player in the Free State and Northern Cape region, as well as neighbouring Lesotho. Apart from being one of the biggest institutions and a significant supplier of work opportunities, the UFS also has a major impact on the economy of the region in terms of buying power and use of utilities and resources.

Giving to the UFS

Much has been done to transform the academic quality and rebuild human relationships among our staff and students. But, none of these innovations are without challenges, and none of these initiatives can be attained without support. We have identified a number of funding projects and they include among others:

- The International Institute for Studies in Race, Reconciliation and Social Justice, which will serve as a premier national and international site for scholarship and research on these topics;
- The laptop project, in which we aim to provide a laptop to every first-year student;
- The undergraduate core curriculum, in which we aim to introduce all first-year students to the foundational sets of knowledge required for higher learning and citizenship;
- The first generation students project, in which Grade 10 students are selected and placed in first-year classes over weekends and vacations;
- The No student hungry campaign, in which we want to build a substantial reserve that can feed students in need during the academic year; and
- The Great Teachers Project, in which we intend to collect the top stories of great individual teachers and publish it in the form of a book. The proceeds will go towards bursaries for deserving students wanting to study education.

Our other funding projects are marked with * in this booklet.

We are proud of

Our World Universities Forum Award for Best Practice in Higher Education. The UFS's implementation of a number of interlocking innovations to transform the institution was recognised with the award at the beginning of 2011.

We awarded an honorary doctorate to Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu in January 2011.

Our International Advisory Council of leading thinkers and practitioners of higher education that advises our leadership.

We house a BioPAD Platform for Metagenomics (a technique that enables researchers to extract DNA from microbes in their natural habitat and to investigate it further in their laboratories). Our Centre for Development Support aims to promote sustainable human development in the broader South African society.

Our Disaster Risk Management and Education Centre for Africa (DiMTEC) offers the only postgraduate qualification in Disaster Management in Africa.

Our GMO Testing Facility provides a service regarding the diagnostic detection and quantification of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in grain and processed foods for the food industry in South Africa.

Our Faculty of Theology established a Jonathan Edwards Center for Africa in 2009. The centre is affiliated with the Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale University in New Haven, USA and serves as a research, education, and publication hub for studying the works of Edwards and evangelical history.

The Odeion String Quartet symbolises the university's commitment to the arts. It was established in 1991 as a permanent full-time resident string quartet, the only resident string quartet at a South African university.

Our SA Doping Control Laboratory (SADoCoL) is the only one of its kind in South Africa, and one of only two in Africa.

Our Business School was rated by its students and alumni in the Financial Mail (September 2010) as one of the top

three schools in South Africa in terms of the quality of its lecturers, the extent to which the students enjoyed the course, and value for money.

The South African Fryer Oil Initiative situated in our Department of Microbial, Biochemical and Food Biotechnology, monitors edible oils in the food industry and makes a seal of quality available to food distributors. The main aim of the initiative is to improve the competitiveness of the South African food industry.

In 2010, scientists from our Department of Microbial, Biochemical and Food Biotechnology made an important breakthrough in the use of nanotechnology in medical and biological research.

Our Unit for Children's Rights promotes research and training of persons and institutions in the field of children's rights. With its Human Trafficking Initiative, the unit has made contact and established co-operation with various national and international key participants working in the field to combat human trafficking.

Reaching into our community

The UFS uses its formidable knowledge base and expertise to serve disadvantaged communities in the Free State and Northern Cape. We take great pride in our projects in this regard, including:

Our Department of Paediatrics and Child Health's Beds of Hope Campaign, which



Prof. Jonathan Jansen,
Vice-Chancellor and Rector

aims to improve the facilities for babies and children in need of specialised health care. The campaign's goal is to acquire state-of-the-art equipment to provide for these specialised health care needs.

Our **University Preparation Programme** takes adults and students, who have been failed by the school system, and offers them foundational learning and basic skills for continuing education and training.

Our **Centre for Education Development** launched its Family Math and Family Science rollout initiative in the Free State and Northern Cape at the beginning of 2009. The project demystifies Maths and Science for learners in the early school years.

Our **Boyden Observatory**, situated near Bloemfontein, is managed by our Department of Physics. The observatory is one of only three optical observatories in Africa.

The university supports the **Mangaung String Programme**, which provides more than 500 township children with quality training in classical music – to such an extent that some of these children playing to a music ensemble.

We run a successful **Emerging Farmers' Programme** in conjunction with the Free State and Northern Cape governments. The programme assists emerging farmers with scientific knowledge.

Our international reach

2

The objective of our international co-operation strategy is to foster high quality, productive scholarship through partnerships, networks and coalitions with leading organisations, groups and individuals.

Paramount to this strategy is the application of internationalisation principles to increase income for and from research through a diversity of approaches, sources, partnerships, and alliances.

A number of partnerships have been instrumental in achieving this objective. These include partnerships in the United States of America and Europe.

In the US, one of our flagship agreements is the affiliation of our Faculty of Theology's Jonathan Edwards Centre for Africa with the Jonathan Edwards Centre at Yale University in New Haven. We also have an agreement with Cornell University that focuses on research and project collaboration.

Institutional partnerships exist with the Appalachian State University, Mississippi

State University, and the University of Minnesota, while we have a faculty partnership with Virginia Polytech. This partnership between our university's Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences and Virginia Polytech is almost a decade old.

In Europe, we have partnerships in Belgium, France, and Germany.

Our partnership with the Catholic University of Louvain in Belgium is one of our university's oldest partnerships. Activities under the agreement include the short-term exchange of academic staff, joint research activities, and the exchange of students from undergraduate to postdoctoral researchers.

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed with Ghent University in 2007.

