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THE SUSTAINABILTY OF SERVICE LEARNING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN THE POST 'COMMUNITY HIGHER EDUCATION SERVICE PARTNERSHIP' ERA

Craig Darrel Rowe

A dissertation submitted to the Wits School of Education, Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education

Johannesburg

May 2011

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ABSTRACT

Historically, institutions of higher education have been perceived to be isolated from the real concerns of the world. They have appeared to be ivory towers and bastions of knowledge to which mere mortals can only aspire. There is currently still a call in the South Africa for education that is relevant and applicable to the development of South Africa. Through emphasizing community engagement and implementing service learning various dynamic approaches are now being considered to link "traditional domains of foundational knowledge and professional knowledge with a new emphasis on socially responsive knowledge" (Altman in Kenny & Gallagher, 2000:1). Altman suggests that service learning links the knowledge, skills and experiences of learners in a way that enables them to act and respond to social problems and engage with communities.

The aim of the research was to through an appreciative inquiry framework determine what is being done in respect to and how best to support and encourage the continued implementation of community engagement and service learning in South Africa. The research focuses on how service learning and community engagement can be made sustainable in South Africa. It identifies what service learning practices are being established by higher education institutions in South Africa following the period typified as the era of the Community Higher Education Service Partnership programme.

Over a period of nine years, higher education institutions received external support from the Community Higher Education Service Partnership programme. In 2008, the Community Higher Education Service Partnership programme was transferred to the Higher Education Quality Committee and the support and funding, previously supplied by the Community Higher Education Service Partnership programme, was terminated. The research investigates how service learning and community engagement has since continued to be sustained and implemented in higher education institutions.

Service learning and community engagement, as an entity, is positioned to "produce powerful transformative effects for learners, teachers, schools, universities, communities and policy-makers" (Le Grange, 2007:8). These developments in higher education **s**erve as a backdrop for the need for transformation and change in South Africa. In response to the fundamental changes occurring in South Africa, there is an imminent need to transform the function, role and purpose of higher education institutions. The findings of the research should generate a greater understanding of the current status of service learning and community engagement in South Africa.

Key words: Service learning, community engagement, higher education, community partnerships, appreciative inquiry

DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Education at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any University.

_____

CRAIG DARREL ROWE

30th day of May in the year 2011.

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my wife, Gina, and my daughters, Danielle and Lauren.

They have shown me the grace of time and allowed me the space to do what has been required of me in order to complete this research.

Their constant support, love and commitment have been a motivation to me on a daily basis.

Thank you Gina, Danielle and Lauren for all you give and for all you mean to me.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACODLTI - The Association of Community Development Leaders in Tertiary Institutions

CBO - Community-based organisation

CHE - Council on Higher Education

CHESP - Community Higher Education Service Partnership

CSI - Corporate social investment

FBO - Faith-based organisation

HEI - Higher education institution

HEQC - Higher Education Quality Committee

NGO - Non-governmental organisation

NQF - National Qualifications Framework

NRF - National Research Foundation

PBO - Public benefit organisation

SAHECEF - South African Higher Education Community Engagement Forum

SLCBP - Service Learning Capacity Building Programme

Chapter 1: Introduction

Historically, institutions of higher education have been perceived to be isolated from the real concerns of the world. They have appeared to be ivory towers and bastions of knowledge to which mere mortals can only aspire. In 1997, the Department of Education published the White Paper for the Transformation of Higher Education, which challenged the institutions to redress the inequalities of the past and to be agents of change and transformation in the higher education system. There is currently still a call in South Africa for education that is relevant and applicable to the development of our nation. Service learning has become one of the approaches that are considered to be able to link "traditional domains of foundational knowledge and professional knowledge with a new emphasis on socially responsive knowledge" (Altman in Kenny & Gallagher, 2000:1). Altman suggests that service learning links the knowledge, skills and experiences of learners in a way that enables them to act and respond to social problems.

South Africa faces many challenges. Examples of these challenges include poverty, housing, HIV/AIDS, unemployment and disparity in education. Le Grange (2007:11) suggests that "educating students about these problems can be dangerous," because students learn just enough about the problems to pass their examinations without having to do anything about the challenges. Service learning and community engagement is a strategy that is positioned to "produce powerful transformative effects for learners, teachers, schools, universities, communities and policy-makers" (Le Grange, 2007:8).

The call for engagement will only be successful if there is a partnership between higher education institutions (HEIs) and a variety of other role players in the community. HEIs should "lay the foundations for the development of a learning society, which can stimulate, direct and mobilize the creative and intellectual energies of all peoples towards meeting the challenge of reconstruction and development" (Department of Education, 1997:5). This, in essence, depicts South Africa's call for a new role for higher education in the context of the past inequalities. The Department of Education states that "in South Africa today, the challenge is to redress past inequalities and to transform the higher education system to serve a new social order, to meet pressing national needs, and to respond to new realities and opportunities" (Department of

Education, 1997:7). The Ford Foundation made funding available to the Joint Education Trust in 1997 and 1998 to survey the service learning and community engagement landscape of South African higher education. Four key findings emerged from the survey. Firstly, most HEIs included community service in their mission statements; secondly, few HEIs had any strategy or policy to actually implement what they said; thirdly, the range of service learning and community engagement projects was wide and varied; lastly, the projects were initiated by innovative members of staff or students, but not as a strategy of the HEI. In response to the findings of the survey "the Ford Foundation made a further grant to the Joint Education trust in 1998 to establish the "Community Higher Education Service Partnerships (CHESP) initiative" (Lazarus, Erasmus, Hendricks, Nduna & Slamat, 2008:58).

