CHAPTER 7

THE CASE OF THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE TEAM

7.1   Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the implications of the restructuring process, which culminated in the establishment of a new management team at the most senior level of the university, referred to as the Senior Executive Team (SET) and explore the immediate impact of this structure on university management. SET is a structure that is intended to provide academic leadership but is unable to do so in practice.   By academic leadership is meant being able to create space and opportunity for academics to engage in growing intellectual projects.

The issues discussed in this chapter include: (i) the establishment, rationale, composition and functions of SET; (ii) the ways in which SET has affected the relationships between the senior university managers and the existing governance structures such as the council, senate and the university forum; (iii) the implications of SET for the newly established deanship structures and the relations between deans and the faculty; and (iv) the implications of SET's management agenda and practice for the changing nature of academic work. The argument pursued in this chapter is that, even though the literature refers to the devolution of power, the creation of SET illustrates the re-centralisation of power within an elite group of managers who are able to gain greater control through technologies of surveillance and performativity. As has been argued elsewhere, it appears that the restructuring process has not genuinely resulted in devolution of power and authority to individual faculties, but in de-concentration of the power and authority of the vice-chancellor through the integration of the executive deans into the Senior Executive Team.

In other words, the power and authority of the vice-chancellor's office has been diffused but not relinquished through delegation of management functions to the executive deans.[518] In addition, this process was accompanied by a phenomenon that we refer to as 'the de-DVCisation of the faculty', that is, the transfer of the traditional authority and influence that the deputy vice-chancellors had over the faculty to the executive deans.[519]

7.2   The Establishment, Rationale, Composition and Functions of SET

SET was established during the 2000 restructuring process. The rationale for having deans as part of SET was that managerial responsibilities, which had previously been the domain of the DVC (such as research), [520] were devolved to faculties for which the deans are now responsible. To ensure consistency across the faculties to a central university vision, deans were included in SET. SET was therefore established so that central control could be retained over faculties.[521]

While SET is a new structure, the Vice-Chancellor's Office (VCO) still continues to exist. Before the establishment of SET, the advisory body to the top management structure within the university was referred to as the Vice-Chancellor's Office (VCO), which consisted of the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy

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509   Cross, M. & Johnson, B. (2004). Academic Leadership under Siege: Possibilities and Limits of Executive Deanship at the University of the Witwatersrand . *South African Journal of Higher Education,* 18(2), 51.

519   Cross, M. & Johnson, B. (2004). Academic Leadership under Siege: Possibilities and Limits of Executive Deanship at the University of the Witwatersrand.   *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 18(2), 51.

520   It was shown in Chapter 5 that the DVC Research recently contested whether devolution of research was a wise decision, given the tendency by faculties to use their research monies on other faculty related matters.

521   Coughlan, F. (2004). University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg: Executive Management of the University: Role of the Senior Executive Team (SET). Special Advisor to the Vice-chancellor, Ms Kashaini Maistry. p.1-2 & 10-11.

Vice-chancellors and the Registrar. When reflecting upon the internal operations of the VCO, a dean indicated:

> Previously we were members of the VCO - Vice-Chancellor's Office…And then there was another thing called vice-chancellor and deans - so we used to have a meeting and then in due course the Vice-chancellor would throw us out - it's time to go now, now we have the important meeting. It's now different. [522]

Another dean expressed a similar sentiment:

> …You find that SET is composed of two subgroups, that is, the VCO and the deans. The DVC and VC sit on the top and their functions cut across all the faculties and are university wide. The deans bring the faculty issues across so at SET we have structures. There are clearly distinct sub groups: the tenth and eleventh floor, the university registrar and the deans. My experience of SET, except for the unfortunate experience with the ex-VC, was excellent. I think we worked very well. Where you could pick up that distinct grouping in a sense we also met separately outside of SET – the deans have Friday lunch once a month where we discuss our issues, discuss difficulties, such as a disciplinary hearing or a student problem. VCO also have their meetings where they look at portfolios and how they share responsibilities amongst themselves. [523]

SET is composed of the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Partnerships and Advancement, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, the Registrar, the Executive Director of Finance and five deans of the five faculties.

