

Chapter 4

The Institutional Context of Restructuring

External and Internal Determinants

4.1 Introduction

This chapter considers the institutional context from 1984 leading to restructuring at Wits.²⁰² The period from 1984 is discussed, since the legacy of this period has bearing on restructuring.

The questions discussed in this chapter are: What was the relationship between the university and the state? What are the relationships between internal institutional constituencies? How have these relationships influenced restructuring at Wits? The purpose is to map out the internal and external determinants of the institutional restructuring at Wits, as well as the legacies that might have mediated the choices regarding new management styles and processes.

The chapter considers the following main periods: (i) Heightened opposition to the apartheid state, 1984 to 1994; (ii) Dominance of Crisis Management, 1990 to 1997; and (iii) Visionary Management of 1997 to 1999. Each period is introduced around the vice-chancellor of that period, as the change in vice-chancellor coincided with a change in the nature of management. During the first period, the anti-apartheid struggle forced the university community to rally around its leadership to respond to what was seen as external interference.

²⁰² Previous studies on Wits include the officially commissioned work of Murray: Murray, B.K. (1982). *The Early Years: A History of the University of the Witwatersrand*. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand; Murray, B.K. (1997). *Wits the Open Years: A History of the University of the Witwatersrand 1939-1959*. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand.

By the second period, external pressures were overwhelming and resulted in acute internal tensions and conflicts. Unable to contain these, the university management was reactive in its responses, while numerous institutional initiatives were undertaken to assist it in moving out of a state of stalemate; these were not implemented. Management was unable boldly to confront the demands placed upon it by the internal opposition, the state and South African society at large. The last period represented an historical break from the past in that, benefiting from the infusion of innovative ideas from a visionary leadership; the management was able to move beyond a crisis management mode towards systematic planning and implementation of strategies with far reaching and long term effects within a significantly revised institutional mission.

4.2 Resisting Apartheid State Interference, 1984 To 1994

Professor Tober was Vice-Chancellor of the University during the period 1984 to 1990. His efforts were inspired by the “Open Universities” statement, which privileged institutional autonomy and was opposed to any interference of the apartheid state in the running of the university. Referring to this particular historical moment, Professor Munro emphasised that: “We had a common moral purpose”.²⁰³ This common moral purpose was an expression of the joint statement articulated in 1957 in a publication entitled: ‘The Open Universities in South Africa’. The “Open Universities” were a group of four English medium universities, namely the University of Cape Town, the University of Natal, Rhodes University and the University of the Witwatersrand. UCT and Wits were particularly vocal in this regard. The statement expressed the commitment of these institutions, self-defined “open-universities”, to the principles of university

²⁰³ Interview with Professor Kathy Munro, Director of Wits Plus, University of the Witwatersrand, 8 July 2003.

autonomy and academic freedom.²⁰⁴ It arose out of the government's decision in 1956 to enforce racial segregation within universities.²⁰⁵ It was reiterated in 1987 by the same institutions and the University of the Western Cape (UWC) as an affirmation of unity in the fight for academic freedom.²⁰⁶

Against this background, Wits placed itself at the forefront of academic opposition to the apartheid state. The management, staff and students joined efforts in criticising, protesting and organised marches against apartheid and its interference in university life. General assemblies became almost a routine on campus. At these general assemblies, the university consistently registered its abhorrence at the apartheid state's disregard for academic freedom and autonomy, detention without trial of both staff and students and the State of Emergency declared in June 1986. This opposition culminated in the historic general assembly of 28 October 1987 during which the university opposed the violation by the state of its autonomy. The state threatened to withhold subsidy if universities did not comply, for example, with reporting political activities on campus. At this general assembly a plaque was unveiled on the steps of the Great Hall capturing the university's stance against apartheid.²⁰⁷ The inscription on the plaque reads as follows:

²⁰⁴ Academic Freedom was defined in relation to "four essential freedoms" by Dr T.B. Davie, the Vice-Chancellor of UCT, in 1957 as "who may teach, what may be taught, how it shall be taught, and who may be admitted to study" (The Open Universities in South Africa. (1957). p. 9). These words were reiterated at Wits by Professor Tober in 1985 (General Assembly 16 August 1985, University Archives, Senate House, p. 2).

²⁰⁵ Moodie, G.C. (1994). The State and the Liberal Universities in South Africa: 1948 – 1990. *Higher Education*, 27(1), 8-9.

²⁰⁶ Joint Statement with UCT, UWC, Natal, Rhodes and Wits 4 March 1987, University Archives, Senate House.

²⁰⁷ Foreword by Tober to General Assembly, 28 October 1987, University Archives, Senate House, p 3-5.

The University of the Witwatersrand is dedicated to the acquisition, advancement and imparting of knowledge through the pursuit of truth in free and open debate, in the undertaking of research, in scholarly discourse and in balanced, dispassionate teaching. **We reject any external interference**²⁰⁸ designed to diminish our freedom to attain these ends. We record our solemn protest against the intention of the Government, through the threat of financial sanctions, to force the University to become the agent of Government policy in disciplining its members. We protest against the invasion of the legitimate authority of the University. We protest against the proposed stifling of legitimate dissent. In the interests of all in this land, and in the knowledge of the justice of our cause, we dedicate ourselves to unremitting opposition to these intended restraints and to the restoration of our autonomy.²⁰⁹

However, contestation against apartheid was not only limited to resistance or opposition against the apartheid state and its policies; it also included all discriminatory practices and forms of social injustice entrenched in South African institutions, including universities. In this regard, in spite of the apparent unity against government, Wits was not immune from other external pressures and increasing internal contestation. External pressure came from grassroots organisations and wider communities with vested interests in the university. Grassroots organisations increasingly pushed for changes to be initiated within universities. Their concerns centred on the needs for: (i) curriculum change; (ii) improved financial assistance for students; and (iii) improved student and staff representation in institutional governance at the level of senate and council. The most revealing views of the surrounding communities came from a Wits-initiated research project, Perspectives of Wits (POW), published in 1986.

²⁰⁸ My emphasis.

²⁰⁹ Foreword by Tober to General Assembly, 28 October 1987, University Archives, Senate House, p 29.

The aim of the project was to scan the demands of the outside community on the university.²¹⁰ The POW project was a R20 000 project involving an extensive group of academics concerned with the relevance of Wits as an institution to the outside community. It involved interviews with members of organisations of disadvantaged communities in the PWV (Pretoria Witwatersrand Vereeniging) area, the international community of academics who had strong links with South African universities in their opposition to apartheid in Britain and European universities, a sample of students, academic staff and support staff at Wits. It also included a meeting with the ANC in Lusaka even though the ANC was banned by government. The project highlighted the commitment of some academics to assist the institution in meeting the changing demands of its external environment.²¹¹

The project revealed a tremendous contrast between the perceptions of the external community, especially the surrounding disadvantaged community of the PWV area, and the image that Wits had projected as a progressive institution opposed to the apartheid state. The disadvantaged community of the PWV area felt that Wits had not transformed itself sufficiently. For them, Wits was an institution: (i) controlled by the government, the ‘white community’ and the ‘business community’; (ii) not concerned with ensuring that its internal staff composition represented the larger South African society; (iii) not concerned with developing a curriculum relevant to the South African society and the southern African environment; (iv) not representative of disadvantaged communities represented by organisations such as the trade unions, civic organisations and parent organisations; and (v) without a strong presence in the community.²¹² Unfortunately Wits responded in a defensive manner and made no effort to translate POW’s proposals into an institutional plan for implementation.

²¹⁰ Perspectives of Wits 1986, University Archives, Senate House; Interview with Professor Edward Webster, University of the Witwatersrand, 29 January 2001.

²¹¹ Perspectives of Wits, University of the Witwatersrand, 1986, University Archives, Senate House.