In South Africa, each HEI is required to adhere to the criteria set out by the Council on Higher Education (CHE) to maintain its accreditation and registration. There are three areas according to which HEIs are evaluated namely: teaching and learning, research, and community engagement. In HEIs, service learning is considered to be an integral part of community engagement, providing an academic context for what occurs in the partnerships with communities. For the purposes of the institutional evaluation of the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC), it is possible to fulfill many of the criteria only through the well-structured implementation of service learning programmes. Lazarus et al (2008) describe the five programmes that CHESP supported for the development of service learning in HEIs. According to them, these programmes have thus far provided grants, supported capacity building programmes, monitored and evaluated initiatives, advocated to inform higher education policy, and provided a resource and information service to HEIs.

The following diagram illustrates how the CHESP programme has positioned service learning and community engagement in South Africa. The diagram captures the essence of what was achieved through the CHESP programme and how it was positioned in 2006 at the conclusion of the programme.

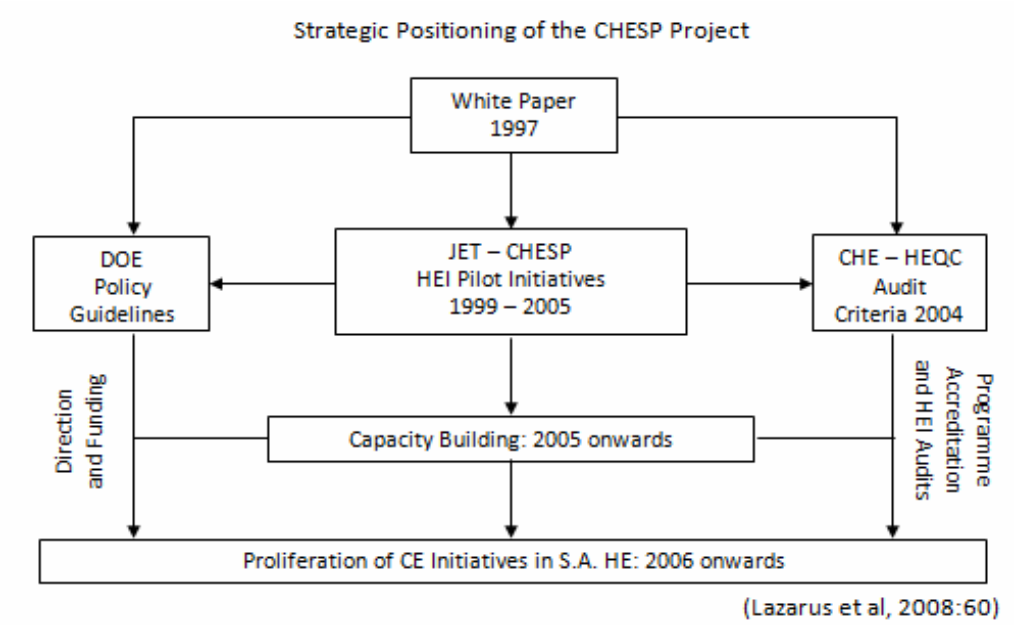


Diagram 1

Since the termination of CHESP programme in 2008, funding from government sources has not been readily accessible, nor has funding been available from other similar sources to the CHESP programme. All HEIs have had to support the implementation of service learning and community engagement with their own resources or through external funding which they needed to access themselves. The challenge with which the HEIs are faced if they are to continue to implement the community engagement programmes, is that it would require their continued institutional commitment. Such commitment would entail the support of the highest level of management for the provision of finance, allocation of staff, implementation of capacity building programmes, provision of resources, encouragement of curriculum development and support for the accreditation of service learning programmes – all areas that that were previously supported by CHESP. It is a moot question whether the HEIs are willing and able to continue this process of implementing service learning as a form of community engagement without external support. This places the long term sustainability of community engagement and service learning in jeopardy. The funding and staffing of these programs is seen as being essential for sustainability.

The research problem

Service learning was established in response to legislation and was primarily supported and funded by the CHESP programme from 1999 to 2008. In 2008, the CHESP programme was

transferred to the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) and the CHE. Since the transfer of the programme there has been very little visible support from the HEQC or the CHE for the continued development of service learning and therefore also for community engagement. Since the support and funding, which was previously provided by CHESP, has been terminated, it is questionable whether there is a future for service learning and community engagement and whether these actions have been sufficiently embedded in HEIs for them to continue to be in the forefront of HEIs' strategic objectives. This study strives to find answers to these questions.

The research context

This research report investigates the implementation of service learning at HEIs and how it has contributed to addressing and enhancing community engagement. The research addresses the following issues:

- Community engagement and service learning policy and practice;
- Interest in community engagement and service learning; and
- Opportunities for the development and sustainability of community engagement and service learning.

After the presentation of an overview of the current status of service learning in this study, recommendations are made for the future development of community engagement and service learning in South Africa.

Learning has been identified as the cardinal form of leverage in the context of developing communities and service learning is one of the options that were chosen by the CHE to promote civic engagement, responsibility and awareness. The CHE seeks to encourage universities to fulfill their mission by serving their communities with distinction and, in the process, achieving high levels of excellence in teaching and research. All HEIs are expected to contribute to transformation and to "be more responsive to community challenges" (Erasmus, 2005:1).

International imperatives

In response to fundamental changes that are occurring throughout the world, HEIs are transforming their function, role and purpose in order to respond to new needs and environmental conditions. HEIs are facing the challenge of engaging more closely with their surrounding communities, developing an intellectual foundation for such engagement and seamlessly integrating the key aspects of the university's mission, namely teaching, research and community engagement. Service learning is acknowledged to be one of the most important ways of engaging with communities through teaching, learning and research, thereby linking academia with the community in a reciprocal way.