During the restructuring process, SET also existed but to distinguish it from this post restructuring structure, Bundy referred to the first SET as SET 1 and the post restructuring SET as SET 2. SET 1 included the legacy dean and therefore was composed of all nine deans who assisted Bundy in coordinating the academic restructuring process. [524]

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[522]   Interview with Professor Colin Wright, Dean of the Faculty of Science, University of the Witwatersrand, 14 January 2004.

[523]   Interview with Professor Raymond Nkado, Dean of the Faculty of Built Environment and Engineering, University of the Witwatersrand, 23 January 2003.

[524]   Interview with Professor Colin Bundy, Vice-Chancellor of the University Witwatersrand, Cape Town, South Africa, 24 December 2003.

A review of the biographies of the members of SET reveals that, except for the position of the Executive Director of Finance, all other members are recognised and established academics. However, executive portfolios have changed to ensure their consistency with the vision and strategic plan of the institution. Before the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic was responsible for both academic and financial matters within the university, with restructuring, financial matters have been transferred to an Executive Director of Finance, Mr Andre de Wet, a chartered accountant with numerous years of accounting experience within the university environment. A new portfolio was also established in addition to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic: the Deputy Vice-Chancellor External, recently renamed Partnerships and Advancements. This is to cater for all external affairs of the university aimed at affirming its international and regional standing. While SET has a clear membership, it has a layer of professional managers who report to it. This includes the Director of Human Resource Management, the Director of Facilities Management and the Directors of Entrepreneurial Entities (for example, Wits Plus).

Common practice tends to suggest that in organisational development tasks are identified first before the establishment of the necessary enabling structures. It appears, however, that SET was established without clear definition of its tasks, [525] except for those inherited from the Vice-Chancellor's Office. In this regard, SET could be described as a management structure seeking its mission while doing its job. Neither is the current agenda of SET fixed. Members of SET, including the newly established Senate Governance Committee, are still grappling with the role of SET within larger processes of decision making of the institution. Here is an account from a current member of SET:

> I don't think we have yet found the exact formula for what should and what shouldn't be discussed at the Senior Executive Team. And that's an issue that needs resolving. What issues should be handled by senior managers and just reported to Senior Executive Team. What issues

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[525] Coughlan, F. (2004). University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg: Executive Management of the University: Role of the Senior Executive Team (SET). Special Advisor to the Vice-Chancellor, Ms Kashaini Maistry. p. 1-2.

> should be discussed at the Senior Executive Team level? There are some people who believe that we discuss too much detail, and other people believe that we don't have enough meetings. [526]

SET's role and responsibilities have therefore not been clear from the outset and, as a consequence, evolved over time and within different contexts. For example, SET 1 played a specific role during the actual restructuring process by coordinating the restructuring activities, discussions and processes within various faculties, while SET 2 has attempted not only to oversee management responsibilities across the institutions but also to provide vision and leadership.

SET has therefore gone through processes of change, with many concerns being raised in different forums outside of SET about SET, such as the University Governance Committee and various staff meetings. The primary concern has centred on SET's powers, as there is a feeling that many decisions are made within SET.

While SET is an evolving structure, there are suggestions for SET to set its agenda far more explicitly. The following responsibilities have been identified:

> Effective sharing of information, joint problem solving and joint proactive planning.
>
> Recognising the need to exercise strategic leadership.
>
> Sharing information on areas of importance to particular parts of the organisation to enable a collective consideration of impact.
>
> Collaborating on issues that have cross portfolio impact to ensure holistic management of the issues.
>
> Making recommendations on matters of strategic importance to other governance bodies of the University without usurping the authority and responsibility of any such structure.
>
> Ensuring effective, timely and deliberate communication with the University to facilitate efficient decision making and implementation where the opinion of SET is likely to change, or affect the course of, another decision making process.

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[526]   Interview with Professor Gerrit Olivier, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, 3 July 2003.

Ensuring careful management of the resources of the University by receiving and considering regular financial reports, by assisting with prioritisation of resource use and by making recommendations with respect to extraordinary resource use proposals to the appropriate governance structure.

