

A Transformation Barometer for South African Higher Education

TSG/ TMF - July 2015

Introduction

1. Instruments ‘measuring’ change in the context of social justice and equity are associated with various terms: scorecards, dashboards, matrixes, climate surveys, monitoring and evaluation systems, etc. In this document the notion of ‘transformation barometer’ is preferred as part of the broader parlance that has existing traction within higher education. The ‘barometer’ is also viewed as ‘dynamic’ and shifting as it attempts to provide ways for thinking, doing and measuring transformation; and for analyzing inhibiting and facilitative conditions for transformation.
2. The Minister of Higher Education and Training, Blade Nzimande, in his May 2015 budget speech in parliament, promised an uncompromising push for higher education transformation in the wake of various student-initiated movements such as the Rhodes Must Fall campaign at the University of Cape Town (UCT); the Open Stellenbosch movement at the Stellenbosch University (SUN); the transformation battles at North West University (NWU); and similar ones at various institutions of higher education across the country. These and the present challenges facing the University of Zululand (UNIZULU) embody the range of glitches resident and reproduced within the South African higher education system. The Minister captures the combination of difficulties as follows: ‘Despite the significance of symbols such as names and statues, we must not conflate these with more fundamental matters of transformation. There remains an urgent need to radically change the demographics of our professoriate; transform the curriculum and research agendas; cultivate greater awareness of Africa; eliminate racism, sexism and all other forms of unjust discrimination; improve academic success rates; and expand student support’¹. It seems, as the demands from students across the system suggest, that transformation must be performed to create an Afrocentric space; advance the decolonization of knowledge; agitate for better facilities and more productive practices; promote just pedagogies; broaden opportunities and increase success rates for black students; foster demographic representation on all levels of the academy, and across university structures; stimulate a democratic and non-repressive institutional culture; and ensure accountable governance and management efficiencies.
3. In a meeting with the Transformation Oversight Committee on 26 May 2015, the Minister also foregrounded the transformation challenges at Historically Disadvantaged

1

Universities (HDIs) in relation to functionality, efficiency, quality and good governance; in addition to the challenges experienced at other ‘types’ of universities.

4. The present focus on the transformation of higher education in South Africa follows a range of impressive reports and research studies over the past fifteen years. Prime amongst these are the Council on Higher Education’s (CHE) higher education reviews, the Higher Education Monitor and the Kagisano series. The work of the Centre for Higher Education Transformation (CHET) since 1996 is noteworthy, whilst a series of books and a wide scope of articles of a reflexive and analytical nature also add to our body of knowledge (see Maake, 2011; Jansen, xx; Nkomo, Swartz and Maja, 2006; Chetty and Merrett, xx).
5. Reflections on higher education transformation in South Africa generally choose the policy-starting-points reflected in the report (1996) of the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE); the White Paper on Higher Education (1997); the Higher Education Act (1997); the National Plan for Higher Education (2001); the Report of the Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions (2008); the Declaration of the Higher Education Summit (2010); the National Development Plan (2012); the terms of reference of the Ministerial Oversight Committee on Transformation in South African Public Universities (2013); and the White Paper for Post-school Education and Training (2014)².
6. Jansen *et al* (2007) suggest six types of knowledge-production that define research on change (transformation) in higher education in South Africa: statistical surveys; case studies; historical inquiry; critical events research; policy analysis; and single-issue

² The draft social inclusion policy framework of the Department of Higher Education and Training includes a comprehensive list that constitutes the South African post school legal and policy architecture as it relates to transformation: Department of Education, National Education Policy Act (Act no.27 of 1996); Department of Education, White Paper 3 on the Transformation of the Higher Education System, 1997; Department of Education, Education White Paper 4 – A Programme for Transformation of Further Education and Training, 1998; National Student Financial Aid Scheme Act, 1999 and subsequent amendments National Policy on HIV/AIDS, for learners and educators in public schools, and students in Further Education and Training Institutions (1999); Department of Education, National Plan for Higher Education, 2001; Department of Education, White Paper 6: Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System, 2001; Department of Education, *Report of the Working Group on Values Education, 2001*; Department of Education, Values Manifesto, 2001; Department of Education, Bill of Responsibilities for the Youth of South Africa, 2008; Department of Higher Education and Training, Higher Education Laws Amendment, Act 26 of 2010; Department of Higher Education and Training, Adult Education Act (Act 52 of 2000) as amended by the Higher Education and Training Amendment Act of 2010; Department of Higher Education and Training, Skills Development Act, 2010; Department of Higher Education and Training, Formal Further Education and Training College Programmes at levels 2 to 4 on the National Qualification Framework, 2011; Department of Higher Education and Training, National Skills Development Strategy 111 (2011); Department of Higher Education and Training, the Green Paper for Post-School Education and Training, 2012; Department of Higher Education and Training, the White Paper on Post-School Education and Training, 2013; Further Education and Training Colleges Amendment Act, 2012(Act no.3 of 2012). Strategic Documents and Reports includes the following: Department of Education, *The Ministerial Report on the Elimination of Discrimination and Promotion of Social Cohesion in Higher Education Institutions* (Soudien Report, November, 2008); Department of Higher Education and Training, Council on Higher Education (CHE) Report on student engagement (2010); Department of Higher Education and Training, National Skills Development Strategy 111; Department of Higher Education and Training, Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa (HRD-SA) 2010-2030, (2010); Outcome 5 of Government’s 12 performance outcomes: “A skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path” (2010); Department of Higher Education and Training, *Report on the Charter of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2011 (HSS Report); Framework for co-operation in the provision of career development (information, advice and guidance), 2012; Presidency, National Planning Commission, The National Development Plan, Vision 2030, 2011.

studies³. ‘Many of these studies are descriptive and to some extent analytical, but very few can be classed as theoretical in design and approach’ (*ibid*: 159-160), is one of the critiques against research on higher education forwarded by Jansen *et al* (xx). Moreover, what these studies reveal is the power of the reproductive machinery of the university which is structurally anchored within its institutional arrangements. The vital statistics (2014) of the CHE which captures audited data from 2007 to 2012 confirm the systemic entrenchment of racialized participations rates. In addition, the system has most recently been described as a ‘low intake high attrition system because only about half of the 18% of the country’s 18 to 24 years olds entering the system graduate’ with ‘Black African’ and ‘Coloured’ students fairing the worst (Van Zyl: May, 2015).