Internationally, community engagement includes integrated service learning as a strategy of which the primary beneficiaries are the community and the students. The primary goal of service learning is considered to be the provision of service to the community and the enhancement of learning through the rendering of this service. Reciprocity should be the central characteristic of service learning and the service learning programmes should be fully integrated into the academic curriculum. Additionally service learning programmes should be credit bearing. This approach to learning enhances the University's international perspective, since leading HEIs worldwide have similar approaches.

Service learning has introduced a new approach to the concept of partnerships in higher education. The concept is underpinned by a notion of reciprocity in learning and exploration, which produces a range of benefits that flow from joint endeavours by and interaction between the university, community and service providers. Carriere (2006:16) defines this partnership as "a collaboration of equals." The continuation and development of these partnerships is also a key factor in ensuring the sustainability of community engagement and service learning

South African imperatives

In 1997, the White Paper on Higher Education that was issued by the Department of Education posed three key challenges to the higher education sector in South Africa, namely:

1. The need to address the chronic mismatch between higher education and the skills or human resource needs of a developing economy;
2. To help lay the foundation for a critical civil society; and
3. To adopt appropriate policies and practices in teaching and research that counteract academic insularity and isolated approaches to higher education.

The HEQC of the CHE was established through the Higher Education Act (1997) to further contextualise the landscape of community engagement and service learning in higher education. The responsibilities of the HEQC include quality promotion, institutional audits and programme accreditation. The HEQC has identified "knowledge based community service" as a basis for programme accreditation and quality assurance. This aspect of the HEQC policy has required that, as part of institutional audits, higher education institutions should report in terms of the specific criteria of community engagement. The attempts to change the policy landscape of South African higher education are "framed by the overall social goals of transcending the inherited apartheid social structure with its deep social inequalities" (Cloete, Pillay, Badat & Moja, 2004:1).

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) cites a number of critical learning outcomes for the South African education system. These outcomes can all be supported through the integration of service learning into higher education training and research. Students should be able to identify and solve problems and then make decisions by means of critical and creative thinking. They are required to work effectively as members of a team, group organization or community. Community engagement activities should be organized and managed effectively to respond to and address needs. In order to determine these needs, students and faculty should collect, analyze, organize and critically evaluate information. The Department of Education (1997) concurs that service learning provides a means for students to achieve the above mentioned learning outcomes, particularly because it creates sound opportunities to demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems. By interacting with the community, students have the opportunity to realize that problems and solutions do not exist in isolation; they are interwoven and it will take a holistic approach to find solutions.

Significance of the research

In response to the fundamental changes occurring in South Africa, there is an imminent need to transform the function, role and purpose of HEIs. This research project aims to create a greater understanding of the current status of service learning and community engagement. This research project focuses on the levels of interest in service learning and community engagement and what could be done to sustain that interest. Challenges will be identified that, if not addressed, will hinder the development and sustainability of service learning and community engagement in South Africa. Concerns should be identified and, if they have substance, the matters concerned should be corrected or changed. Some of the challenges that have been identified, concern logistical and practical issues and these issues should be addressed at an institutional level.

Another aspect of this research that is of significance, is the context of what the HEQC requires of HEIs with regards to community engagement and therefore service learning. In the publication entitled Criteria for Institutional Audits (2004:29), community engagement is defined as any initiative or process "through which the expertise of the Higher Education Institution in the areas of teaching and research are applied to address relevant issues in its community." The document continues to define service learning as "applied learning which is directed at specific community needs and is integrated into an academic program and could be credit bearing and assessed" (Council on Higher Education, 2004:31).

Breier (2001: 6) comments that "at an institutional level, responsiveness to the needs of individuals and of society has become a key theme in university mission statements." The question that should be answered is: How many of these statements have been translated into sustainable actions? It is important to note that "higher education alone cannot transform the economic and social structures and practices of the wider South African society on its own" (Singh in Cloete et al, 2004:46). The policies and framework alone are not enough to ensure the sustainability of community engagement and service learning**.** There needs to be accompanying institutional economic and academic support for the implementation of community engagement and service learning.

Aims of the research

The aim of this research project is to investigate what is being done in respect of service learning and how best to support and encourage the continued implementation of service learning and community engagement in South Africa not just in policy documents but also in practice. The project aims to investigate how service learning and community engagement can be sustainable in South Africa. Sustainability would be determined by the extent of the HEIs response to the CHE criteria and their response to the CHE audit recommendations. The research report will therefore attempt to identify what community engagement and service learning practices are being established by HEIs in South Africa in the post-CHESP era. Over a period of nine years, HEIs had received external support from CHESP. In 2008, CHESP was transferred to the HEQC. Since the transfer, the support and funding that had been provided by CHESP has ended and since 2008 the HEIs have received very little financial support for service learning and community engagement. This state of affairs raises the question about whether there is a future for the implementation and development of service learning and community engagement. This research project aims to discover how service learning and community engagement have continued to be implemented by the HEIs.

Research questions

1. What role did CHESP play in the establishment of service learning and community engagement in South Africa?
2. How and to what extent has service learning been embedded in the community engagement, teaching and learning, and research cultures in HEIs in South Africa?
3. What are the key factors or structures that are in operation or should be implemented for the ongoing support of community engagement and service learning in South Africa?

Research methods

A qualitative research paradigm was used for the project. The investigation was accomplished by undertaking a small-scale survey. The procedures used were an in-depth literature review, in-depth interviews, reviews of policy documents and audit reports, and observer / incidental information.