²¹² Perspectives of Wits, University of the Witwatersrand, 1986, University Archives, Senate House, p 75-76.

There was a perception that the university was on the right track and significant changes had already been undertaken. Isolated initiatives were referred to, to justify this. For example, Zille at the time stated that Wits had established links with the outside community by pointing to that such as the initiative between the Faculty of Education and black resistance groups around policy research and education.²¹³

Briefly, while Wits appeared united in its opposition to the apartheid state, this unity became increasingly undermined by internal tensions and contestation echoing the growing external criticism of prevailing institutional practices. Areas of contestation were reflected in the debates concerning academic standards - whether these were declining as a consequence of the increase in the number of black students at Wits²¹⁴ - and the tension between the academic boycott and academic freedom.²¹⁵ In this regard, the Wits community was divided between those who argued that the institution and knowledge should not be isolated and those who thought that, given the imposition of sanctions upon the apartheid state by the international community, academics should comply with the academic boycott to further pressurise the state. Also contested were the working conditions of the support service staff²¹⁶ and the role of academics in the struggle.

²¹³ Zille, H. (1987). White South African University Forges Links with Black Resistance Groups. *The Chronicle of Higher Education USA*.

²¹⁴ Webster, 20 May 1987, University Archives, Senate House, p. 8; Tober 20 May 1987, University Archives, Senate House, p.8.

²¹⁵ McGregor, M. (1987, 12 January) Academic Boycott is too high a price to pay, *The Star*; Webster, E. Notes for Senate Academic Freedom Meeting 5 June 1987, Professor Webster's Archives Sociology of Work Unit (SWOP), University Central Block. An example of this tension between academic freedom and the academic boycott was the threat by students to disrupt a seminar by Dr Conor Cruise O'Brien on 9 October 1986 which raised the debate on campus about the tension between the academic boycott and striving for academic freedom (*Wits Reporter* (1986, 28 October). University Archives, Senate House, p.1).

²¹⁶ During 1985 an agreement was signed by grades 1 to 4 and the university, recognising the Black University Workers' Association (BUWA) (*Wits Reporter* (1985, March). University Archives, Senate House, p.1). At this stage black workers were organised separately and were only organised at the lower level grades. They were, however, a significant force as during 1984 they managed to pull off a work stoppage, which was the

Highly debated was whether academics should play an activist role or limit their intervention in the struggle to knowledge producers. There were differences in approach, particularly between academics and students on how to deal with internal disagreements, whether through intellectual debate or through protest actions.²¹⁷ The general outcome of this contestation was an increasing crisis at the level of university management.

Among academics unequal relations existed, not only on a gender but also a racial basis. Only a few white men experienced a sense of collegiality. The academic administrative system promoted this:

Undeniably there is an 'old boys' network; they are people who have been around forever, they know the codes, who to speak to, which buttons to push, where to have a drink on Friday evening.²¹⁸

Given the nature of networks, it is more likely that the names of men will emerge during search processes, as it is they who participate in the various committees of, for example, senate and council, and therefore are more likely to present themselves as candidates for senior positions within the institution. Women's domestic responsibilities inhibit them from participating on the same scale.

first in the history of the university. *Wits Reporter*, University Archives, Senate House). Black workers called for the resignation of three administrators at the university's residence Glynn Thomas House in Soweto. In addition, they called for improved conditions of work and the stopping of threats against workers and the undermining of the union. Eventually the strike was ended approximately one week later as the outcome of mediation (Daivha. (1984, 2 November) *Wits Reporter*, University Archives, Senate House). At the time alongside BUWA, the General and Allied Workers' Union (GAWU), aimed to get workers involved in issues beyond the university at a national level. For example, celebrations pertaining to May Day and linking up with initiatives undertaken by workers at the University of Cape Town (UCT) (Interview with Professor Kathy Munro, 8 July 2003 and Interview with Professor Kathy Munro, 9 March 2004). The National Educational Health and Allied Workers' Union (NEHAWU) was launched in 1987 and was affiliated to the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) (Interview with NEHAWU Front Worker Leader, University of the Witwatersrand, January 2001). This meant that workers on campus had links with national developments.

²¹⁷ Interview with Professor Kathy Munro, Director of Wits Plus, University of the Witwatersrand, 8 July 2003.

²¹⁸ Interview with Dr Wendy Orr, Head of the Transformation Office at Wits, 20 March 2002.

This remains today a significant constraining factor in women remaining outside of these networks.

Getting to know academia requires huge amounts of time, time in the office, time ‘on the beat’, seeing and being seen, going to the social occasions, being available for the emergency meeting at 8 o’clock in the evening and for many women that is really very difficult.²¹⁹

As a result, very few women²²⁰ were found in senior management positions, and when they were, they were white women who found themselves constantly in the position of being an extreme minority.

In a similar way, the institution had few black staff²²¹ in senior positions and few black academic staff. In instances where black staff could be found, they were in administrative positions or junior academic posts. Black academic staff regarded themselves as being second class citizens. Professor Jimmy Khumalo who at the time was in the African Languages Department stated:

...there are several cases where highly qualified black staff members had stagnated in career terms. Waleke Vilakazi and Machebe Mofokeng, both with doctorates, were still working as tutors in the department when they died. Another academic with a doctorate, Sibusiso Nyembezi, left Wits after being offered a professorship by Fort Hare.²²²

Black staff were aware that promotions and access to employment were rarely based upon merit alone, but on connections to the old boys’ network to which they did not have access. What complicates the matter in South Africa is that institutionalised racism secures the “Old Boys’ network” as an exclusive terrain for white men through which to exercise power and control within the institution.

²¹⁹ Interview with Dr Wendy Orr, Head of the Transformation Office at Wits, 20 March 2002.

²²⁰ Refer to Appendix C (page 385-387) for more details.

²²¹ Refer to Appendix C (page 385-387) for more details.

²²² *Weekly Mail* (10 September 1993).

The legacy of the institution is that white males²²³ who had established allegiances with the institution over generations run the university.

The system operated on the basis of paternalism with (i) some individual members, whether support service or academic staff, being appraised and their salaries being higher than the rest; (ii) only some gaining access to promotion, depending on how close they were to the centres of power such as having relationships with departmental heads; and (iii) decisions being made on behalf of the institution by a small club that was socially and culturally connected. Instead of equality among peers and equals, inequality, differentiation and the absence of democratic practices and transparency was evident.²²⁴

The structures were referred to as administrative structures, which merely provided support to the academic endeavours of the institution. As for the academic structures, they were typical of the British model as discussed in Chapter 2. Wits, like any other South African university, had a council responsible for financial and maintenance issues; a senate as the locus of academic power and run by the professorate; faculties with a dean and the governing body, the faculty board; and within each faculty, departments with heads of departments. Instead of the administration being led by the VC and the registrar in private as was the case during the 1960s, by the 1970s, university administration was led by an administrative team which consisted of the DVC, administrative and finance registrars, public relations officers and other administrators.

²²³ Refer to Appendix D (pages 388-389) for more details.

²²⁴ A similar claim was made by an academic in Political Studies who argued that before one had easy access to the senior management and could discuss work with them over a game of golf and now, with systems being far more formalised, it was much more difficult to secure, for example, a promotion or to discuss a particular problem (Interview with Mr Richard de Villiers, Director of Human Resources, University of the Witwatersrand, 18 February 2003).

It was at the time of the Vice-Chancellorship of Professor Guerino Bozzoli during 1969 that the eleventh floor of Senate House was constructed for the VC, the three DVCs, the new Council Chambers, some committee rooms and the VC's dining facilities. Some 25 years later, Bozzoli reflected upon the construction of Senate House and had this to say:

I later decided it was a mistake to hide away the top administration from public view. The (pre)existing vice-chancellors and deputy vice-chancellors' offices were on the ground floor in the middle of a very active campus. Their offices were visible to students, and students were visible to the occupants. The administration was a visible part of the university and was not thought of as 'they'. It might have been the thought of the sit-ins I had witnessed in Europe and America that caused me to welcome the eleventh floor plan, but...I came to regret the isolation of these lofty offices, referred to somewhat acidly, as the 'eleventh floor'.²²⁵

This isolation remained a feature of the university administration.