Committing to integrated planning, implementation and monitoring of short, medium and long term plans of the University. [527]

No mention is made of academic leadership functions; there is a strong orientation in the functions of SET towards fulfilling the managerial obligations of the institution.

7.3 The Implications of SET for University Statutory Bodies: Council, University Forum and Senate

The establishment of SET without a clear mission from the outset has resulted in SET gaining dominance in decision making, especially in relation to senate.

The Higher Education Act of 1997 recognises the council, senate and the institutional forum as the three top statutory bodies. Council is responsible for ultimate decision making within the institutions with respect to wider governance and financial matters. Senate is responsible for academic matters. The institutional forum is an advisory body to council and senate. While senate and the institutional forum include almost exclusively internal stakeholders, the council brings together a considerable number of external and internal stakeholders.[528]

Unlike these statutory bodies, which have clearly defined juridical obligations, the Senior Executive Team (SET) is neither a statutory body nor a governance structure. It is a management structure, responsible for the daily operations of the

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[527]   Coughlan, F. (2004). University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg: Executive Management of the University: Role of the Senior Executive Team (SET).   Special Advisor to the Vice-Chancellor Ms Kashaini Maistry.   p. 12-13.

[528]   These changes were already introduced at Wits during the mid 1990s as discussed in Chapter 4.

university. It was established after the 1999 restructuring process. According to a university dean:

> Even now the Senior Executive Team doesn't have a legal standing. It *de facto* makes decisions, but if those decisions were challenged, it wouldn't have any legal basis to enforce them. Legally, it's actually an advisory body to the Vice-Chancellor and it was that before as well. [529]

Even though SET has no legal standing, there has been some dissatisfaction with the dominance and power SET has attained in the absence of a clearly defined mission. The dominance of SET particularly in relation to senate has been emphasised.

> While in the past senate discussed academic matters, its role has changed. For example academic planning has been taken out the role of senate and has been located in the Academic Planning Unit. Today senate discusses management issues and not academic matters. [530]
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> During the 1980s and 1990s, but especially during the 1980s, there were heated debates within senate. Senate meetings were very exciting. Today senate is loaded with many, many documents with members often not paying attention. There are no debates; in senate academic matters are not discussed. [531]
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> The way I see it, SET has more powers than senate. Decisions are made there and senate has been sidelined. [532]
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> Previously senate was like attending a major parliamentary debate. [533]

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[529]   Interview with Professor Max Price, Dean of the Faculty of Health Science, University of the Witwatersrand, 13 January 2003.

[530]   Professor Shirley Pendlebury, Head of School of Education, contribution to the seminar with Professor Michael Cross, University of the Witwatersrand, School of Education, 4 March 2004.

[531]   Interview with Professor Belinda Bozzoli, Head of the School of Social Science, University of the Witwatersrand, 7 April 2003.

[532]   Interview with Professor Gerrit Olivier, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, 3 July 2003.

[533]   Comment made by Professor Jonathan Hyslop at seminar on this thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 6 November 2004.

While power has shifted in favour of SET, there is some indication that the discussions are far more of a managerial nature than of an academic nature not only in SET but also in senate.

7.4   Deans in SET: Challenges, Possibilities and Limits

Deans have been made members of SET, a change with profound implications in their identity and practice. Unlike in the past when deans would merely report to the VC without necessarily being part of top level management discussions, they are now part of these discussions.

Deans refer to the benefits of participating in SET as giving: (i) a much better understanding of the large issues facing the university; (ii) access to key actors in university life; and (iii) overall ownership over university decisions.   More specifically, inclusion in SET allows them: (i) to participate in the formulation of university policy; (ii) to have access to other executive managers; (iii) to take faculty positions to the executive management for discussion and so attempt to influence the decisions of the executive management of the institution; (iv) to participate in more critical financial decision making structures such as the Financial Resource Allocations Committee (FRAC) at which university budgetary decisions are made; and (v) to participate in top level discussion on changes in state policy. These are some of the accounts in this regard:

> You've got a much better understanding of the university as you participate more in decision making processes around the large issues facing the university. That's the one.   You are more knowledgeable about the external environment like the restructuring of the higher education sector. You're also involved even at the embryonic stage in policy formulation within the university, whereas previously the vice-chancellor's office used to come up with a policy and then the deans would see it afterwards.   You are now involved at an early stage…and thirdly there's a thing called FRAC – Financial Resources Allocation Committee.   Members of the senior executive have always been on FRAC so, when deans were not on that they weren't on FRAC. Now all of a sudden they are and now you discover that that's where the

> university budget is actually finalised. So deans' roles are very different now.[534]

> SET are people that you need access to and you needed to tell your stories to and cry to, they are all there in SET. And being a member of SET means that you have better access to people that you should have access to than I've experienced in other universities.[535]

> We have agreed once or twice on an issue to bring to SET that we might discuss first. There was not a pre-informed decision – it was not a case of taking a position and getting ready to fight it out at SET. I've not been part of any such discussion and so we have generally been very frank and open at SET. I am not aware of any cliques or prior positions taken by the VCO or by the deans.[536]

> I think I mentioned to you before that one of the attractions of this job for me was the structure of SET, that the deans were involved. So you don't have this management team in Senate House that then tells us what's going on. We must take responsibility for the crappy administration if it's crappy because we are part of the process, which is why I failed in terms of the budgetary process. It's no good me bleating on saying that the budgetary process is wrong but equally I need to accept that I failed in not persuading them to move faster to change the system. The structure to me makes it much less of a 'them and us' situation I think.[537]

Another important benefit is related to easy access to information critical to effective management. This includes privileged information as a consequence of the establishment of the Strategic Planning Division and within it the Management Information Unit.

> So management needed a much more proactive way of getting to information quickly and manipulating it. So it was decided to form this Strategic Planning Division to help with restructuring and all of those things and also a Management Information Unit to support the Strategic Planning effort. And as I said the first task was to implement this Executive Information System, which is really about staff, students and

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[534]   Interview with Professor Colin Wright, Dean of the Faculty of Science, University of the Witwatersrand, 14 January 2003.

[535]   Interview with Professor Neil Garrod, Dean of the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, University of the Witwatersrand, 14 January 2003.

[536]   Interview with Professor Raymond Nkado, Dean of the Faculty of Built Environment and Engineering, University of the Witwatersrand, 23 January 2003.

[537]   Interview with Professor Neil Garrod, Dean of the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, University of the Witwatersrand, 14 January 2003.

financials. That project probably took about two years to implement properly and it was designed at that stage for the maybe senior top 20 managers, the deans and the executive of the university.[538]

While participation in SET might have enhanced the position of the deanship, in some ways it has been a site of contestation and competition. Some deans refer to the challenge of getting everyone in SET to agree to their positions. An example is the Attributable Income Model. According to one dean:

> I am and I've been making these points in that group for the past 12 months. And everybody nods and says: "Yes, that's absolutely right, we need to get to this particular model, but we need to get there slowly." I don't agree with that. We could do it overnight. You know we could move to that system now with the same budgets that we are going to get for this year, which would show that I am subsidising other faculties...
>
> I'm hopeful that there were some converts – not converts to the idea because everybody nods and says it's a good idea - but actual converts to meaning that they want to do it. .... instead of wasting time debating the right to have another professor, we would be debating whether the level of cross-subsidy between the surplus faculties and the deficit faculties is appropriate and if it's not then how the deficit faculties are going to actually do something about changing the situation.[539]

7.5   Deans in the Senior Management Team: Implications for Faculty Management

The literature on university management tends to concur on the contradictory and ambiguous position of deanships. Deans have been labelled by Berling (2000) as "boundary" persons, who work at the boundaries between various groups to enable the institution to fulfill its purposes.[540] Breslin described deans as resembling "the inside of a sandwich", pressed between the needs of inherently

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[538]   Interview with Mr Kevin McClouglin, Acting Director of the Strategic Planning Unit, University of the Witwatersrand, 24 February 2003.

[539]   Interview with Professor Neil Garrod, Dean of the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, University of the Witatersrand, 3 May 2003.