7. The figures⁴ that supposedly represent shifts in staff demographic profiles are depressing; suggesting that very little, almost nothing, has been consciously designed and executed since 1994 to ‘grow’ black academics of all genders; resulting in transformation inertias across the national system.

International Connexions and Disciplinary Dynamics

8. The world has become connexionist in the wake of globalising economic, cultural, political and social processes that are steered, almost exclusively, by neo-liberal logics.

³ See Jansen *et al* (2007: 159-160) **Statistical surveys** – broad surveys of system monitoring and performance in relation to standard indicators, such as equity, efficiency and effectiveness, for example, headcount and enrolment studies (Cooper & Subotzky, 2001); system-wide monitoring studies (Cloete & Bunting, 2000); annual reports on policy initiatives and achievements (CHE, 2004); national planning accounts and strategies (Department of Education, 2001); and research performance trends (Mouton, 2003). The most common equity indicators used in most of these studies relate to race and gender participation and performance. **Case studies** – site-specific and in-depth studies of typically single institutions, faculties, departments or programmes (Ensor, 2001; Anderson, 2002; Jansen, 2002) where the subject matter could range from institutional mergers to deracialization to curriculum restructuring. These studies tend to offer fascinating accounts of one or more institutional sites but, with few exceptions, lack a broader theorization, which enables these single cases to hold meaning beyond a specific locale. **Historical inquiry** – intensive studies of higher education policy or social movements concerned with higher education, for example, policy evolution (Schoole, 2005); and student politics (Nkomo, 1984; Badat, 2001). These studies tend to foreground the role of politics and political movements in shaping and constraining policy options in higher education; their value lies in the thorough documentation of historical processes and events that continue to shape higher education. **Critical events research** – special study of an emergent, significant national phenomenon that is of contemporary and critical importance to higher education, for example, private higher education (Kruss, 2004); black academic migration (Potgieter, 2002); new forms of knowledge production (Kraak, 2000); institutional culture studies (Thaver, 2005); and higher education as international trade (Schoole, 2005). These studies generate high concentration value for limited periods of time and tend to locate South African higher education within international thinking and trends on the issue under analysis. **Policy analysis** – focused review and criticism of an emergent or established higher education policy or policies, with an assessment of the nature, origins and consequences of such policies (Muller, 2003; Hall, Symes & Luescher, 2004; Jansen, 2004; SAUVCA, 2003). This category of study ranges from thoughtful theoretical or public position papers on a topic to more conventional policy analyses targeting a particular higher education policy or plan. **Single-issue studies** – coverage of a wide spectrum of issues or concerns in higher education that are often confined to a particular institution, based on a specific interest of an individual academic researcher, and using a wide range of methodologies. Such studies typically appear as a single article in a higher education journal or as an entry into a general education or social science journal. A single issue of the *South African Journal of Higher Education* would, for example, cover topics as disparate as performance management in higher education, environmental education research, building research capacity, indigenous knowledge systems, language policy in higher education, postgraduate supervision, and industry-university partnerships.

⁴ See Andile Makholwa (2015): ‘Of the 475 permanent and associate professors at UCT, only 18 are black African. Add Indian and coloured professors and there are 71 — still woefully inadequate. Wits University has 202 black full and associate professors, including temporary staff, out of 916. At both universities, African includes staff from the rest of Africa. At the end of 2013, there were 491 black (including Indian and coloured) professors in the country and 1,862 white professors. There were 530 black (including Indian and coloured) associate professors compared with 1,299 white associate professors. Black women are the most underrepresented group on academic staffs’. <http://www.bdlive.co.za/national/education/2015/05/18/campuses-changing-slowly--and-unevenly>.

The alignment of universities with neoliberalism, the new spirit of capitalism and the ensuing managerialism linked with notions of efficiency and control has received widespread attention over the past two decades (Adams, 2006; Vally and Motala, 2014; Lynch, 2014; McGettigan; 2014; Hedley, 2010; Ntshoe, 2008). Badat (2009: 3-4) identifies three forms of neoliberal influences on the university: the way in which the logic of the market defines the purpose of higher education in economic terms; the redefinition of the university as supermarkets for varieties of public and private goods; and the rise of rampant materialism, also within higher education spaces.