The scope, limitations and assumptions of the study

The small-scale survey was undertaken among ten of the champions that have either pioneered service learning and community engagement or are currently involved in service learning and community engagement in South Africa. The respondents were selected on the basis of their previous as well as their current involvement in service learning and community engagement. They were selected from the practitioners in several HEIs and NGOs who occupy various positions in these organizations, including academics, managers, administrators, directors and partners. The research also assumes that community engagement and the implementation of service learning are accepted as a valid form of teaching and learning in HEIs, and will continue to be on the agenda of the CHE. This orientation implies that the research has been approached from a very positive perspective with the expectation that HEIs are committed to the ongoing challenge of implementing service learning and community engagement.

The scope of the research topic is extensive as it addresses a national initiative that had been funded through CHESP until 2008. The limitations of the research are that since the transfer of the service learning and community engagement project from CHESP to the HEQC in 2008, it appears as if there has been less funding available for research to be conducted on service learning and community engagement. However, there are still academics who are undertaking research in this field.

The execution of this research project was subject to several practical limitations such as time frames, availability of the participants, travelling and the cost implications for the researcher.

Chapter 2: Review of related literature

Introduction

The context of community engagement and service learning in higher education

Learning has been identified as a key form of leverage in developing contexts and service learning is one of the options chosen by higher education institutions to promote civic engagement, responsibility and awareness. Universities seek to fulfill their mission by serving their communities with distinction and, in the process, to achieve high levels of excellence in teaching and research. Service learning, if embraced by HEIs, could make inroads in addressing the inequalities of the past. By releasing intellectual capital into communities, service learning can create the possibility for real change to take place and for the communities to inform academia. Universities also have a social responsibility to engage effectively with communities and with society at large. The challenge that universities face, is "how engaged universities can best serve society by preparing students to be active, principled citizens and by linking knowledge to public good through engaged scholarship" (Zimpher in Carriere, 2006:13). However, there should be a balanced approach in that community engagement and service learning should not be perceived to be the provision of "a panacea for the deep-rooted socio-economic and educational problems of communities" (Hay in Erasmus, 2007:37).

The current theoretical and pedagogical basis for service learning and community engagement is examined in the literature review that follows. Research reports and other available literature will be scrutinized. Several CHE audit reports of HEIs' community engagement practices that are available in the public space will be reviewed and national policy documents will also be examined. These documents will inform the interviews that are to be conducted for the purposes of this study. The participants in the research survey will also be requested to refer to research that they have completed or to literature that they recommend as additional sources of information.

Defining community engagement

Community engagement is seen by HEIs in vastly different ways. There is a spectrum of terminology used and there are different understandings of the concepts. The CHE has provided a basis for the development of a shared understanding and the issues continue to be vigerously debated both nationally and internationally. The CHE defines community engagement as:

> "Initiatives and processes through which the expertise of the higher education institution in the areas of teaching and research are applied to address issues relevant to its community. Community engagement typically finds expression in a variety of forms, ranging from informal and relatively unstructured activities to formal and structured academic programmes addressed at particular community needs (service-learning programmes)."
>
> (CHE, 2004:12)

At the University of the Free State the Community Service Policy outlines community engagement as "continuously negotiated collaborations and partnerships between the UFS and the interest groups that it interacts with, aimed at building and exchanging the knowledge, skills, expertise and resources required to develop and sustain society" (Community Service Policy Document at UFS, 2006:9).

The proposed model is a "response to the challenge of becoming a model of a truly robust and responsive university that uses its teaching, research and community service capacities to make a significant contribution to the development of its province and also that of its wider region, South Africa and Africa" *(*Community Service Policy Document at UFS, 2006:2).

At Monash University, community engagement is defined "as actively engaging within and outside the university across local, national and international contexts with the aim to exchange knowledge, learning and cultural understanding for the benefit of society" (2011:1).

Community engagement in HEIs often includes some of the following activities: volunteerism; integrated service learning; internships/placements/practicum; community outreach, building and development; research, innovation and knowledge exchange; institutional development and access to educational, cultural, and research resources. The primary goal across these activities can include: service, enhancing learning, finding innovative solutions to problems, creating new knowledge. "In its fullest sense, community engagement is the combination and integration of

service with teaching and learning (e.g. service-learning), professional community service by academic staff and participatory action research applied simultaneously to identified community development priorities" (CHE, 2004:12).

Defining service learning

As a fundamental part of community engagement service learning facilitates a close relationship between theoretical and practical knowledge by acknowledging the value of expertise, theory and community participation. It fosters a close relationship between three entities namely the community, the partner and the student, with the intention of enhancing the functioning of each of these entities. In South Africa, a frequently used definition of service learning is:

> "Service-learning is a credit-bearing, educational experience in which students participate in an organised service activity that meets identified community needs and reflects on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility."
>
> (Bringle & Hatcher, 1995:112)

Service learning is not intended to replace other forms of learning and teaching in higher education institutions. Rather, the approach can be seen as a complementary one and is intended to augment the range of strategies available to achieve excellence in teaching and learning.

Pedagogical origins of service learning

Many scholars and philosophers have confronted and addressed the issue of learning and community. In addition, "most scholars trace the tying of service to schooling to the writings of Dewey" (Kraft, 1996:133). Dewey challenged the traditional principles of education that were prevalent in the early 20th century. His focus was the process of lifelong learning and learning through experience. According to Bringle & Hatcher (1999), Dewey provides a foundation for significant student learning to take place. Such learning would be accomplished when emphasis is placed on the student's reflection with regard to the experience that was gained through service rendering and the application of theory.

In the context of learning and change, Dewey emphasized the relationship between the school and society. It is apparent that he saw them as being closely related. Dewey and other educational

theorists continued to “emphasize that important knowledge advances occur when educational institutions focus on key issues facing modern society” (Elwell & Bean, 2001:48). Dewey held the conviction that “we learn in the process of living” (Saltmarsh in the CHE, 2006:15). The proponents of service learning would consider these frameworks to be seminal to the development of the pedagogy of service learning.