[540] Berling, J. (2000). Boundaries *and the Chief Academic Officer*. Presentations at the 2000 Deans Conference on the theme Boundaries, roles and burdens of the Chief Academic Officer, p.1 & 3.

conflicting bodies.[541] Blackmore and Sacks (1997) use the concept of 'institutional schizophrenia'[542] to refer to similar instances. For them 'institutional schizophrenia'[543] describes situations such as the case of deans in which they are required to be accountable to two layers within the institution, which within the new organisational structure, could have divergent and contradictory interests.

Deans have described this dilemma in many interesting ways:

> On the other hand, you have to represent the faculty in a debate with the other deans about how much resources each faculty should get. And so in that sense you're representing your faculty. And I think it's always been that dilemma. And in my view it would be impossible to do the job of dean if you had lost the confidence of your faculty. … But there are some situations like that where you might have to do that on behalf of the university, or the university will appoint someone to do that. But on the whole you couldn't build a faculty, create a vision and share it, and get people to buy into it and motivate them if they didn't have confidence in you. It's the same I think on the other side. So, you are often caught between those two and you have to try to reason and satisfy both and ensure that each side sees the view of the other. I think it's very much a kind of *mediation role* between these two bodies. And you have to keep the confidence of both of them otherwise under most circumstances you can't do your job. [544] [my emphasis]

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[541]   Quoted by Carol Mullen, *The deanship inside out: a college's adjustment to top-tier research status*, Paper presented at the first annual conference on curriculum. http://edtech.connect.msu.edu/Searchaera2002/viewproposaltext.asp?propID=7762. For more details see also Cross, M. & Johnson, B. (2004). Academic Leadership under Siege: Possibilities and Limits of Executive Deanship at the University of the Witwatersrand. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 18(2), 34-58.

[542]   I am drawing this notion from Blackmore & Sachs (1997), cited in Ball (2001) when referring to the contradictions teachers experience between first order and second order activities when having to divide their attention between good teaching and the rigours of performativity. Ball, J. S. (2001). *The teacher's soul and the terror of performativity*. http://www.lhs.se/atee/proceedings/Ball._Key_note. p. 8).

[543]   Ball, J. S.(2001). *The teacher's soul and the terror of performativity*. http://www.lhs.se/atee/proceedings/Ball._Key_note.

[544]   Interview with Professor Max Price, Dean of the Faculty of Health Science, University of the Witwatersrand, 13 January 2003.

> When we defined the job description it was very clear that the deans would be the *'piggies in the middle'*. Faculties would think…and I don't think it's true, but there's a danger that faculties would think that deans are working in cahoots with the senior executive and the senior executive would think that the deans are just there on the other side. You do have to and you've got to do it in different ways at different times. Sometimes you are on the side of your faculty and other times you've got to convince your faculty that they've got to do something for the good of the institution.[545]

Or,

> I regard my deanship as playing an *intermediary role* between the needs of my faculty, making sure that issues that are brought to SET are taken into consideration before decisions are made. I also see myself communicating to my faculty the decisions taken at SET. [546]

While the *mediation* and *intermediary roles* are emphasised to deal with the dilemma, it appears that the policy intensity phase that Wits is experiencing, coupled with considerable organisational and strategic changes, is very often met with scepticism and/or resistance which requires strong and informed leadership from deans. This is to secure that downward accountability (to the faculty) does not become irreconcilable with upward accountability (to the vice-chancellor or SET). Strong leadership is also essential in instances where, in spite of disagreement, opposition or resistance, the dean has to ensure the institution's central objectives and policies are upheld in resolving strategic issues driven by the vice-chancellor or SET. As argued elsewhere, "a strong leadership would certainly opt for what Tierney calls 'dialogues of respect', within and across 'communities of difference', which will not be possible within the narrow parameters of managerialism."[547] This is in line with the following view:

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[545] Interview with Professor Colin Wright, Dean of the Faculty of Sciences, University of the Witwatersrand, 14 January 2003.

[546] Interview with Professor Raymond Nkado, Dean of the Faculty of Built Environment and Engineering, University of the Witwatersrand, 23 January 2003.