9. These developments afflict the global higher education scene as captured in *University in Ruins* (Readings 1996); *Scholars in the Marketplace* (Mamdani 2007); *Between Race and Reason: Violence, Intellectual Responsibility and the University to Come* (Susan Searls Giroux 2010); *The Closing of the American Mind* (Bloom 2008); *Achieving our Country* (Rorty 1999); *Our Underachieving Colleges* (Bok 2006); and *Universities in the Marketplace* (Bok 2009). Others include *Citizenship and Higher Education - The Role of Universities in Communities and Society* (Arthur and Bohlin, 2005); *Higher Education and the Public Good* (Nixon, 2011) and *Intellectuals and the Public Good* (Misztal, 2007).
10. Amidst analyses of this kind, ranking frenzies and the overproduction of such orderings are now dominating the higher education landscape; its over-proximity within universities gave rise to forms of anti-educational and narcissistic forms of academic citizenships across the sector. A perfunctory analysis of the Daily Higher Education News (DHEN) will underscore this assertion.
11. But, higher education in South Africa and on our continent suffers a more profound constraint: the western disciplining of knowledge. Here one can summon Ndlovu-Gatsheni's⁵ argument that 'the worse form of colonization [...] on the continent is the epistemological one (colonization of imagination and the mind) that is hidden in institutions and discourses that govern the modern globe'. The lack of interpretive resources to cognise 'black' is thus structurally-anchored within the disciplines; the very terms for decolonisation is prefigured in the colonising knowledge project. This epistemic injustice features in our research, teaching and learning and community engagement practices; they are discipline-bound, constituted by the organisation of knowledge and finding expression in what we do as knowledge practitioners. Crucially, these injustices are legitimated by knowledge and are, for most part, rendered invisible to the academy itself (see Keet, 2014).
12. Needless to say, the disciplining of knowledge, though particularly associated with the advancement of the scientific method, has long histories that are constitutively tied to the history of universities. Such histories map the production spaces and locations of epistemologies and the intellectual, economic and social dominance that ensue from it.

⁵ Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S.J., 2013. *Coloniality of Power in Postcolonial Africa: Myths of Decolonisation*. [e-book] Dakar: Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa. Available at: http://www.codesria.org/IMG/pdf/2-Coloniality_of_Power_Ndlovu_Chapter_2.pdf [Accessed on 20 November 2013], p.63.

Charles Van Doren captures this well in *History of Knowledge*⁶ in an inclusive account that geographically spans the globe and historically extends to the ‘ancient empires’. The mistake made by Van Doren, although common, is to present ‘coming into epistemic being’ as dependent on ‘discovery’ by the cognitive faculties of the western observer.

13. As argued later, the dynamics inherent to disciplines is part of the *intellectual* economies and reproductive machinery of universities. ‘More so than any other social and intellectual arrangement, the disciplines permeate the life of the university. Academics and students are streamed; professional, academic and student identities are constructed; scientific authorities are established and maintained; social statuses are affirmed; social spaces are mapped out; recognitions, rewards and sanctions are distributed; and epistemic injustices legitimated. A series of classes, textbooks, study-guides, tutorials, practicals, conversations, seminars, journals, conferences and assessment regimes, each charted according to the status of the disciplines within the university space, animates the university. Ritual behaviours, symbolic expressions, ceremonial practices, triumphal architectures and artifacts add to this picture of the university as an institution steeped in the self-referential logics produced within the disciplines. Lenoir suggests a useful definition for disciplines: Disciplines are the institutional mechanism for regulating the market relations between consumers and the producers of knowledge [...] disciplines are political structures that mediate crucially between the political economy and the production of knowledge’ (Keet, 2014).
14. Once this logic is accepted, knowledge transformation and the disruptions of the disciplines would become central to the South African higher education transformation project.

Transformation: Floating signifiers and unstable discourses?

15. ‘Transformation’, in the South African context, may well be one of the most prolific empty signifiers that ‘absorbs rather than emits meaning’ (xx). It also seems to be a dynamic floating signifier meaning different things to different people; ‘they may mean whatever their interpreters want them to mean’ (xx). This particular challenge is underscored by a review of Integrated Transformation Plans (ITPs) of universities Soudien (2013) which identified nine meaning-making themes from the various ITPs: reparations; compliance; relevance; evolution; psychological; contexts; social; review; and mission⁷.

⁶ Van Doren, C., 1991. *A history of knowledge. Past, present, and future. The pivotal events, people, and achievements of world history*. New York: The Random House Publishing Group.

⁷ **‘Reparation:** Transformation as a process of making **amendments**. It is about bringing about radical changes in ourselves and advocating change to structural defects and dehumanising systems for the betterment of higher education whereby it is possible to build a culture of mutual respect, trust, co-operation, tolerance and humaneness; **Compliance:** Transformation as a response to constitutional and legal requirements; **Responsiveness:** Transformation as a process of becoming useful in and to society at large. It is amultifaceted and integrated process by which the university continuously renews itself in an ongoing effort to complement national development and societal goals; **Evolution:** Transformation as an inevitable (involuntary) process of change. It is an ongoing process and not an event or an end in itself. It is a journey that requires courage, tolerance, fairness, and equity and the willingness and courage to ask the difficult questions; **Psychological:** Transformation as a change that takes place in individuals. It refers to the change process that takes place in people. In involves the promotion of moral, ethical and social