Those in leadership positions were drawn from academics inside²²⁶ the institution for a limited period of time, and there was no status, hierarchy or remuneration associated with these positions. They were however, held in high esteem by their peers.

Sufficient funding was allocated to various units and faculties based upon requests which were usually honoured upon request:

Faculties hardly had any budgets because the budget was done at the university level and faculties and departments were simply given departmental grants, which was to basically sustain their office operation. There were no inputs from the faculties with regards to what we need and what we would like to have. The university officer holds on to all the fees currently, and all the subsidies and all the other monies the university generates such as investment income.²²⁷

²²⁵ Cited in Bundy, C. (1997). *Innovative Approaches to University Management: A View from the Eleventh Floor*. Elections Address delivered to the University Community, University Archives, Senate House. p 13.

²²⁶ Refer to Appendix D (page 373) for more details.

²²⁷ Interview with Mr Helgaard Holtzhausen, Financial and Business Manager of the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, University of the Witwatersrand, 18 May 2003.

The old system ... they just top-sliced all the overheads and say alright, we first pay salaries, then we take the overheads and what's left, we'll distribute to the faculties.

It's not only maintenance, it's also the cost to run the central services, like finance Senate House...The previous system...It was sort of decided, I would say, on the eleventh floor, how they will distribute. You didn't have any say.... for example, in my faculty, my student ratio was 10 students per lecturer and Humanities would have a student ratio of 50 students to one lecturer. There was no incentive or penalty for either of us to change.²²⁸

The central feature of the financial system was that financial allocations to faculties in, for example the form of funding staff posts, were based upon historical trends within faculties and departments and therefore funding remained fairly stable over the years. Budgets would prescribe 60 % for posts and the 40 % to support services.

Funding and financial matters were organised, controlled and allocated from the centre without any significant pressure upon various units to comply with specific limits. This enabled academics to be free to engage in intellectual projects of their choice, although, within limits imposed by the apartheid state. For example, the assassination of Dr David Webster during 1989 signalled the limitation upon academic freedom brutally imposed by the apartheid state.

Given the nature of institutionalised racism in South Africa, support service staff were not only women, but black. Menial support services such as cleaning were retained in-house with staff often challenging the administration about their conditions of employment and their wages.

This allowed for lateral solidarities to develop within the institution, for example, between academic, cleaning staff and students, characteristic of this period of opposition to the apartheid state.

²²⁸ Interview with Mrs Magda Potgieter, Financial and Business Manager of the Faculty of Built Environment and Engineering, University of the Witwatersrand, 12 March 2003.

4.3 Intensification of Contestation and Crisis Management, 1990 - 1997

‘Reactive and crisis management orientation’ refers to the university management’s tendency merely to respond to demands that were placed upon it by powerful interest groups, without developing an independent proactive action orientated plan for what was required to transform the institution. This was a particularly dominant feature of the Charlton era, which will be discussed below.

Professor Tober was succeeded in 1988 by Professor Robert Charlton as the university’s Vice-Chancellor, a traditional academic who remained true to the ideals of the “Open Universities in SA”. Like Tober, he remained consistent with the tradition of the institution,²²⁹ an aspect that soon would prove to be his major weakness, given the rapidly changing political and social environment in the country. From 1990 to 1994 nationally, South Africa was faced with heightened violence (for example, the 1993 Boipatong massacre), negotiations were being pursued that culminated in the Government of National Unity (GNU) and the first democratically elected government in 1994. During the same period within the education arena, alternatives were discussed; one such initiative was the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI), a project of the National Education Coordinating Committee (NECC), conducted from December 1990 to August 1992.²³⁰ The Union of Democratic University Staff Association (UDUSA) and the ANC education desk added to the debate on alternatives.

Underpinning their projects was their concern with democratising institutional governance structures, attaining equity and ensuring that institutions became more

²²⁹ Refer to Appendix D (page 373) for more details.

²³⁰ The objective of the project was to develop a value framework, which would be drawn from the objectives of the national liberation movement (National Education Policy Investigation, 1993, vii). The post NEPI period was about further transforming this framework into policies.

responsive to both regional and national needs.²³¹ By 1994, it became clear that the state would not be able to provide free education to all. Instead of free education through increased state expenditure, spending on education would be limited, with primary education prioritised above tertiary education.

Of particular importance was the nationally initiated students' Right to Learn Campaign,^{232 233} which translated into confrontations between students and their own administrations. Similarly at Wits, students were now turning upon the administration and targeting it as an "enemy". Many incidents of internal protests and confrontations between students and the administration were seen throughout this period.²³⁴

Students' demands centred on financial assistance, improved levels of support in teaching and learning and the need for more representative governance structures within the institution.²³⁵ A closer look at these demands reveals that they reflected

²³¹ Bunting, I. (2002). Section 2: The South African Experience Part 1: Funding and Students Chapter 4: Funding. In N. Cloete, et al. (Eds.), *Transformation in Higher Education: Global Pressures and Local Realities in South Africa*. Cape Town: Juta and Company. p. 122-124.

²³² The Right to Learn Campaign was focused, as suggested by the name, upon students centring their collective energies upon confronting the state and their individual campus administrations to support them in expanding access to higher education by, for example, making it more affordable.

²³³ Maurice, P. (1991, March 1 to March 7). Varsity Students gear up for Countrywide Protest. *Weekly Mail*, p. 17.
 Beaver, T. (1991, 12 March). Wits has no room for intimidators. *The Citizen*, p. 10.
 Marsland, L. (1993, 4 September). Forced March to Change. *Saturday Star*, p. 5; Mvoko, V. (1993, October). Charge vandals, says SRC. Education Supplement Vol. 2 No. 9 to *Weekly Mail and Guardian*, p.8.

²³⁴ The militant acts by students include Operation Litter, 'Charltonville' and the class boycott during 1992/93 (Interview Mr Stephen Greenberg, University of the Witwatersrand, 2001; *Wits Reporter*. (1993, 20 September). Vol. 11 No. 15, University Archives, Senate House; *Wits Student Special Edition*. (1993, August). University Archives Senate House). "Charltonville", was the name given to a squatter camp erected on the library lawns. It marked students' views of the quality of the accommodation black students tended to occupy in the city centre and Hillbrow and less so on campus (Interview with Mr Stephen Greenberg, University of the Witwatersrand, 2001).

²³⁵ The "Statement to all Staff and Students on SASCO Protest Action" the Acting Vice-Chancellor, Professor June Sinclair, 20 August 1993, University Archives, Senate House;

deep seated systemic problems, which the university management was unable to respond to effectively. On the other hand, however, students' opposition was weak and they were unable to present alternatives that were acceptable to stakeholders such as academics.

The demands on financial assistance were related to declining state subsidy allocation per student. With mounting pressure by students upon the university management for access, the university made more financial aid available to students without anticipating future decline in state funding. At Wits, the number of black students increased significantly (refer to the table below), while government funding per student fell in real terms nationally.²³⁶ Less government expenditure on higher education was part of the state's strategy articulated in its macro economic strategy GEAR to spend less on social services. This meant that the provision of financial aid was not sufficient to cater for the increased demand by society for access of financially needy students to higher education institutions.²³⁷

R. Charlton, personal communication, 30 August 1993, University Archives, Senate House, p.1; Forward to Free Education for All SSAC, University Archives, Senate House; SASCO and SSAC say: Join the Fight against Exclusions and Corruption, University Archives, Senate House; SSAC and SASCO say: Mismanagement must end, University Archives, Senate House; Education is a Right and not a Privilege SSAC; WOSA, University Archives, Senate House; Wits Annual Report 1990, University Archives, Senate House, p. 2; Wits Annual Report 1994, University Archives, Senate House, p.7.