[547] Cross, M. & Johnson, B.J., Academic Leadership under Siege: Possibilities and Limits of Executive Deanship at the University of the Witwatersrand. *South African Journal of Higher Education,* 18(2). p.50.

> I've never had that.   You know this 'them and us' idea. I don't buy it because in any organisation you have to marry your own local needs and desires with the bigger picture.   So as a member when I first started as a lecturer I was a member of a department of four people who all had slightly different views on life. If we were running the show we would have run it slightly differently.   But you have your own personal views and you talk through and you come up with an institutional departmental guide.   I don't see any difference here.   And that's one of the debates I have with some of the heads of school – that they're very insular and they say: Oh well it is a them and us approach.   I don't think so.   I said: Look you don't like it.   I'll take it private.   I don't mind.   I will lead the charge that you as a school want to leave Wits and become a private institution.   Staff would reply: No, no, we can't do that, you know, the Wits name is important. [548]

If the leadership is weak, the consequence is inevitably too much focus on upward accountability at the expense of downward accountability and, consequently, over reliance on top-down management styles. In short deans regard their positions as 'mediating' or 'intermediary' or having a 'dual responsibility' as they represent faculty concerns within SET and take SET's views to the faculty for discussion.

In summary, it appears that the establishment of SET under the present organisational design has brought about tighter centralisation of decision making processes through faculty devolution and the integration of deans into top management structures such as SET. From the faculty point of view, this could be interpreted as a fundamental shift from a model which emphasised downward accountability to the faculty, to a new model which stresses upward accountability to the vice-chancellor. This is apparent in the following account:

> Legally one was appointed by the vice-chancellor and one was accountable to the vice-chancellor, although the faculty was the body that selected you and had to approve you and put your name forward to the vice-chancellor.   And I think deans were certainly seen as accountable to their faculties in the previous model and as having to be accountable to the vice-chancellor.   For example, the vice-chancellor says: "Here's your budget, don't overspend it." And you have hundreds of academics thinking that they need more staff or more equipment or more budgets for their departments and you have to then sort of take the position of the vice-chancellor of the university saying: "I'm sorry you

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[548]   Interview with Professor Neil Garrod, Dean of the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, University of the Witwatersrand, 14 January 2003.

can't have it." Our management is top-down management in that way. [549]

7.6   SET, Performativity and Nature of Academic Work

While the functions of SET are still evolving, a trend in the kinds of issues on SET's agenda is identifiable. When UMA reviewed the Strategic Management at Wits and reviewed what SET discussed during 2000, it observed that it did not devote sufficient time to strategic management issues. [550]

Figure 1:   Frequency breakdown of issues brought before SET

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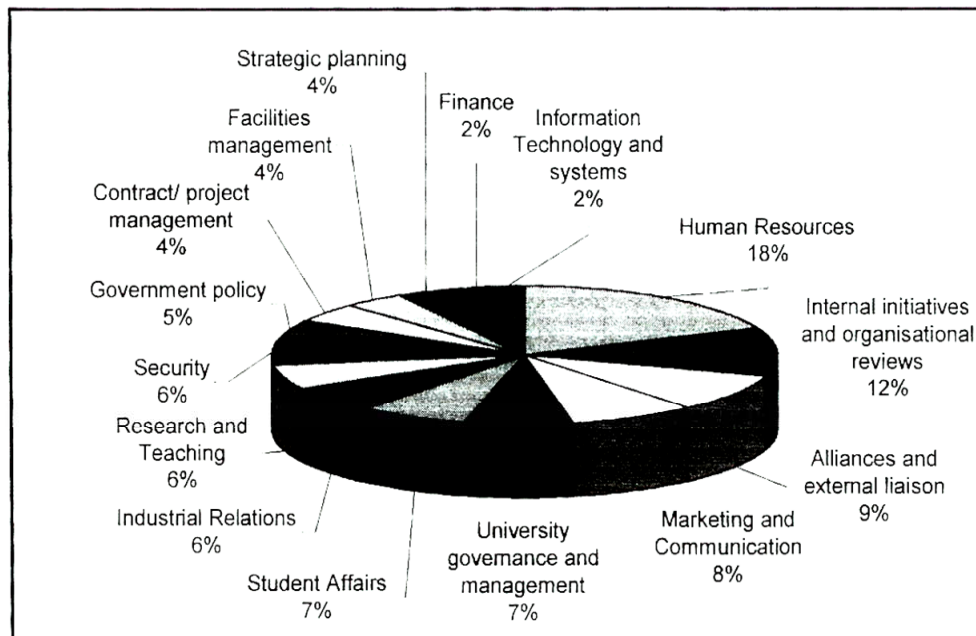
[549]   Interview with Professor Max Price, Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, University of the Witwatersrand, 13 January 2003.