16. A survey across universities produced the following six transformation indicators and categories in order of weight: institutional culture; curriculum and research; teaching and learning; equity and redress; diversity and social inclusion; and community engagement (2015: xx). The core mandates of higher education, research, teaching and learning, and community engagement are reflected in these prioritized themes.
17. The most recent policy initiative in the area of higher education transformation, the Draft Social Inclusion Policy Framework of DHET (2015), aims to address ‘deep historical inequalities and, in moving forward, heals the divisions of the past through interventionist policies and programmes. Race, gender, class, age, disability, HIV and AIDS as well as geographical inequalities need to be addressed through deliberate policies and programmes that focus on [substantive] equality, anti-racism, social cohesion, inclusion and human rights in the post-school education and training sector. This social inclusion policy ensures that all public colleges, Adult Education and Training Centre and other public higher education and training institutions operating in South Africa have in place anti-racism and anti-discrimination policies as well as grounding programmes that focus on building an inclusive society’. ‘Social cohesion’, a key theme in the NDP, dovetails with ‘social inclusion’ as two of the primary signifiers for transformation; a priority underscored by the review of the ITPs and the survey.
18. Despite the slipperiness of the concept, a broad meaning-making frame is emerging around transformation that hinges on the following operational concepts: institutional culture; curriculum and research; teaching and learning, equity and redress; diversity, social cohesion, and social inclusion; and social engagement. One can interpret this meaning-frame as having the *development of an inclusive narrative of progress and equality in mind: one that can facilitate the fundamental reconstitution and re-expression of the role of the university in wider society; as well as contributing to the reconfiguration of an economy based on the goals of social justice, democracy and human solidarity.*
19. In general, the principles of transformation, the transformation themes; and the mandate and roles of university provide sufficient clarity for a definitional framework for higher education transformation.
20. Transformation of higher education is generally conceptualised around the following principles as expressed in the White Paper on Higher Education and Training of 1997: equity and redress; democratisation; development; quality; effectiveness and efficiency; academic freedom; institutional autonomy; and public accountability.

values as well as the enhancement of moral regeneration; **Context:** To provide opportunities for an excellent teaching and learning experience that is contextually responsive to the challenges of globalisation and of a society in transition; **Social:** Transformation as a change that takes place between individuals and where **historical power relations** are fundamentally altered and equalised; **Review:** Transformation as a process of **evaluating** existing conditions; **Mission:** Transformation as a process of meeting set **objectives**. Transformation is fundamental and purposeful advancement towards specified goals - individual, collective, cultural and institutional.

21. It is possible to combine the transformation themes with the transformation principles; but, for conceptual clarity, we need to differentiate the layers along the following lines:
- a. The *mandates* of universities (research, teaching and learning, community engagement).
 - b. *Principles* of transformation (equity and redress; democratisation; development; quality; effectiveness and efficiency; academic freedom; institutional autonomy; and public accountability).
 - c. *Themes* of transformation (institutional culture; curriculum and research; teaching and learning; equity and redress; diversity; social cohesion and social inclusion; and community engagement).
22. The overlaps between *mandate* and *themes* can be tolerated conceptually given the predisposition to interpret the *principles* from the standpoint of preservationist ideologies; something higher education transformation practitioners should be mindful of. Further, the mandates, principles and themes have to be situated within the mission, role, objectives, tensions and contexts of higher education in South Africa, aptly captured in Badat's writings (2006; 2007; 2010; 2013)⁸. He further articulates five roles for higher education (Badat, 2013: 5-6):
- i. 'to produce *graduates* that possess values, knowledge, attitudes and skills acquired through thoughtfully designed and implemented formative and professional teaching and learning programmes that engage simultaneously with disciplinary, historical, ethical, cultural, economic and learning issues;
 - ii. to undertake *critical social and scientific inquiry* and imaginative and rigorous scholarship – of discovery, integration, application and teaching - that serves diverse intellectual, economic and social goals and the greatest public good;
 - iii. to contribute to forging a *critical and democratic citizenship*. Vibrant and dynamic societies require graduates who are not just capable professionals, but also thoughtful intellectuals and critical citizens that respect and promote human rights;
 - iv. to *proactively engage with our societies* at the intellectual and, more generally, cultural level. This requires universities to not just transmit knowledge to people in the wider society, but to have a two-way engagement with the wider society; a reflexive communication if you like;
 - v. to *actively engage with their wider contexts and societal conditions*. Our universities must engage effectively with the economic and social challenges of our local, national, regional, continental and global contexts; with the tasks of economic development and the ability to compete globally; job creation and the elimination of unemployment and poverty; the effective delivery of social services and the threat of HIV/AIDS and other diseases'.

⁸ See Badat, 2007: The role of higher education must necessarily intersect and effectively engage with the economic and social challenges of local, national, regional, continental and global contexts. These challenges include the imperatives of economic growth and development; the ability to compete globally; job creation and the reduction/elimination of unemployment and poverty; the effective delivery of social services and the threat of HIV/AIDS and other diseases. The challenges also encompass the imperatives of equity and redress; social justice; the democratisation of state and society, the building of a culture of human rights, creating a vibrant civil society, and promoting a culture of vigorous and critical intellectual public discourse. At the same time, in playing its role higher education must also be guided by and embody specific *principles* and *values*. These include: equity and redress, quality, development, democratisation, academic freedom, institutional autonomy, effectiveness and efficiency, and public accountability'.