Service learning as a form of experiential learning

Experiential learning is centered on the model developed by Kolb who draws on the ideas of three educational theorists - namely Dewey, Lewin and Piaget. Dewey never used the term service learning, but “his perceptions and philosophy of education contributed to the pedagogy of service learning” (CHE, 2006:15). He emphasized the need for learning to be grounded in experience as well as the notion that experience plus reflection equals learning. Lewin stressed the importance of people being active in learning and much of Kolb’s experiential learning theory was based on Lewin’s “problem solving model of action research” (Knowles, Holton & Swansen, 2005:197).

According to scholars, Piaget’s theory also had an influence on Kolb’s theory of experiential learning. Piaget considered the developmental process to be vital to an understanding of learning. Piagets’s theory incorporates assimilation, accommodation and equilibration. Assimilation refers to the way in which people take in and structure various stimuli in order to have incoming information “fit with their existing way of thinking” (Siegler, 1995:37). The operative word is how the new information ‘fits’ into the existing scheme of thinking and thereby fits an external reality into an “existing cognitive structure (schema)” (Bhattacharya & Han, 2001:2). The ’new’ information is simply processed within the structures that are available to the learner. These structures could be situated in a community context.

Another feature of the developmental process, according to Piaget, is that of the accommodation of new knowledge. People change and through their interaction with new knowledge they “adapt their ways of thinking to the new experiences” (Siegler, 1995:37). The new experiences enable the learner to construct new ways of assimilating and therefore of accommodating new

information. Assimilation and accommodation influence each other and as “reality is assimilated, structures are accommodated” (Bhattacharya & Han, 2001:2).

The key to developmental change, according to Piaget, is equilibration. “It refers to the overall way of thinking and the new experience” (Siegler, 1995:38). Piaget described intelligence as the interaction of the person and with the environment. In the following diagram, Kolbs experiential learning cycle is introduced. In Kolbs’ experiential learning cycle, he provides the framework upon which service learning is based, namely concrete experience, observation and reflection, formation of abstract concepts and generalizations, and the testing of the implications of concepts in new situations. The following diagram illustrates the process:

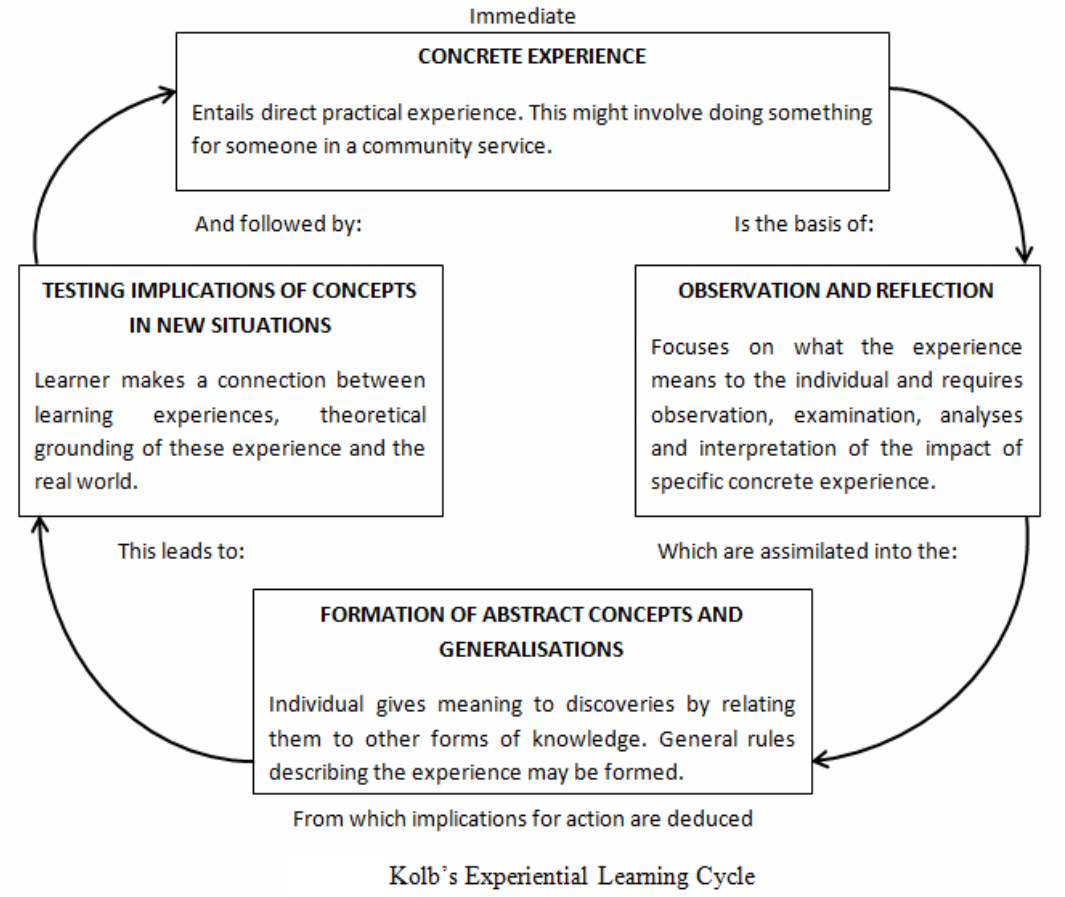


Diagram 2 (Kolb in the CHE, 2006: 18)

Concrete experience entails the practical application of theory in a community context. Observation and reflection together are regarded as a “crucial element in transforming concrete experience into knowledge” (Bringle & Hatcher in the CHE, 2006:18). Future behavior can only

be impacted by past experiences if the students and the community are allowed to form a frame of reference for what is happening or going to happen. In this model, experience is the foundation for all learning. It is through observation and reflection on concrete experiences that the development of abstract concepts and generalizations takes place.