[550] Coughlan, F.   (2004).   University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg: Executive Management of the University: Role of the Senior Executive Team (SET).   Special Advisor to the Vice-Chancellor Ms Kashaini Maistry.   p. 2.

(Source: Coughlan, F. (2004). University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg: Executive Management of the University: Role of the Senior Executive Team (SET). Special Advisor to the Vice-Chancellor Ms Kashaini Maistry. p. 2.))

The pie chart above demonstrates that SET is concerned with a potpourri of issues of both an internal and external nature, but tends to focus marginally more on human resources, internal initiatives and organisational reviews. These areas do significantly impact upon academics.

A key component of this tendency has been the implementation of what I refer to as technologies of surveillance and performativity through which academic work can be monitored at a distance and evaluated in relation to central institutional policies. An entire network of techniques and artefacts of power has been set in motion through offices, processes, policies, strategies of motivation and mechanisms of reformation to shift the academic staff from their traditional roles and interests to those aligned to the organisation, or more specifically the 'performativity' of the university, in its process of accounting to external pressures such as the state. These include: (i) the highly contested and unpopular performance appraisal mechanism; (ii) promotion of new workload models which emphasise performance and income generation; (iii) surveillance and monitoring mechanisms; there is a tendency to link performativity to the university reward system, particularly salaries and promotions.

The Human Resources implemented performance appraisal[551] at Wits in 2000. It is one system through which the performance of individual academics within all

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[551]   The system works in the following way: Each member of staff is given a form to complete, which must be submitted by July every year and therefore completed during May and June. Training around the form is organised through the Centre for Learning and Teaching Development (CLTD). The role of the central HR manager is to oversee and design the system, the format of the form, the training, and negotiate the system with the staff associations and the unions. In terms of distribution, each deputy HR manager is given the forms, which are distributed to the deans and heads of schools. They ensure that the forms are completed. Once the forms have been completed and all staff have been appraised, the rating is captured on to the salaries data because performance appraisal is tied to the salaries and thereafter the forms go back into the filing system. The HR Managers then draw the form; consider the training needs and training patterns. This is referred to as the training needs analyses. HR then approaches CLTD with these analyses and training is designed to

units can be systematically monitored by peers, individuals themselves and their senior managers.

Performance appraisal is a mechanism by means of which management is able to appreciate the level of effort put into the work of individual members of staff and to guide staff members to improve their performance by, for example, getting additional training through the Centre for Teaching and Learning Development (CLTD). It is also meant to provide staff with the opportunity to reflect constructively upon their practice and to explore ways, in conversation with their immediate colleagues, of improving the performance. It is however, output orientated, with the final result being to ensure that more students are retained and output levels are improved within the system, so that the institution may eventually attain greater levels of government subsidy. As the Director of Human Resources stated:

> The significance of the performance appraisal system is to achieve the following: (i) individual objectives to faculty and institutional objectives; (ii) develop a relationship between the reward and performance; and (iii) develop the capacity of staff through training. The significance of reviewing the relationship between individual, faculty and institutional objectives is linked to the strategic plan. For example, people are still doing research on ancient Greece and this may not be relevant, if we consider ourselves to be an African university. The link between rewards and performance appraisals is seen as counter productive, as staff are more interested in their rewards than in training which is the underlying concern of the model. [552]

While senior managers regard the technology of performance appraisal as a mechanism through which transparency can be established, its impact upon academic staff members seems to be varied. Some academics regard performance appraisal in a positive light as an opportunity to develop their professional

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meet these needs. HR also completes an evaluation of the system, so that it can be improved. For this, HR conducts its own research during September/October of each year. The aim is to keep evaluating and improving the system, so that it does not simply become a mechanical process (Interview with Mr Richard de Villiers, Director of Human Resources, University of the Witwatersrand, March 2003).