23. Though these mandates, roles, themes and principles of transformation in higher education generate various overdeterminations, entanglements and double binds, studies such as that of Cloete *et al* (2002), Cloete and Moja (2007) and Cloete (2014) that set up a discourse of ‘transformation tensions’ need to be cautiously engaged; it reduces the transformation project to trade-offs between equity and quality; redress and efficiency; and change and development. Though ‘tensions’ are to be viewed as productive within the mandates and roles of universities, the frames⁹ used by these studies are unquestionably linked to images and pictures that are ‘framed’ so as to organize the interpretations of higher education transformation on the basis of conceptions of ‘excellence’ within higher education as it has emerged from a violent, oppressive and highly unequal history, nationally and internationally. One has to question the frames and the framers; because something is happening that falls outside the scope of the frame: an attempt at the reconceptualization of higher education transformation away from established understandings of what universities are; how they look like; and what they should do. But because the frame ‘must’ have parameters to fit a picture, the inevitable image of the ideal ‘UCT’ and others is protruding. This is the major weakness of higher education transformation studies in South Africa and elsewhere; it has bequeathed us with racist, sexist, discriminatory, preservationist, brutal and false conceptions of ‘excellence’ and ‘quality’ that have become its own ideology; a point easily demonstrated by content analyses in official and public discourses generated by universities themselves.
24. In addition to problematizing the notion of ‘excellence’ and ‘quality’ as linked to discursive practices aimed at exclusion (as the notion is employed at present); patterns of elitism and eurocentrism so endemic in South African higher education and elsewhere has given rise to ‘race’ and ‘ethnic’ thinking produced within the academy itself resulting in academic complicity and complacency. This happens across the sector; conscripting academics from all cultural backgrounds. Alumni, ‘ethnic’, academic and political ‘cabals’ act as ‘shadow governments’ on some campuses promoting ‘race’ and ‘ethnic’ networks and career advancement (see Law, Phillips and Turney, 2004). All types of universities in South Africa appear as outsourced to varieties of self-interest-driven networks and university-based cabals.
25. Useful contributions in *Being at Home: Race, Institutional culture and Transformation at Higher Education Institutions in South Africa* (Tabensky and Matthews, 2015) highlight the following transformation themes: the ‘idea’ (purpose) of a university; institutional culture, transforming disciplinary communities; the instrumentalisation of universities in relation to neo-liberal logics; tolerance and inclusion; policy; the role of leaders and the agency of those who ‘flourish in the cracks’. Agential responsibility is distributed across the university community. An instructive question from this book is: ‘Can we really think of transforming our institutions without transforming the disciplinary communities to which we belong?’ (Taylor, 2015).

⁹ See Butler, 2009.

Definitional framework

26. Given the preceding discussions and ideas underpinning the mission, purpose, mandates, and transformation principles and themes, the following definitional framework for higher education transformation is proposed:
- a. Progress towards the attainment of levels of *inclusions* as reflected in the social structure of the academy and its administration; governance and management processes; the institutional culture of universities; and patterns of equity and redress¹⁰.
 - b. Inclusive *and* equity-based student access, success, and support.
 - c. *Africanisation* in relation to curriculum, research, language, aesthetics and governance (Metz, 2015); the capacity of universities to ‘read’ African.
 - d. A more *just* reconfiguration of power-relations embedded within the organisation of knowledge, its disciplines and disciples and the construction of professional and identities and authorities.
 - e. Fair and inclusive distribution of authority within knowledge generation processes, research subjects, objects, topics and trends.
 - f. The advancement of critical and post conflict pedagogies and an understanding of the constitutive links between pedagogy, research and institutional culture.
 - g. The promotion of equitable and equalising relationships between higher education and the state, private sector, interest groups, pressure formations and broader society.

Six economies - the social structure of the academy¹¹

27. The definitional framework in the preceding paragraphs needs to be linked to a detailed understanding of the social structure of the economy, organized around six economies: material, administrative, socio-cultural, affective, intellectual and political. These economies are central to the reproductive machinery of the university. Its power is shown in the massive quantitative data available to us that reveal a system that obeys the discriminatory fault lines in society.
28. The social structure of the academy, as a ‘system of rules and practices that influence the actions and outcomes of large numbers of social actors within university settings consists of rules, institutions, and practices; is embodied in the actions, thoughts, beliefs, and durable dispositions of individual human beings; assigns roles and powers to groups and individual actors; and has distributive consequences for individuals and groups’ (xx). The structure, though embedded, is disclosed in equity patterns; promotions, privileges, access and success rates; governance; teaching and learning; community engagement; and

¹⁰ Here we have to avoid giving in to the seductive allure to reduce higher education transformation to equity targets; the Baudrillardian warning of seduction followed by catastrophe should be heeded. The Equity Index, co-authored by Makgoba and Govinder (2013), is a case in point.

¹¹ Keet, 2014

research. It is at the heart of the reproductive machineries of the university; and should be one of the central priorities on the transformation agenda. The way in which scientific authority is distributed and transferred; the constitution of university committees such as disciplinary, ethics and research committees; the patterns of decisions emerging from these committees; the pedagogical arrangements and support matrixes within institutions; the access and success rates of students; etc. are all constitutive of and functions of the social structure of the academy.

29. In the case of *material* economies, privileges and benefits, financial and otherwise, are circulated within established networks that reaffirm the *power-positions* of those on the grid. These include access to publication and research outlets and wide networks of 'buddy-systems', nationally and internationally whose sole gate-keeping function is the reproduction of academic 'authority' and its privileges; a form of operation that seems incapable of cognising 'black'. Other practices include closed research networks with associated research funds that validates scholarly work; good or bad. There are many more.
30. *Material* economies are serviced by *administrative* economies on all levels of the system; where *administrative* economy refers to the circulation and distribution of administrative and regulatory power and control; access to systems and the codes and rules by which these systems operate. The shared values and assumptions that steer administrative cultures and practices dovetails with broader institutional cultures which normalise entrenched patterns of exclusion and inclusion. Studies on how powerful disciplinary, research, higher degrees, promotions and ethics committees are constituted and what patterns of decisions emerge from their deliberations, are non-existent. One can, given narrative accounts, simply speculate on their powerful role in the reproduction of discriminatory patterns.
31. *Socio-cultural* economies ensure the flow of beliefs, customs and behaviours that affirm the status quo.
32. *Affective* economies circulate collective emotions and affect, in, for instance, the case in which the 'white subject' 'is presented as endangered by imagined others whose proximity threatens not only to take something away from the subject (jobs, security, wealth), but to take the place of the subject'¹². The converse, the anxiety of continued subjugation by other means of the 'black subject', circulates its own set of affects. Anger, fear and despair usually accompany this anxiety as expressions of the 'unsayable' effects of institutional cultures for which a regime of articulation do not yet exist in its fullest.
33. *Intellectual* economies safeguard the movement and pre-determined transfer of scholarly authority and credentialisation according to established institutional and sector-based rules that reproduce the social structure of the academy, by regulating who has access to the 'games' that are set up the 'rules'. The monopoly of 'scientific competence' is

¹² Ahmed, 2004.

ensured; so that the agent is socially recognised to speak and act legitimately (Bourdieu), even if such competence is mythical in real scientific terms.