The implications of this experiential learning model for service learning is that once concepts and generalizations have been established they are then applied and tested, which in turn leads to further concrete experiences. A noteworthy aspect of this learning cycle is that it does not have to be linear. It could appear to be haphazard, but could then nevertheless be considered to be learning, because processes are being developed. Learning is built on existing frameworks of knowledge. These frameworks are also not necessarily orderly but could simply be the scaffolding that supports learning. Learning is dynamic and can commence at any stage; therefore "there may be learning wheels within wheels at any point in time" (Atherton in CHE, 2006:19). In terms of the model, learning takes place by bringing every bit of previous knowledge into every situation. Therefore there is interdependency in the learning process.

According to Eyler & Giles (1999:13), service learning is an obvious response to the critics of higher education in that "the emphasis in service learning on applying knowledge to community problems and the reciprocal application of community experience to the development of knowledge" deals with the issue of a lack of connectedness. The process comprises an application of experience, reflection, community or societal involvement and change in the learner and the community. According to Osman and Attwood (2007:15), "service learning is essentially an experiential learning approach in which students receive academic credit for performing community service".

The theoretical context of service learning

Social constructivism and situated learning in service learning

Social constructivism has had a vast influence on the development of service learning. The basic premise of social constructivism is that people who act together construct new forms of knowledge. Vygotsky, who is the foremost theorist in the field of social constructivism, makes

certain claims about the social origins of mental functioning. Vygotsky claims that learning "first appears on the social plane and then on the psychological plane". (Vygotsky in Wertsch & Tulvista, 2005:60).

Vygotsky's emphasises that parents, lecturers, peers and others people fulfill a potentially significant role in the life of the learner. This notion is important in service learning, because communities as well as learners are considered to fulfil equal, but specific, roles in the learning process. All these parties fulfill a part in the development of the learner's knowledge and thought patterns. They are all partners in the journey of learning. Vygotsky's concept proposes a community education system. Although a variety of people have an educational role to play, the value of the knowledge gained cannot supersede the value of the relationships that that are maintained**.**

This relationship or interaction in the learning context is a fundamental departure from the notion that "mental functioning must occur first and foremost, if not only, within the individual" (Wertsch & Tulvista, 2005:61). Vygotsky advocates that learning can take place appropriately between people on an inter-mental plane. In fact, he gives precedence to this process as he states that "intra-mental functioning was a derivative, as emerging through the mastery and internalisation of the social processes" (Wertsch & Tulvista, 2005:61). Service learning places the learner directly within the social context and it is from that perspective that internal change and learning take place.

Learning theorists who emphasize the situatedness of the learner argue that all knowledge must be taught in practice and in context, and not in the abstract. "Learners must use tools as practitioners use them and become 'cognitive apprentices' in that disciplines community and culture" (Vincini, 2003:1**).** In service learning there is a relationship in and with communities that has to be negotiated by forming partnerships between all the role players. Lave and Wegner in Vincini (2003) state that the learner starts on the periphery of a community as a "novice" who is observing what is taking place and then moves slowly towards being a fully active participating member of the community. Wenger (1998) has coined the term 'community of practice' for the learning that occurs within a social context. Communities of practice have three distinct dimensions. Firstly, mutual engagement exists between people who gather socially with

one another. Secondly, joint enterprise keeps the community of practice functioning together and, thirdly, there is a shared repertoire in which all the resources of a community are pooled so that learning can take place.

Learning, according to Wenger (1998), advances through collaborative social interactions**.** It is a function of the activity, context and society in which it occurs. A key principle of learning is that it has to be presented and learned in an authentic context**.** Knowledge, according to Wenger (1998), is situated in a community of practice rather than in books. Wenger (1998) indicates that significant learning takes place in our lives through the various social contexts within which we exist. Members of a community are bound together into a social identity by mutual accountability. Relationships of mutual accountability are established through interaction and engagement. As people function, there will be diversity and differences which can either lead to greater development or the breakdown of a community.

The domains around which people organize themselves give the members of a community a sense of joint enterprise. Joint undertaking can give rise to shared understanding. In service learning, the emphasis on learning as a social interactive process is a vital one. Learning is "situated" and takes place primarily in a cultural and social setting. The culture could be, for example, a business, a school or a farm. The social setting could be a formal structure such as a family or a group of people. It could also occur within the context of informal contacts. Wenger (1998) says that in communities of practice, learning, transformation and change are always implied in one another.

The key issue to be considered for the purposes of this study is how communities of practice impact on service learning. Wenger's (1998) approach to learning through social interaction could be applied to facilitate the social context for the changes that higher education would want to effect in the learning process. The challenges that are presented by the South African situation could warrant the development of a South African service learning educational model. The concept of community engagement with reciprocal partnerships can develop into a meaningful community of practice in which all participants benefit.

The way we think, reflect and respond could influence how we experience the relationships that we form, the work situations in which we find ourselves and every other aspect of our lives. The

assumptions that we make, the values that we hold and our everyday actions would continually be challenged if we were to continually reflect on our lives. Change and development is possible through the application of the principles of service learning in a community of practice and linking the learning process to new knowledge being constructed in a dynamic social context.