[552] Interview with Mr Richard de Villiers, Director of Human Resources Management, University of the Witwatersrand, 18 February 2003.

identity. Other academics regard it as a hazard and joke as it is not even tied to any changes in their salaries.

The key motivation for this new system is that the management of the university regards it as being far more transparent than previously when there was no system; people were placed on special lists. There were special salary lists, which were independent of the normal salary curves. As a result, there were people who earned special salaries and there were people who were specially appraised. This included senior academics, senior support staff and junior support staff who were close to the senior support staff.[553] Furthermore, the model represents a change from personnel to human resource development. Personnel refer to budgets, records and administration; human resource management is concerned with the development of the human resources and therefore the 'human capital'. [554]

Workload models under the auspices of the human resources office are other key mechanisms through which the distribution of work among members within the faculty may be monitored to ensure parity in workload distribution. The Performance Appraisal System allows staff to reflect upon their Key Performance Areas (KPAs) and their workloads. Inequitable workload distribution is discovered and questioned. The reason for this may be that some staff members are more closely tied into networks with the head of school than others. The transparency allowed by the system establishes greater levels of equity among staff. While this may be a new system in many faculties and schools, this has

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[553]   Interview with Mr Richard de Villiers, Director of Human Resources Management, University of the Witwatersrand, 18 February 2003.

[554]   "The significance of this is that even though we talk about being an excellent institution, we do not have many excellent people at Wits. It is very difficult to get people to come to the tip of Africa and it is difficult for us to compete with the market especially given our currency. So the idea is to keep our own people and to develop them both in relation to support and academic staff." (Interview with Mr Richard de Villiers, Director of Human Resources, University of the Witwatersrand, 18 February 2003).

been the practice for some time in the Faculty of Built Environment and Engineering and the Business School. [555]

Although this may be a plausible explanation for the implementation of workload models, it puts academics under greater pressure to teach while at the same time being required to increase their publications; both avenues are regarded as a source of income for the institution. The system is, however, contradictory. While academics' teaching loads increase significantly, they have much less time available to undertake research, which forms part of the evaluation basis.

The consequence for academics of these numerous mechanisms of surveillance and performativity, together with greater pressure to increase student numbers, has been that they are constantly caught in a dilemma of having to comply with increasing managerial obligations and having many more students to teach. The education backgrounds of many of these students have placed them in a vulnerable position within the university and they therefore require greater support from academics.

7.7 Conclusion

A close examination of the rationale, the establishment and operations of SET leads to four important conclusions with profound implications for the changing university management. First, through deconcentration and devolution strategies, and integration of all top managers into SET, power has been increasingly centralised into SET. Currently there are attempts to clarify the functions of SET. Second, the incorporation of deans into SET has fundamentally reframed the lines of accountability, from a model where deans primarily represented their faculties, to a model where they are primarily accountable to the vice-chancellor and SET. Third, SET has been overseeing the implementation of technologies of surveillance and performance over academic work. These technologies allow the

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[555]   Interview with Mr Richard de Villiers, Director of Human Resources Management,
         University of the Witwatersrand, 18 February 2003.

senior institutional management consistently to monitor and evaluate academics at a distance across all academic entities. Layers of management, such as human resources and financial management, occupy a special place in re-enforcing the managerial power of SET over academics.

The consequence of this is that relations between the senior management of the institution are being transformed from collegial relations to employer/employee relations, as in any other workplace setting. The inherent problem, however, is that academics value academic leaders and not managerial instructions. Four, the centralisation of decision making around SET within the current organisational structure provides a basis and rationale for top-down management translated into an increasingly managerial *modus operandi* at the faculty and school levels.

I now turn to Chapter 8 in which I discuss the changing nature of the deanship.