34. *Political* economies here refer to the circulation of political beliefs and ideologies; *and* to the social ‘relations, particularly power relations, that mutually constitute the production, distribution, and consumption of resources’ [...]; social relations organized around power or the ability to control other people, processes, and things, even in the face of resistance¹³. These resources and control, in higher education institutions, are varied. They include material, academic, opportunity and intellectual resources; and the means to control processes by which the distribution of privileges are determined.
35. It is obvious that these economies influence entire university communities in the way that it set up institutional (academic and administrative) cultures as the ‘the deeply embedded patterns of organisational behaviour and the shared values, assumptions, beliefs, or ideologies that members have about their organisation or its work’ (Peterson and Spencer, 1991:142).
36. It is analyses of the social structure of the academy that will reveal the mechanics and tactics responsible for the lack of transformation across the system. In essence, when we speak of *institutional culture*, we actually refer to the *collective outcomes of the six economies* that produce the social structure of the academy, its administration and governance; and its habits and dispositions.
37. If we view universities as constituted by these sets of economies, we are able to cast a framework and need for transformation across the entire sector; not a single institution can escape this interpretive scheme. The economies of historically disadvantaged institutions have the same logical structure of advantaged, previously ‘white’ institutions and these economies are present in all institutions; they serve *historically established patterns of interests* as distributed across the sector¹⁴. Though localised dynamics may differ from institution to institution and are expressed in differentiated ways, the interests embedded within these economies are comparable across the sector. We can thus engage with transformation matrixes and priorities at institutions that profoundly differ from one another.
38. These conceptual notes and attempts at developing a definitional framework need to be converted into a management tool: the transformation barometer. This is an extremely

¹³ Mosco, 2009.

¹⁴ This sector includes all South African universities: Walter Sisulu University; University of Zululand; University of Fort Hare; Mangosuthu University of Technology; Rhodes University; University of Limpopo; Tshwane University of Technology; University of the Western Cape; Cape Peninsula University of Technology; University of Johannesburg; University of Venda; Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University; University of the Free State; Vaal University of Technology; Stellenbosch University; University of KwaZulu-Natal; Central University of Technology; University of Cape Town; North-West University; Durban University of Technology; University of Pretoria; and the University of the Witwatersrand.

difficult task: capturing the density of transformation-understandings within the operational tasks we have to perform. Nevertheless, the next few paragraphs try to do so.

The transformation barometer

39. Diversity toolkits and transformation plans are littering the higher education landscape, globally. The establishment of well-resourced diversity offices is a common feature of higher education institutions in Western-Europe and North-America. On our continent, ‘The Working Group on Higher Education of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa in 2006, developed a toolkit for mainstreaming gender in higher education in Africa in collaboration with the Association of African Universities’ (2015, xx). However, broader transformation toolkits are not commonly available in African higher education institutions.
40. ‘Chief Diversity Officer’ is also nowadays a standard designation in universities in the USA; usually appointed at very senior levels; and diversity scorecards are commonplace (see Williams, 2013; 2014). This development has been steered by three models; the affirmative action and equity model (1950-1970s); the multicultural and inclusion diversity model (1960s-1980s); and the learning, diversity and research model (1990s-2000s). It also explains South Africa’s focus on equity and redress over the 20 years; and the seductive allure to reduce higher education transformation to these targets.
41. Indicators for education quality have also become a feature of comparative work of regional and international institutions (UNESCO, OECD, OSF and the World Bank). Measuring the attainment of outcomes is central to the logic of these indicators. With reference to the MDGs, there is already a frenzy of activities associated with the post-2015 agenda; and the role of higher education. Captured in the NDP, South Africa already has long-term targets in place associated with the performance of the higher education sector.
42. As a consequence of processing national policy imperatives; expression within ITPs; and feedback from transformation practitioners, the thematic areas for the barometer must emerge from the concepts captured in the following table:

| Mandates | Principles | Themes |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research • Teaching and learning • Community engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity and redress • Democratisation • Development • Quality • Effectiveness and efficiency • Academic freedom • Institutional autonomy • Public accountability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional culture • Curriculum and research • Teaching and learning • Equity and redress • Diversity • Social cohesion and social inclusion • Community engagement |

43. Emerging from these concepts and the preceding discussions, the following themes should steer the higher education transformation project:

- a. Institutional culture
 - i. Governance and Management
 - ii. Professionalisation of ‘Transformation’ work
 - iii. Social structure of the academy
 - iv. Social inclusion/ cohesion
 - v. Language and Symbols

- b. Equity and redress
 - i. Access and success (staff)
 - ii. Support/ opportunity
 - iii. Diversity and inclusivity

- c. Research, scholarship and post-graduate studies
 - i. Knowledge transformations
 - ii. Diversity and inclusivity
 - iii. Internationally recognised research on ‘race’, ‘gender’, ‘disability’ and social justice

- d. Leadership, relations with external stakeholders, and community engagement
 - i. Diversity, training, development and professional growth
 - ii. Transformational leadership
 - iii. Socially just, diverse, inclusive community engagement
 - iv. Equity-based external engagement