²³⁶ Bunting, I. (2002). Section 2: The South African Experience Part 1: Funding and Students Chapter 4: Funding. In N. Cloete, et al. (Eds.). *Transformation in Higher Education: Global Pressures and Local Realities in South Africa*. Cape Town: Juta and Company. p.122-124.

²³¹ To assist with financial aid to disadvantaged students, the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) was established in 1996. Since 1994 R2 billion had been allocated to aid students. The state proposed that redress funding go to institutions like Wits (Education in South Africa: Achievements Since 1994, Department of Education, May 2001, p.37). Through the Tertiary Education Fund of South Africa (TEFSA) launched in January 1996, R300 million was available and R45 million from overseas donations (Ngwenya, P. (2000, 7 June). SASCO Opposes Job Losses at Wits. *Business Day*, p. 4).

The greatest challenge for the institution during this time was its inability to translate its liberal ideals into a transformed university, free of the shackles of apartheid. Already during 1987, in a Senate Special Lecture series, the financial implications of the changing student composition were stressed.

The university estimates that by 1995 the student body will consist of 25 000 students. If we were to give total support to 10% of the students, and assuming an increase of 15% per annum, we would have to find over R60 million in bursary money - if we had to pay it out of our own budget it would be 7% of our estimated 1995 budget.²³⁸

Table 5: Changing Student Demography at Wits

| Year | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 |
|---------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Total | 18 477 | 18 159 | 17 884 | 17 811 | 17 506 | 17 837 |
| Female | 7 658 | 7 536 | 7 594 | 7 592 | 7 634 | 7 915 |
| Female Black | 1 984 | 2 211 | 2 541 | 2 866 | 3 227 | 3 652 |
| Female White | 5 674 | 5 325 | 5 053 | 4 726 | 4 407 | 4 263 |
| Male | 10 819 | 10 623 | 10 290 | 10 219 | 9 872 | 9 922 |
| Male Black | 3 217 | 3 580 | 3 881 | 4 348 | 4 650 | 5 030 |
| Male White | 7 602 | 7 043 | 6 409 | 5 871 | 5 222 | 4 892 |
| Black | 5 201 | 5 791 | 6 422 | 7 214 | 7 877 | 8 682 |
| African | 3 050 | 3 461 | 3 975 | 4 629 | 5 220 | 5 951 |
| Coloured | 333 | 347 | 334 | 338 | 349 | 340 |
| Indian | 1 818 | 1 983 | 2 113 | 2 247 | 2 308 | 2 391 |
| White | 13 276 | 12 368 | 11 462 | 10 597 | 9 629 | 9 155 |

²³⁸ Webster, E. (1987). Academic Excellence and Democracy. In *The University and its Communities*. University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, Senate Special Lectures, Professor Webster's Archives Sociology of Work Unit, Central Block, p. 21.

While the increasing demand upon the institution to provide financial aid despite decline in state funding was emphasised, very little was done to address this situation. Instead, the institution continued to put in place projects and processes, which together addressed the underlying social pressures confronting the institution. The university management's reactive and crisis management orientation was indicative of this period and evident in other incidents such as the mission statement project, FFACT, and the Makgoba Affair, which are discussed below.

The mission statement project was launched on 24 November 1992, headed by a group of senior professors²³⁹ with the aim of drafting a new mission statement.²⁴⁰ The mission statement group was referred to as 'the missionaries'. The new mission statement was informed by the Values and Objectives document and clearly set out Wits' relationship to the state.²⁴¹ The missionaries' approach was clear from the outset choices had to be made.

We shall not be able to continue to try to be all things to all people. Preference will therefore be given to those activities where Wits has particular strengths, which match national and regional priorities.²⁴²

²³⁹ This group consisted of Professor Michael Sears, Dean of the Faculty of Science; Professor Alan Kemp, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering; Professor Freer, Dean of the Faculty of Education; Professor Michael Pendlebury, Professor of Philosophy and Professor Edward Webster, Head of Department of Sociology under the leadership of the Vice Principal, Professor June Sinclair.

²⁴⁰ Interim Report Back on the Mission Statement Project, 3 September 1993, University Archives, Senate House, p.1.

²⁴¹ Wits Annual Report 1993, University Archives, Senate House, p.1-21; Interim Report Back on the Mission Statement Project, 3 September 1993, University Archives, Senate House, p.1; Mission Statement 1994; Towards the Twenty-First Century: The University's Mission, University Archives, Senate House; *Sunday Times* (1994, 21 August) Towards the Twenty-First Century: The University's Mission and *Sowetan* Towards the Twenty-First Century: The University's Mission.

²⁴² Interim Report Back on the Mission Statement Project, 3 September 1993, University Archives, Senate House, p.2.

Approximately two years after its establishment the mission statement²⁴³ was adopted in 1994.²⁴⁴ The mission statement captured the key objectives of the missionaries which were to confront the university's declining subsidy in the face of increasing student demands for access and accommodation, without compromising the quality or excellence of the institution with respect to teaching, research and scholarship while becoming relevant to the needs of the new state.²⁴⁵

This was a remarkable attempt by Wits, involving numerous senior academics in the mission statement project and later 15 task groups,²⁴⁶ and dedicating extensive university resources to ensure that the institution became relevant to the needs of the new state.

Despite the intensive two year period of work, the university management did not implement the mission statement group's work. They did not even attempt to negotiate the lack of legitimacy of the mission statement project with students, support service workers and some academics who viewed the mission statement group as not being representative of all stakeholders within the institution.²⁴⁷

²⁴³ Refer to Appendix E (page 374) for more details.

²⁴⁴ Strachan, K. (1994, 22 August). Wits gears up for the 21st century. *Business Day*; Summary of the Mission Project, 28 February 1995, University Archives, Senate House; *Mission Statement 1994*; Towards the Twenty-First Century: The University's Mission, University Archives, Senate House, published in the Sunday Times and Sowetan, 21 August 1994.

²⁴⁵ Mission Statement 1994; *Towards the Twenty-First Century: The University's Mission*, University Archives, Senate House; The Academic Strategy for Wits 1989, University Archives, Senate House, p.1.

²⁴⁶ Refer to Appendix F (page 375) for more details. University of the Witwatersrand Minutes of the Senate Planning Committee Meeting 3 May 1994 S94/648, University Archives, Senate House, 1-2; Minutes of Senate Planning Committee Meeting 17 May S94/728, University Archives, Senate House; R. Charlton, personal communication, Notice To: All Staff and Students, 15 June 1995, University Archives, Senate House.

²⁴⁷ During 1994/1995 the university management noted that it would be difficult to continue with the mission statement project as those who opposed the process namely NEHAWU, SASCO and the Post Graduate Association (PGA) saw the process as 'stage managed' and as an 'illegitimate' process. (Summary of the Mission Project to Date 28 February 1995, University Archives, Senate House, p. 2; Interim Report Back on the Mission Project 3 September 1993, University Archives, Senate House, p. 1).