Our agreement with the University of Antwerp was renewed in April 2010.

In France, the collaborative agreement between Group ESC Rennes and our Business School is renewed automatically every year. The agreement with the Institute of Political

Sciences in Bordeaux is centred on Political Science, while the partnership between the Robert Schuman University and our university's Business School also entails that lecturing staff visit our university to teach in our MBA Programme.

In Germany, our institutional agreement with the University of Bremen has also resulted in administrative staff from both commerce faculties paying visits to the partner institution.

Our future

Our academic staff

One of the first necessities in developing a world-class university is to build a world-class professoriate. To achieve this, a drive was undertaken to recruit senior top professors with high research ratings from South Africa and abroad to strengthen the scholarly skills and depth at the UFS.

Our university has also launched the *Vice-Chancellor's Prestige Programme for Young Scholars – a unique programme that will provide an accelerated pathway to 25 young scholars with recent PhDs. The scholars will be taught how to become professors through intensive local and international mentorship, research support, and academic training. The programme focuses on the next generation of top researchers in South Africa. No other university in the country has a programme of such scale and intensity for building excellence and diversity through young scholars.

Our students

For us merely obtaining a degree is not enough. A new programme will be put into place to better prepare undergraduate and postgraduate students for the workplace. A *Career Preparation Office will be established to offer students internship experiences and to bring every student into contact with leading firms in commerce and industry, government departments and foundations where they can acquire the skills necessary for graduate employment in various fields.

The academic curriculum will be adjusted to better position knowledge and training for occupational success. Our university will introduce a *core curriculum that specifically trains students in generic skills required for critical citizenship, intellectual development, and real-life engagement.

The study-abroad experience is especially important in our efforts to break down racial and ethnic stereotypes and divisions. Our intention is to build strong international links with universities abroad, especially those with exemplary policies, programmes, and practices in racial integration.

The initiative gained momentum when the first group of first-year students, 71 in total, travelled to the US as part of the university's *Student Leadership Development Programme in 2010. The students spent two weeks at universities to experience student life and learn about leadership and diversity at these

institutions. The universities included Cornell University, New York University, the University of Massachusetts, the Appalachian State University, and Virginia Polytechnic University. Upon their return, the students have become involved in student-life programmes on campus, have established volunteer programmes, and initiated and established mentoring programmes for their fellow students. In 2011 we will be taking 150 students to universities in the USA, Europe and Asia.



3

Faculties

Economic and Management Sciences

In the midst of the evolutionary and revolutionary forces shaping the public and private sectors, the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences has accepted the challenge to be relevant, yet different in a highly competitive global society. Through a pragmatic entrepreneurial approach, we provide communities with both applied and scholarly research, education, and community service to match the demand for knowledge.

Education

The Faculty of Education is the university's youngest faculty, constituted in 2009.

The faculty educates teachers in several disciplines. Our most important role is to prepare pre-service teachers for their work in schools, ensuring that they have a strong disciplinary base for their professional work. A second role is the training of in-service teachers. This work is informed by and closely related to our research and community outreach.

Health Sciences

The Faculty of Health Sciences was established in 1969, and has grown over the years into the existing faculty that consists of the School of Medicine, the School for Allied Health Professions, and the School of Nursing. The faculty benchmarks its training and research on international standards and delivers a crucial health care service in a vast, very poor part of South Africa. Our faculty boasts a number of units of national importance, including the National Control Laboratory – the only vaccine-testing laboratory in the country evaluated to do vaccine testing for the World Health Organization. The Sports Laboratory is based in the Department of Pharmacology and tests samples for prohibited substances for various sporting codes.

Humanities

The Faculty of the Humanities forms the foundation on which our university was built, and its scholars and students are recognised countrywide for their high level of professionalism, their dedication and contributions. Our faculty encompasses a wide variety of





academic departments and modules that vary in disciplines from languages and arts, to human sciences, social sciences, and cultural sciences.

Law

The century of the teaching of Law at the UFS was celebrated in 2009. The Faculty of Law was, however, only established in 1945 and is privileged to be situated in the judicial capital of South Africa. The faculty is one of the most distinguished faculties of Law in South Africa. The faculty primarily offers a four- or five-year LL.B. degree that will provide well-equipped and balanced jurists to the professions.

One of the unique initiatives of our faculty is the Centre for Financial Planning Law. We are the first academic institution in South Africa to offer formal postgraduate qualifications providing access to membership of the Financial Planning Institute of South Africa.

Natural and Agricultural Sciences

The Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences with its diverse disciplines encompasses broad spectrum of expertise in the natural, agricultural and building sciences.

In the field of Natural Sciences we are focusing, among other things, on the disciplines of biological sciences, forensic sciences, conservation genetics, biotechnology, physical and

chemical sciences and geosciences. In Agricultural Sciences, we have the most specialised group in South Africa servicing the farm animal industry with expertise in breeding, nutrition, and physiological manipulation. Research on irrigation and salinity, water harvesting and the optimisation of water use are other key focus areas, as well as research on the modelling of non-point pollution of water for irrigation.

Our building science departments are leaders in the country and are consistently successful in obtaining accreditation from national and international professional bodies. They are involved in outreach activities such as construction mentorship for many small, emerging building contractors.

Theology

The Faculty of Theology was established in 1980, making it one of the youngest faculties of the UFS. Courses of the faculty are recognised by many church denominations, such as the Dutch Reformed Church, the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa, the Anglican Church, Pentecostal and independent churches. The faculty's training is recognised internationally as being of exceptional quality. The mission of this faculty is to make a unique national and international contribution to the development of the church, society and the academe by means of quality theological training and specialist research in Theology from a classical-theological perspective.



Qwaqwa Campus in the Eastern Free State