- e. Teaching and learning
 - i. Inclusive enrolment planning
 - ii. Access and success (students)
 - iii. Critical pedagogies
 - iv. Diversity competencies

| Dimension/ Theme | Sub-themes | Goals | Indicators/ activities |
|------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Institutional Culture | Governance and management | Developing broad transformation policy trajectories; supported by council and top management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transformation statement from councils Commitment of councils to transformation Improving equity patterns on councils and in top management structures Support and embed the work of Institutional forum Policy reviews and alignment Human resource reviews and alignment Recommendations to DHET re legal and policy reform if so required Activities aimed as corruption free university Levels of efficiency in strategic and academic managements |
| | Professionalisation of higher education transformation work | <p>Establishing professional transformation outfits at universities that is located in the VC' office; and linked to all other relevant structures within the university</p> <p>Developing collaborations between transformation offices and <i>ombud-function</i> (independent structure dealing with concerns confidentially)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitably qualified, experienced, Head (Director) of University Transformation; reporting directly to the VC Dedicated positions outlining the strategy, structure and goals of the unit; with budget from central funds proportionate to the size of the institution¹⁵ Support and toolkits for developing transformation plans and generating transformation reports Earmarked website for transformation Influence over academic and strategic plans to embed transformation imperatives Some measure of independence to provide advice without fear or favour Specialised training/ professional association/ defined territory and jurisdiction/ code of ethics |
| | Social structure of the academy | Studying and analysing the mechanics of Institutional Culture steered by an analysis of the six economies that sets up the social structure of the academy to identify patterns of privilege and in/exclusion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantitative indicators (shift in demographic profiles of committees) Qualitative assessment of strategies (shifts in networks; inclusive distribution of resources and opportunities) Identification of socially unjust systemic and structural patterns and responses to deal with it |
| | Social inclusion/ exclusion/ cohesion | <p>Studying the meaning and experiences of inclusion/ exclusion and affiliation/ disaffiliation</p> <p>Ensuring inclusive learning spaces; diversified workplaces, and hospitable environments across its campuses</p> <p>Developing and implementing Innovative and cross-cutting programs to improve the institutional culture for diverse students, staff and visitors.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and nature of studies Institutional social inclusion policy Number of social inclusion projects Solidarity-generating initiatives (e.g. support across universities for students facing financial exclusion) Perceptual measures Levels of participation Perceptions of engagement Perceptions of satisfaction Perceptions of affiliation (not belonging) Number and patterns of disciplinary, harassment and discrimination cases Number of diverse student and staff associations Number of campus 'incidents' Number of affinity organisations (e.g. LGBTI) Number of transformation articles in campus media |
| | Language and Symbols | <p>Develop inclusive language policies informed by the needs of students</p> <p>Develop policy on university symbols, and naming processes</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy; and levels of inclusivity it generates Policy and levels of inclusivity it generates |

¹⁵ Comparative analysis required.

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|--|---------------------------|---|---|
| Equity and Redress | Access and success | <p>Recruiting, promoting and retaining of diverse faculty and staff – (focus on ‘race’, disability and gender/ <i>be mindful of the ‘white’ female diversity trap</i>).</p> <p>Conducting studies of human resource conceptualisations and practices that facilitate/ inhibit equity</p> <p>Studying the composition of recruitment and promotions committee on all levels and the patterns of decisions ensuing from it</p> <p>Linking equity with the diversification and transformations of knowledges</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of staff appointed to advance demographic representation across universities (e.g. ‘Black’ dominated staff profiles - universities to recruit and retain ‘white’ academics and staff; and the other way around) • Number of transformative academic communities • Diversity levels in recruitment search processes • Number and distribution of development grants • Analysis of patterns of disciplinary cases • Initiatives at transforming recruitment practices • Targeted focus on STEM related recruitment of diverse staff • Levels of integration between academic and ‘service’ staff • Perception studies of ‘service’ staff • Number of targeted interventions for ‘service’ and administrative staff |
| | Support and opportunity | <p>Establishing university-based development programmes</p> <p>Consciously designing efforts for inclusive and equity driven opportunities</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of targeted interventions supporting staff • Nature of resource and academic support |
| | Diversity and inclusivity | Developing and maintaining of diverse and inclusive staff profiles | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a diversity index; and f efficacy of strategies to meet the demands of the index |
| Research, scholarly and post-graduate studies | Knowledge transformations | <p>Studying intellectual communities within the academy and its national and international networks, and the patterns of in/ exclusion relating to participation, engagement, opportunity and funding.</p> <p>Exploring the continued political constructions of disciplines; and the ways it generate in/ exclusions and possibilities of self-transformation</p> <p>The diversification of knowledge; its producers; and beneficiaries, which specific emphasis on ‘Africanization’.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of study programmes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fist nation studies ○ Africa studies ○ Gender studies ○ Ethnic studies ○ Disability studies ○ Area studies ○ Diverse Histories of STEM ○ Etc. • Number of full-time or affiliated staff in these programmes; and their equity profiles • Presence of transformation and diversity-themed research • % of research funding available for transformation studies • Total number and value of grants • Scholarly outputs on transformation themes • Qualitative assessment of the roles of committees such as research committees and ethics committees on facilitating/ constraining transformation-themed research • Engaged scholarship • Number of interdisciplinary diversity-themed research; administratively, financially supported across faculties |
| | Diversity and inclusivity | Enrolling and graduating postgraduate students from diverse environments, geographical locales, ‘ability’, and socio-economic conditions (class and social status). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of students and demographic, socio-economic, gender and ‘ability’ profiles • Study area and demographic profile • Number of support initiatives for diverse post graduate students • Number of targeted recruitment initiatives of students within a broad understanding of diversities; and increase degree completion • Develop and implement non-discriminatory supervision standards and practices • Number of interventions that facilitate postgraduate student intellectual cultures • Number of trainings on good practices in recruiting and graduating diverse students |