The struggle around institutional power through the establishment of the Forum for Further Accelerated Comprehensive Transformation (FFACT) was another example of the reactive and crisis orientation of the university management. Here again the university management was merely responding to a demand placed upon it without providing an independent plan for transformation. FFACT was established in 1995 as an alternative but yet parallel vehicle to the traditional or established institutional structures such as the council and the senate.²⁴⁸ This forum was similar to others in the country such as Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA), a multiparty negotiations forum, which was seen as a mechanism through which to alter power relations in society. Therefore the power of FFACT in relation to the existing statutory bodies was the most contentious issue.²⁴⁹ The tension here was between the university insisting that existing

²⁴⁸ The African National Congress (ANC) supported this approach as it called upon students to shift their strategies towards 'constructive engagement' through establishing a university forum (Wits Annual Report 1993, University Archives, Senate House: p.6; Alfreds, L. (1995, 27 March) Plan for Shake-up of Varsity Councils. *Sowetan*). The idea of FFACT grew out of the 1980s as part of the populist struggles to address the unrepresentative nature of the council, the white management and academic staff within the institution. This idea was not peculiar but rather widespread during the period of transition of the 1990s. It was meant to give the historically excluded an opportunity to exercise their voice. At a national level, the institutional forums were known as the Broad Transformation Forum (BTF) characterised by three distinct approaches nationally: (i) BTFs should give advice to existing statutory structures, (ii) BTFs should replace existing statutory structures with more representative structures and (iii) BTFs should be regarded as transitional structures oversee the transition from apartheid to new institutional structures (Johnson, B. (2000). Co-operative Governance? A Case Study of the Broad Transformation Forum at the University of the Western Cape. *Perspectives in Education*, 18(3), 75).

²⁴⁹ The other issues which led to heated debates within FFACT concerned: (i) the composition of FFACT linked to discussions on membership of FFACT and (ii) the size of FFACT. Previously excluded constituencies such as students, academics and black academic staff represented by the Wits Black Staff Forum and support service staff represented by NEHAWU, wanted to increase their representation on FFACT (Minutes of the meeting of the Working Group, 15 June 1994, University Archives, Senate House, p.2; Minutes of the Meeting of the Working Group held on 21 May 1994, University Archives, Senate House, 3; Minutes of Meeting of the Working Group, 11 August 1994, University Archives, Senate House, p.4; Minutes of the Meeting of the Working Group, 14 September 1994, University Archives, Senate House, p.3-4; Wits Black Staff Forum, Proposal on the Role and Composition of the New University Council, 13 July 1995, University Archives, Senate House, p.1; Proposal of the University Delegation on the Composition of FFACT, 1 February 1994, University Archives, Senate House, p.1-2; Memorandum issued by R.F.

statutory bodies' authority could not be altered while the Education Alliance²⁵⁰ argued that FFACT could not simply be a talk shop and needed more powers.²⁵¹ The Education Alliance was an alliance of ANC aligned organisations both on and off campus. Most vocal within it were the NECC and SASCO. SASCO leveraged the Education Alliance as part of its strategy to gain more support for its positions within FFACT.

The university management made sure that it engaged in discussions with constituencies around the need for institutional transformation without significantly altering the power relations within the institution. It was eventually agreed that FFACT would not replace council or senate, but would restructure the university council and that decisions reached within FFACT would be attained through a process of consultation and consensus.²⁵² Senate remained the locus of power of academics, while students were recognised as secondary stakeholders.

While power relations were not altered within the institution, changes were made to the existing university statutory bodies. Council was restructured by FFACT and became more representative of the society, especially the external community.²⁵³ Senate was restructured and became representative of all constituencies, a phenomenon which was unheard of before as senate was viewed as the centre of academic leadership, with the vice-chancellor as the academic leader of senate.

Hofmeyr to all Clubs and Societies under the aegis of the SRC and to all Members of Staff, 5 June 1995, University Archives, Senate House, p.1).

²⁵¹ Minutes of the Meeting of the Working Group, 3 August 1994, University Archives, Senate House, p.3.
Star. (1995, 27 February). Wits Forum Finally Set Up.

²⁵² Statement of Agreement, 1 September 2003, University Archives, Senate House, p.2

²⁵³ Refer to Appendix G (pages 376-377) for more details. *Wits Reporter*. (1996, 16 August). Volume 14 No 12, University Archives, Senate House, p. 1.

One of the mechanisms through which future internal tensions between students and the university management could be managed was the creation of the position of Dean of Students, which further removed students from the centre of power; as before negotiations would take place with the DVC of student affairs.²⁵⁴

The ‘Makgoba Affair’ was another indication of the university ‘crisis management’ approach. In October 1994, Professor Malegapuru William Makgoba was appointed the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Wits.²⁵⁵ A year later, 13 senior members of the university community including eight deans formally lodged a complaint against him.²⁵⁶ They accused him of falsifying his Curriculum Vitae and bringing the university into disrepute.

Professor Charlton offered Professor Makgoba an opportunity to respond to the allegations formally so that he could determine whether an investigation should be pursued.²⁵⁷ Professor Makgoba did not respond and the university council decided to undertake a formal inquiry.²⁵⁸ Professor Makgoba did not respond to these allegations. Instead he obtained the personal folders of council members and launched counter-charges against them. He accused them of tax evasion and dishonest appointments.²⁵⁹ This led to the suspension of Professor Makgoba, and

²⁵⁴ Interview with Professor Edward Webster, Senior Academic, University of the Witwatersrand, 18 March 2004; Interview with Professor Michael Cross, Senior Academic, University of the Witwatersrand, 10 November 2004.

²⁵⁵ Wits Annual Report 1994, University of the Witwatersrand, University Archives, Senate House p. 2.

²⁵⁶ Wits Annual Report 1994, University of the Witwatersrand, University Archives, Senate House p. 16.

²⁵⁷ Wits Annual Report 1995, University of the Witwatersrand, University Archives, Senate House p.16.

²⁵⁸ Wits Annual Report 1995, University of the Witwatersrand, University Archives, Senate House p.16.

²⁵⁹ Wits Annual Report 1995, University Archives, Senate House p.16 and *Star*. (1995, 3 December). Professor Makgoba gives the case against his critics.

the establishment of an independent committee of enquiry.²⁶⁰ The committee found that the allegations against Professor Makgoba were unfounded.²⁶¹

Three perspectives emerged on the ‘Makgoba affair’ - that it was (i) an expression of racial conflict, (ii) a manifestation of a battle over succession and (iii) a hegemonic struggle between competing transformation discourses.

Those who argued that it was an incident of racial conflict pointed to divisions within the institution between black and white staff. It was largely black staff who expressed support for Makgoba. Makgoba himself characterised the incident as *racial conflict*. He regarded the 13 signatories’ approach as resistant to institutional transformation and characteristic of institutional racism. Statman and Ansell (1996) argue that the incident was highly racialised.

In October 1995, R.W. Charlton, Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of the Witwatersrand, received a 297-page dossier prepared by thirteen senior Wits administrators and academics (twelve of whom are white; one, “African-American”).²⁶²

Webster (1998) notes the racialised nature of the incident as it brought white staff and students, on the one hand, and black staff and students, on the other, into confrontation. While black staff and students felt that much transformation was still needed, white staff and students argued that too much transformation had taken place as evidenced in the decline in institutional standards.²⁶³

²⁶⁰ *Citizen*. (1995, 6 December). Wits suspends Makgoba: Bengu to intervene. The independent committee of enquiry was named after Advocate Wallis and the report that was released was called the Wallis report.

²⁶¹ In response to the Wallis report, The Wits Transformation Front, representing SASCO, SRC, NEHAWU and the Black Staff Forum, rejected the Wallis Report and called for a single inquiry to investigate all the allegations and counter-allegations (*Wits Reporter*. (1996, 1 March). Volume 14 No 2, University Archives, Senate House, p. 1).

²⁶² Stateman, J.M. & Ansell, A. (1996). *A Boyfriend with balls: Symbolic Conflict and the Makgoba Affair*. Unpublished manuscripts. p.4.

²⁶³ Stateman, J.M.& Ansell, A. (1996). *A Boyfriend with balls: Symbolic Conflict and the Makgoba Affair*. Unpublished manuscripts. p.31.

Webster, however, argues beyond this by linking the ‘Makgoba Affair’ to a ‘more simple agenda’, the struggle over the succession to Professor Robert Charlton, who was to retire at the end of 1997.²⁶⁴ The incident was regarded as an attempt to secure the lineage of traditional academic leadership consistent with Charlton’s leadership and recognised within the leadership of Professor June Sinclair.²⁶⁵

Statman and Ansell (1996) suggest that underpinning the racialised nature of the incident was Makgoba’s approach to transformation. Makgoba’s approach to transformation was ‘Africanisation’. For Makgoba, the greatest challenge to South African universities was to

Facilitate the emergence of a new nation with a common vision, principles, values and culture system based on the highest intellectual foundations. All African universities should take a lead in capturing the essence of Africa and its indigenous people, to adapt and integrate western culture into the African culture.²⁶⁶

Essentially Makgoba’s version of transformation would require a radical change (not simply a cosmetic change) in the staff composition, student composition, curriculum and value system of the university away from a traditionalist British English speaking model to an institution representative of ‘Africanness’ and ‘African scholarship’.²⁶⁷ The Wits SRC President at the time, Prishani Naidoo, offered a different perspective on Makgoba’s approach to transformation. According to her, while Makgoba was a victim of the ‘white elitist cabal’ Makgoba’s strategy of Africanisation was unlikely to bring about changes in the

²⁶⁴ Webster, E. (1998). Wit’s going on? Revisiting the Makgoba Affair. *Southern Africa Report*. p.32.

²⁶⁵ Webster, E. (1998). Wit’s going on? Revisiting the Makgoba Affair. *Southern Africa Report*. p.32.

²⁶⁶ Makgoba, M. (1996). SA Universities in Transformation. *Perspectives in Education*, 17(1), 181.

²⁶⁷ Makgoba, M. (1996). SA Universities in Transformation. *Perspectives in Education*, 17(1), 181; This notion of “Africanisation” in universities was placed on the national agenda in the context of the NCHC by Professors Malegupuru Makgoba, Herbert Vilakazi, Mashupye Kgapha and Tandwa Mthembu. Their main concern was that, while blacks had attained political power, they had not attained control over the cultural and education resources of the country (Pearce (1996, 10 May to 16 May) *Mail and Guardian*).

kind of research conducted by academics or the curriculum of the institution. Instead, she argued, what was more likely to happen was that Makgoba's strategy would amount to the continuation of white hierarchical arrangements, while allowing for new black elite to be groomed. She reiterated students' view for the necessity to alter governance arrangements for transformation to take place, as was strongly stated during the debates and processes leading up to the formation of FFACT.²⁶⁸

A student leader of the time also expressed the similar opinion that the incident was a battle around succession. Makgoba's opponents supported Professor June Sinclair, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) at the time and one of SASCO's and NEHAWU's main opponents, as they feared that Professor Makgoba would succeed Professor Charlton after his retirement at the end of 1997. Students opposed Professor June Sinclair as she was seen as anti-transformation, racist, undemocratic and harsh upon students, since she had been responsible for calling the police on to campus and having students arrested during student protests.²⁶⁹ The progressive block of the Wits Transformation Front vied for their candidates, Professor Nolutshungu and later Professor Colin Bundy, after Professor Nolutshungu's death.

The Makgoba Affair eventually simply fizzled out. This incident together with POW, discussions and huge initiatives, such as the mission statement project of 1992 headed by Professor June Sinclair, never reached fruition, as management failed to confront the contradictory processes of a neo-liberal, cost cutting agenda on the one hand, and the drive for equity, social justice and social relevance on the other.

While all three explanations can be relatively substantiated, they all miss an important point: the inability of the university management to deal in a systematic

²⁶⁸ Chisholm, L., et al. (2003). *South African Education Policy Review 1993 – 2000*. Sandown: Heinemann Publishers (Pty) Ltd. p. 260.

²⁶⁹ Interview with Mzwake, previously student activist and member of the South African Student Congress (SASCO), University of the Witwatersrand, 12 June 2003.

manner with the internal and external pressures of a transforming society and the lack of a vision and long term sustainable transformation strategy. These explanations further miss that the “Makgoba Affair” represented a struggle around the vision of transformation for Wits: whether Wits should remain essentially an English Liberal University, able to adapt to the demands of the new context while retaining its legacy, or whether the institution should change to become an African University, with significant increases in black staff composition, in the curriculum and in the languages in which teaching takes place. The way in which the Makgoba Affair was handled was an expression of crisis management; the management failed to provide leadership to resolve the crisis through focusing on the transformation debate and instead became embroiled in the process of allegations.

Essentially the management of this time was ‘weak’, lacked vision, lacked courage and expressed resistance to change which made it out of step with the demands of the time. The following comments are revealing in this regard:

The impression was that there was a lack of leadership within the academic community itself. I think that there was a general feeling that the eleventh floor did not seem to have any perspective. The vice-chancellor at the time was not prepared to make any decision and was more inclined to leave matters to committees. It resulted in the view that we were not tough enough.²⁷⁰

The Vice-Chancellor at that time was Robert Charlton, who’d have made a wonderful vice-chancellor in 1960, but was totally out of sync with the period. He was unable to grasp the mettle and he was surrounded by piranhas – those fish that eat other fish - on the eleventh floor and was terrified of making a move.²⁷¹

Other than the changes in students’ profile and increased provision of financial aid, tension and conflict characterised this period. Very little change emerged from the adoption of the 1994 mission statement, the establishment of FFACT and

²⁷⁰ Strategic Informant 2, April 2001.

²⁷¹ Interview with Professor Edward Webster, University of the Witwatersrand, 11 April 2002.

numerous discussion documents; these had not been developed into plans and processes.

Relations between academics and the administration largely remained the same, with academics still able to retain some degree of professional autonomy, despite the racialised nature of collegial relations. Students remained secondary stakeholders, with academics and senior academics in particular being regarded as the primary stakeholders who were better placed to preserve the institution through the most senior academic structure, the senate. Academic and administrative leadership retained a deep seated history within the institution as they were drawn from leadership within the university, particularly in the case of the vice-chancellor. When academics held administrative posts, these were taken on for a limited period of time, allowing them to return to their academic posts after they completed their administrative terms of office. Therefore power relations, structures and processes remained intact.

The table on the following page summarises the key features of the legacy of the institution, which have some bearing on the 1999 restructuring exercise.

Table 6²⁷²: Key Features of Wits Before 1999

| |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Academics have some professional autonomy |
| Students as secondary stakeholders |
| Academics locus of power in senate |
| Leadership drawn from academics of high academic standing inside the university |
| Academics in administrative posts for limited periods of time |
| Notion of 'equality among colleagues' predominantly among white men |
| Vice-Chancellors drawn from academics and from within the institution |

4.4 The Emergence of Visionary Approach in University Management, 1997 to 1999

A distinctive feature of this period was the attempt to move beyond reactive strategies and crisis management to implement long term and far reaching institutional reform plans and provide a vision for the future.

While VC Professor Colin Bundy had led the period, he was not the first choice of the institution. The institution had searched for a black vice-chancellor, someone who would be able to move the university forward, while at the same time have the necessary academic standing among members of the academic staff. Unfortunately, Professor Nolutshungu died tragically and Professor Bundy was supported as the VC. Under Bundy's leadership significant changes were brought to the institution.

²⁷² This table has been adapted but informed by the work of Webster and Mosoetsa (Webster, E. & Mosoetsa, S. (2002). *At the Chalk Face: Managerialism and the changing Academic Workplace, 1995-2001. Transformation, 48.*).