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|---|--|---|---|
| | Internationally recognised research on 'race', 'gender', 'disability' and social justice | Commitment to developing and supporting the production of nationally recognized research and scholarship on race, 'ethnicity', gender, 'disability' class, and other dimensions of transformation and diversity. Clearinghouse of opportunities for funded research, scholarship, and creative activities addressing transformation and diversity issues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % and value of funding/ support and development initiatives • Number of research clusters • Number of scholarly outputs |
| Leadership; relationships with external stakeholders; and community engagement | Diversity, training, development and professional growth | Increasing opportunities for leadership training, professional growth and advancement of diverse academics and staff in all divisions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-aligning skills development regime • Institutional plans that links skills development with diversity training; and the diversification of the professional base |
| | Transformational leadership | Strong transformational leadership at top level, deans and heads of department; as part of key performance requirement Retraining and development of academic and administrative managers Coordination and support of transformational leadership on campuses, faculties, departments and the various academic, support and business units. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty, Departmental and Unit plans with targets in place that include equity figures; and substantive initiatives to advance inclusion • Number of transformation related training and development interventions • Qualitative assessment of impact of transformational leadership activities |
| | Socially just, diverse inclusive community engagement | Advancing transformational external relations and community engagement practices. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative assessment of external relations and community engagement on our academic and institutional cultures • Number of transformational community engagement initiatives; away from conventional, patronizing and discriminatory paradigms, towards inclusive epistemological practices • Increase number and quality with diverse external communities/ partnerships |
| | Equity-based external engagement | Ensuring alignment of alumni, student and staff organisations with the transformation objectives of the university | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical review of impact of alumni organisations on patterns of in/exclusion • Number of and diversity of external engagement practices |
| Teaching and Learning | Planning for inclusive enrolment Access and success | Enrolling and graduating undergraduate students from diverse environments, geographical locales, 'ability', and socio-economic conditions (class and social status). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers and diversity profiles • Graduation rates of designated groups • Grant recipients and bursary rates; and diversity profiles of such • Gateway achievement levels • Level of diversity in different majors, e.g. STEM • Number of 1st generation student |
| | Critical pedagogies | Aligning teaching practices with critical, just and humanizing pedagogies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity in teaching awards • % research funds for critical scholarship • Qualitative assessment of pedagogical approaches |

| | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| | Transformation and diversity competencies | <p>Ensuring that undergraduate students acquire the knowledge, experience, and cultural competencies necessary to succeed in a multicultural, globally interconnected world.</p> <p>Equipping graduate students with diversity-related and social justice expertise.</p> <p>Increasing capacity to teach about diversity issues and to develop inclusive learning environments.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compulsory general education programme focusing on diversity, transformation, environment, development and pluralistic societies • Credit bearing intervention on faculty level (convergence/ divergence design) • Integration of diversity and social justice themes into academic courses, living and learning activities, and other co-curricular activities. • Initiate process to link skills on diversity and social justice education to promotion and professional development points • Review and realign academic development programmes of universities • % of budget on infra-structural developments |
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Now what? A culture of questioning

44. The idea of the barometer is to develop a template for integrated transformation planning and execution and generate comparable reports across the sector, as well as make possible the comparative sharing of ideas, good practices, learning and strategies. The transformation report, and continuous future planning, will serve the general principles of transparency, openness and accountability which should be the heart of academic institutions.
45. One should, as a given, acknowledge the limitations of barometers; and subject the results of barometers with a set of perennial questions in relation to transformation:
- a. Do we run universities' with a larger sense of a social justice purpose?
 - b. Do we understand symbolic domination in the contexts of universities; the consecration and naturalization of power?
 - c. Do we do self-reflexive analysis of the political economy of the academy?
 - d. What is the totality of our self-interest games in the academy?
 - e. How do we employ political escapism to avoid dealing with critical analyses of ourselves?
 - f. Who controls the material, academic, organizational and social instruments to reproduce the faculty and the university?
 - g. Do we have the capacity and categories for self-understanding and self-clarification to transform ourselves?
 - h. What are our qualitative indicators? How do we develop these?
 - i. How do we study structure? Institutional culture?
 - j. What is it that students and academics say and do that 'discloses' the operations of structures? How do we capture this?
 - k. What equity patterns emerge from a study of all the 'powerful' university committees? What patterns of decisions? In/Exclusions?
 - l. How do teaching, learning and research constitute institutional culture? How do we study and disrupt these?

- m. How do we develop qualitative data in all areas of higher education transformation?
- n. How do we study patterns of decisions across university committee and structures to reveal the mechanics of the systems? What do we do about this?
 - i. What patterns, how, for how long?
 - ii. What in/exclusion do these exhibit?
- o. How do we study and assess the impact of 'gatekeeping'?
- p. How do we set up our baseline data; especially in relation to the 'hard-to-measure' areas?
- q. What kind of qualitative data can converse with quantitative data to give us a better sense of our transformation work?
- r. Are we prepared to disrupt racial and ethnic economies; materially, intellectually, affectively?
- s. Do we have the appetite to study the ways in which our 'committees' function to reproduce the social structure of the economy?
- t. Are shifts in numbers for marketing purposes our end game? Is there something more to it?
- u. What does the barometer data say about us? Are we prepared to study our disciplines and disciplinary disciples and 'experts'?
- v. How does the distribution of academic and research support play out patterns of in/exclusions?

End

AK and DS