Bundy did not come to Wits alone. A number of other senior managers were appointed during the period of Professor Bundy's tenure: Professor Leila Patel was appointed Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) Transformation and Equity and came from a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), having been in a senior government position as Director General of Social Development; Mr Andre de Wet was appointed the Executive Director of Finance and came from UWC where he had held a similar position; Professor Loyiso Nongxa was appointed DVC Research and also came from UWC where he had been the Dean of Science. The team included some individuals who had been involved in the 1998 restructuring exercise at UWC²⁷³ and had experience of a black university, which had suffered from escalating student debt and were keen to prevent Wits travelling a similar path.

As will be discussed in Chapter 6, all these members of Professor Bundy's core team would eventually come to play a critical role in the restructuring of Wits. This was a significant shift in the nature of the senior management at Wits. Before all university management and leadership had emerged from within the institution and this was the first time that senior management was brought from outside the university and was not rooted in the history and traditions of the institution.

Professor Bundy managed to translate the institution's vision as expressed in its new 1998 Mission Statement into a Strategic Plan entitled: 'Shaping the Future'. His vision for the institution was already made known in his initial address at the selection committee in 1997 and during and after his reign as VC. At the selection committee Professor Bundy emphasised the need for the institution to: (i) transform itself in unison with developments nationally; (ii) address both falling subsidy and increasing student numbers; (iii) develop new patterns of teaching and learning so that graduates could be more attuned to independent thinking and

²⁷³ Johnson, B.J. (2001). *The Higher Education Worker*. Research Report for CHET; Van der Walt, L., et al. (2003). Globalisation, the market university and support service outsourcing in South Africa: Class struggle, convergence and difference, 1994-2001. *Society in Transition*, 34(2), 277.

problem solving; (iv) improve technological utilisation; (v) establish new relations with Johannesburg; and (vi) develop a team of visible and accessible managers. In elaborating upon the latter he stated:

Good leaders are good listeners. I do wonder whether the architecture of Wits makes listening easy: the eleventh floor may not be the best location for an accessible, visible and listening leadership – and if I were in the new executive I would investigate the possibilities for its physical relocation.²⁷⁴

Later during 1999 as he grappled with his position in relation to the rise of managerialism he admitted:

I still work in the office on the eleventh floor first occupied by Boz. I have not solved the conundrum of how to justify the expense of relocating a sizeable executive team in a climate where we confront downsizing and retrenchments.²⁷⁵

In the same paper he reviewed the rise, nature and critique of managerialism. Here he argues for the ‘fusing of managerial imperatives with academic priorities’, an innovative approach to management, which builds upon the strengths of both managerialism and academia such as (i) facilitating devolution in the sense that decisions are made in a collective manner at the lowest level so as to improve participation, understanding, responsiveness and accountability; (ii) creating a ‘shared organisational space, structure and culture’ to address the ‘rifts’ within the academic community through management facilitating crossdisciplinary engagements; and (iii) managers and academics improving their social standing.²⁷⁶ It was essentially this approach of ‘innovation’ that would guide Professor Bundy. Shortly after his appointment, the University Strategic

²⁷⁴ Bundy, C. (1997). *Managing Change: Wits and the challenge of the Future*. Paper prepared for delivery in the Great Hall at the University of the Witwatersrand. University Archives, Senate House. p. 8.

²⁷⁵ Bundy, C. (1999). *Innovative Approaches to University Management: A View from the Eleventh Floor*. Paper presented at a conference on Innovation and Higher Education, United Kingdom, p.13.

²⁷⁶ Bundy, C. (1999). *Innovative Approaches to University Management: A View from the Eleventh Floor*. Paper presented at a conference on Innovation and Higher Education, United Kingdom, p.11-12.
Bundy, C. (2003). *Under New Management? Managerialism and the Degradation of Higher Education*. University of the Western Cape Education Policy Unit Resource Centre, p.8-10.

Planning Team²⁷⁷ as established in November 1997 to ensure maximum participation and compliance with government requirements for strategic plans by higher education institutions. This was critical for higher education institutions as it would be the basis upon which funding would be made available²⁷⁸.

The strategic planning team established a number of teams²⁷⁹, which led to the production of the Wits strategic plan called *Shaping the Future*²⁸⁰ in June 1999. The plan represented the culminating point of the struggle around transformation and the shift to restructuring. According to the document, it was plain that Wits could not continue with ‘business as usual’ but had to identify priorities, set new directions, and align resource allocation to such priorities²⁸¹ and directions.

The vital next stage in planning at Wits will be for all faculties, departments and support divisions to develop or review their own plans, within the overall framework provided here.²⁸²

Alongside the work of the strategic planning team and further setting the tone for the Strategic Plan was the revised 1998 Mission Statement.²⁸³ Unlike the 1994

²⁷⁷ As a consequence of the 1994 Mission Statement Group process under the leadership of Professor June Sinclair, Dr Glynn Nichols was employed as the first Director of Strategic Planning (Wits Reporter Volume 13 No. 8 22 May 1995, University Archives Senate House, p. 3).

²⁷⁸ *University Strategic Planning Team Newsletter*. (1997, November) Newsletter No. 1. University Archives, Senate House.

²⁷⁹ These included Steering Wits’ academic activities strategically, Transforming Wits, Promoting Wits staff development and working relationships, Managing Wits finances strategically, Enhancing quality at Wits, Managing Wits efficiently, Positioning Wits for the 21st century, Enabling Wits with information technology (*University Strategic Planning Team*. (1998, February). Newsletter No. 2. University Archives, Senate House).

²⁸⁰ This plan was consistent with the ideas expressed in the 1998 revised Mission Statement.

²⁸¹ The goals stated in the plan capture these priorities. These include: institution to ensure student success in undergraduate and post graduate programs, establish Wits as a research and post graduate university in Africa, develop partnerships and outreach programs, to position Wits internationally, to recruit and retain high quality staff and to ensure that resources are managed more effectively and efficiently so that growth may take place within the institution (<http://www.wits.ac.za:88/wcs/strategicplan/goals.html>: 1-2).

²⁸² *Shaping the Future Strategic Plan*, June 1999, University Archives, Senate House, p. 2.

²⁸³ Refer to Appendix H (page 378) for more details.

mission statement, the 1998 mission statement was far more specific, including in its immediate priorities: (i) upgrading of campus facilities, (ii) providing opportunities for part time studies and (iii) emphasising professional development by providing 'executive and certificate courses'.²⁸⁴ These priorities were far more tuned to developing entrepreneurial activities within the institution through improving student life on campus, tapping into the part time studies market, certificate and short courses market. What is significant across both mission statements is the focus of the institution on postgraduate studies as a means to being a research intensive institution and so to attract more government funding. Another similarity is maintaining the importance of humanities and social sciences while emphasising managerial, leadership, and professional courses, English, Mathematics and the Natural Sciences. These are degrees and programmes which are all relevant to the human resource needs of the country.

Bundy developed a number of proposals with his management team. These are discussed below. He refined the organisational form of the institution. During 1998 one of the projects undertaken by Bundy was the restructuring of the senior management team of the institution. He drew upon the expertise of the director of the Commonwealth Higher Education Management Service (CHEMS) who stayed at the institution for a limited period of time and suggested deep seated change premised upon international trends in higher education.²⁸⁵ He proposed that faculties should be downsized as this would streamline the management of the institution; instead of nine deans there could be five. His proposals were based upon his understanding that leadership could not be separated from the organisational structures and therefore if the leadership and management of the institution were to be changed, so too would the organisational structure. This could be seen in the context of the globalizing pressures and the movement towards standardization of management in Commonwealth universities.

²⁸⁴ University of the Witwatersrand Mission Statement, 1998, University Archives, Senate House.

²⁸⁵ Bundy Memorandum to Council May 1998, University Archives, Senate House.

He suggested further that deans be included in the senior executive team, the top management of the institution, as a way of introducing efficient mechanisms of management. These proposals would later be carried out through the academic restructuring process during 2000 and 2001.²⁸⁶

‘A Proposal for Faculty Restructuring at Wits’ further crafted a vision of new organisational structures. Bundy acknowledged previous efforts made within the institution and particularly those of the Key Strategic Initiative 6 Task Group²⁸⁷ entitled: ‘Managing Wits effectively and efficiently’.²⁸⁸ Here he provided four reasons for restructuring and put forward three options that had been discussed previously within this task group. These documents are landmark texts as they were key reference points for what eventually transpired during the actual restructuring process at Wits.

(i) The motor force for the trend has been a shift by universities to greater devolution: the devolution of resources, responsibilities, and accountability and decision making powers to faculties. This shift is based upon the perception that *effective and efficient management* is more easily achieved within the component units (faculties) than at a central level. This also implies that within faculty’s devolution and decentralisation may take place to smaller strategic units.

²⁸⁶ Fielden, J. (1998). Director of *Commonwealth Higher Education Management Service* (CHEMS). A Report on the Executive Structure. Strategic Planning Unit, Senate House, p.4-6.

²⁸⁷ This task group was one set up as a consequence of the mission statement group’s attempt to implement the 1994 Mission Statement into a plan.

²⁸⁸ These ideas are also consistent with the proposal for developing a financial strategy for Wits authored by Professor Alan Kemp. With respect to the economic model, it is stated that there had already been saving in various faculties both on personnel and running expenses of about 12%. While this reduction had been achieved on an ‘equal suffering basis’, over the next few years budget cuts and target settings would be based upon mission priorities and would be developed much more in line with the attributable income model, while allowing for ‘limited cross-subsidisation’ given the uncertainty with respect to the state subsidy formula. It further noted that savings are less likely to be achieved through core support services but more likely to be achieved through ‘outsourcing non-core services’. It was estimated that savings as high as 20% could be achieved in this way (Strategic Change 8 March 1996, University Archives, Senate House, p.1-2; Sinclair Mission Statement Project A Proposal for Implementation, University Archives, Senate House, p.1).

(ii) Having fewer, larger faculties means that the budgets are larger, so that there is scope for the Dean to make strategic decisions, to introduce creative changes, to redeploy posts or facilities.

(iii) A smaller number of faculties makes it financially more feasible to contemplate providing professional staffing to faculty offices in support of functions that have been devolved (this could be achieved by creating posts or by moving posts from central administration to faculty administration or by reorganisation of administrative posts within faculties).

(iv) The extent of devolution that has already taken place at Wits and which is envisaged means that the post of Dean is becoming more demanding in terms of the range of skills needed and the level of duties. *The post needs to be redefined, and remunerated accordingly.* It would not only be more expensive to fund nine such deans but arguably also more difficult to find nine suitably skilled academic managers.²⁸⁹

In relation to the position of the dean, he refers to ‘career deans’ as deans who would not be elected, but appointed and be responsible for their devolved units. Up to this point academic leadership at Wits, whether at the level of the Vice-Chancellor, Dean or Head of Department was occupied by traditional, well-established academics who played a caretaker role on a rotational basis and were not remunerated for this duty.²⁹⁰ Professor Bundy’s proposals would see a significant shift in this as will be discussed in subsequent chapters. He further proposed three ways in which the faculties could be restructured, namely, the ‘clusters’ approach which essentially emerged from the proposals of Professors Alan Kemp and June Sinclair²⁹¹ developed during the 1994 mission statement

²⁸⁹ Strategic Change, 8 March 1996, University Archives, Senate House, p.1.

²⁹⁰ Interview Professor Max Price, Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, University of the Witwatersrand, 13 January 2004; Interview with Professor Patrick Dickson, Head of the School of Accounting, University of the Witwatersrand, 17 March 2003.

²⁹¹ In 1995, Professors Alan Kemp and June Sinclair visited the UK, Australia and New Zealand and reported that restructuring was taking place within these institutions as a means to address increasing demands for access and the decline in state subsidy (R. Charlton, personal communication, Notice To: All members of Staff, 25 July 1995, University Archives, Senate House; Framework for Academic Restructuring 2000, University Archives, Senate House). Already in 1995 in a document entitled *Strategic Change*, five clusters with support services consisting of finance, personnel, marketing and faculty administration with further support for academic (teaching and research) which would be devolved to meet the specific needs of the faculty are proposed. It is stated that clusters would further be developed to establish schools or programs. To manage these

process, the three campus model based upon geographical lines and a merger of faculties into four, five or six. He stated that he preferred the four faculty model, in which faculties are clustered in terms of the natural sciences, human sciences, and health sciences and economic and management sciences.²⁹² These proposals were an expression of an attempt on his part to take the institution forward. The logic of these proposals was adopted during the academic restructuring process.

The 1998 mission statement, the Strategic Plan and Wits' first three year rolling plan of 1999 to 2001, all capture and signify a shift in the institution away from crisis management towards refining and developing visions, with the view to implementation, underpinned by the discourse of efficiency. Institutional goals identified in the three year rolling plan were: (i) to improve access and increase the number of postgraduate students, (ii) to increase the volume and quality of research and to attract research grants and post-doctoral students, (iii) to develop more outreach and partnerships with industry, other academic programmes, government and NGOs, (iv) to develop the institution's international standing, (v) to attract a 'High Calibre Staff' both academic and support services, (vi) to ensure 'A High Quality Learning Environment' with emphasis on the campus being cleaner and securer, and (vii) 'Restructuring for Growth' in which academic and support structures are reviewed so that the institution has more effective decision making and services, courses are relevant to the market needs and income generation and entrepreneurial activities encouraged.²⁹³

Bundy and his team managed to shift the institution away from a crisis orientated approach to one focused on planning, implementation, being pragmatic and yet visionary. Given that an entire decade, characterised by managerial ineptness had passed with escalating institutional systemic crisis, the new managerial team

clusters, cluster management should be established consisting of the DVC, Dean who would be responsible for an annual business plan and develop a strategy for the cluster and manage the decentralised support services. (Strategic Change 8 March 1996, University Archives, Senate House, p.1-2.)

²⁹² Strategic Change 8 March 1996, University Archives, Senate House, p.4.

²⁹³ University of the Witwatersrand Three Year Rolling Plan, 1999, University Archives, Senate House.

turned towards implementing an institutional restructuring agenda relatively quickly with maximum effort driven from above.

4.5 Conclusion

The new leadership of Wits, or Bundy's leadership, represented a decisive break in the history of the institution from crisis orientated management to action orientated management. While management during the previous periods aimed at changing access to the institution, it was carried out without anticipating the consequences. Management was essentially inept and stagnant, being unable to implement any significant changes in the institution including changes to the nature of the management. Only minor changes were evident, such as the establishment of FFACT, which was not established upon the initiative of the university leadership but on that of marginalised stakeholders.

The new leadership of Bundy was willing to reconcile the contradiction between declining state expenditure to higher education with the growing need of an indigent student mass to access higher education. Under Bundy's leadership they confronted the legacy of the institution, a legacy that (i) discussed ideas and established projects without in any significant way altering institutional structures and management practices; (ii) functioned on the basis of the 'old boys' network and informal processes; and (iii) expressed liberal commitment to equity in terms of staff and students without translating this into institutional plans and processes. Significant changes were to be implemented with Bundy's new leadership; structures, processes and relationships which had remained intact for approximately 40 years would be altered.

It was against this background of confronting internal institutional relations and external pressures for greater social relevance that the institution would shift from high level discussions, debates and superficial changes to a process of deep seated transformation, not from below but through the dedicated, diligent and meticulous efforts of the leadership from above. This dual, contradictory yet co-existing

pressure from the mass democratic movement and pressures brought about by global capitalism were addressed under the Vice-Chancellorship of Bundy.

In Chapter 5 I elaborate on the context of restructuring and management change with reference to the state, policy and institutional response.