Service learning in higher education

The teaching strategy needed for service learning differs from the strategy used in traditional classroom teaching (Bender in the Council on Higher Education, 2006:30). The need for such a strategy resulted in academics articulating what is known as the Service Learning Capacity Building Programme. The table below compares traditional learning and service learning:

Traditional learning	*Service learning*
1. Theory	1. Theory and experience
2. Others' knowledge	2. Personal knowledge
3. Spectator	3. Participant
4. Individual learning	4. Co-operative learning
5. Clear distinction between expert and ordinary teacher	5. Blurred distinction – we are all on a journey
6.Answers	6. Answers and questions
7. Ignorance avoided	7. Ignorance a resource
8. Objective	8.Transformationally connected

Distinctions between traditional and service learning

Table 1 (Adapted from Howard & Praxis, 1993)

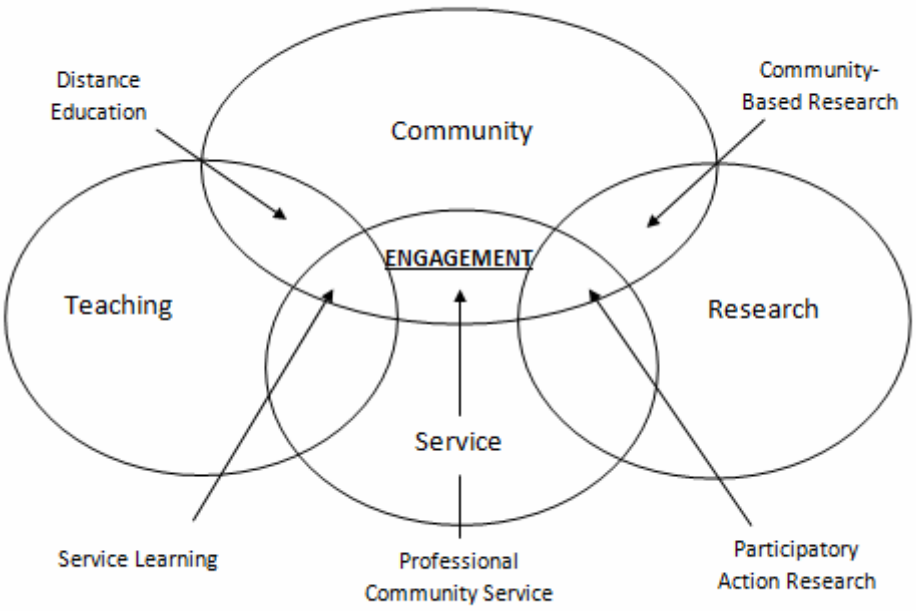
The comparison between traditional learning and service learning illustrates the experiential nature of service learning. Service learning promises to "produce enriched forms of learning that transcends traditional content-based mastery and allows students to develop new ways of thinking and acting that are integrated with their personal values" (Bringle, Phillips & Hudson in

the CHE, 2006:28). In their definitions of service learning, theorists generally agree that for service learning to be effective, learning should be placed within a community, because such placement encourages experiential learning. This position is aptly described by Howard and Praxis who suggests that:

> "Service-Learning is a comprehensive educational experience…it is a teaching-learning model with a myriad of other learning benefits. It offers students new learning paradigms. It offers an opportunity to reconsider prior values, ethics, and attitudes. It offers an experience that counterbalances the curriculum's predisposition for theory. It provides an experience…. which fosters critical thinking. It encourages student self thinking and learning about self. It brings books to life and life to books. It provides opportunities for developing real world skills and real world knowledge."
>
> (Howard & Praxis, 1993:220)

Through the practical application of the theory that the students have been taught, Howard and Praxis indicates that students should become active participants in the learning process. Service learning places students within the learning process relationally. They are no longer spectators in a classroom, but active participants in the field. Service learning puts "feet" to theory. The various aspects of community engagement that are identified in the CHESP programme and depicted in the diagram below are the aspects that are recognized as types of community eng

Types of Community Engagement



(Adapted from Bringle in Lazarus et al, 2008:61)

Diagram 3

The CHESP programme, as depicted in diagram 3, presents service learning, teaching, participatory action research, community-based research, professional community and distance education as forms of community engagement. It is also evident that because the teaching, learning and research processes are all situated in similar community contexts, they are able to intersect as different forms of engagement. The policies, procedures and guidelines that have been developed through the initiatives of the CHESP programme are applicable to most community engagement programmes. The policies that HEIs have to develop and implement are not exclusive to service learning, but also apply to the wider context of community engagement.

Hlengwa (2010: 1) views "service learning as having the potential to create a balance between service, which occurs in the community, and learning, which is thought to be the domain of the university, thereby enabling students to move between the everyday discourses of the community into the elevated discourses of the university." The university can develop an intellectual foundation for such community engagement. It can do this and by integrating the key aspects of the university's mission, teaching and research with service providers and communities. If these matters are in place then, hopefully, learning and constructive change will take place.

HEIs in South Africa have to respond to the challenges of creating an academic environment that tackles the developmental and transformational requirements put to them by government in a unique and decisive way. HEIs according to Bender (2007:127) are "increasingly seeking ways to be more relevant, to bring their knowledge base to bear on social and economic problems." Simultaneously, service learning has introduced a new approach to the concept of partnerships in higher education. The concept is underpinned by a notion of reciprocity in learning and exploration, with the result that a range of benefits flow from joint endeavors and interaction between university, community and service providers. Boyer (1996:11) states that higher education "must become a more vigorous partner in the search for answers to our most pressing social, civic, economic, and moral problems and it must affirm its historic commitment to what I call a scholarship of engagement." In South Africa, there appears to be an attempt to move in this direction. In a document of the Council on Higher Education entitled *South African Higher*

Education in the First Decade of Democracy, the Joint Education Trust defines service learning as:

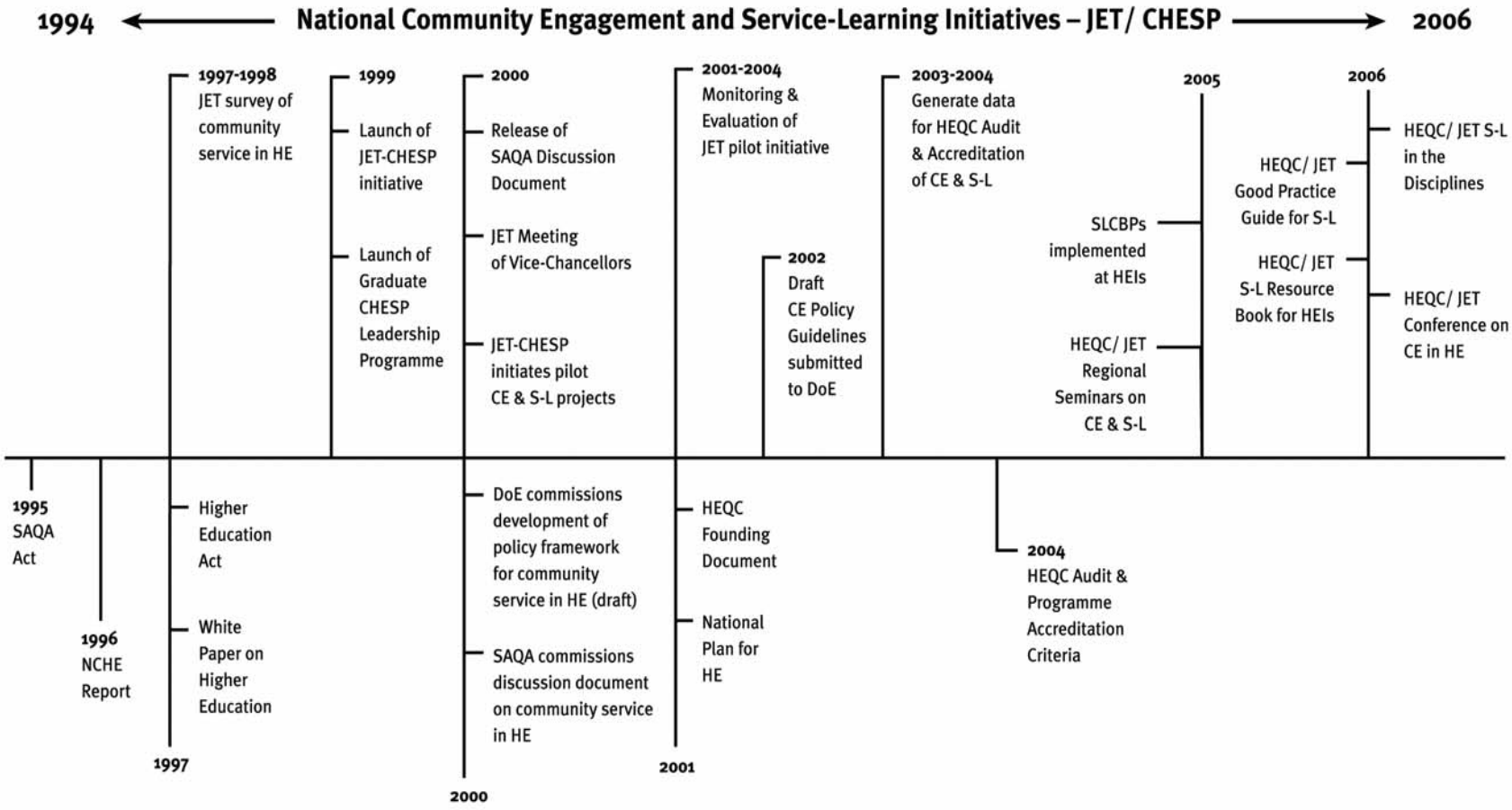
> "A thoughtfully organised and reflective service-orientated pedagogy focused on the development priorities of communities through the interaction between the application of knowledge, skills and experiences in partnership between community, academics, students, and service providers within the community for the benefit of all participants."
>
> (CHE, 2004:132)

Service learning responds to the needs and opportunities of individuals and the community and links up with specific learning goals and experiences for students. All pedagogical processes are designed and managed in partnership with communities, are socially inclusive and are educationally relevant. Waterman, (in Elwell & Bean, 2001:49), states that "experiential educators have brought the current movement to life." Contemporary service learning programmes are merging two important aspects of learning, namely service rendering to the community and the experiential approach to pedagogy. Service learning, according to Lazarus (2008), can be considered to be one of the entry points for community engagement in HEIs.

The effect of CHESP on the development of service learning in South Africa

The establishment of CHESP has had a significant impact on the development of service learning and community engagement in South Africa. In a relatively short space of time a great deal of developments have taken place in this field The timeline below illustrates how the CHESP programme and key higher education policy initiatives between 1994 and 2006 have developed concurrently in South Africa.

Figure 1.1: Timeline Indicating National Policies and Concurrent Service-Learning Initiatives in South Africa Post-1994



(Adapted from Cooke, L.A., unpublished, 2004)

(Cooke in CHE, 2006:2)

Before the inception of CHESP there was no evidence of HEIs conducting audits of their community engagement activities. According to research done by Lazarus et al (2008), by 2008 most of the HEIs in the CHESP programme had used or had adapted a tool designed by CHESP to audit their community engagement activities. Most of these HEIs have developed institution-wide guidelines, policies and/or strategies for community engagement. The HEIs whose representatives participated in the current investigation have also created an executive position and established a directorate for community engagement. In 2006, CHESP hosted the first national conference on community engagement. The conference was attended by 200 delegates from public and private HEIs. "A 2007 external program review of the CHESP initiative found that CHESP achieved its original objectives and is now located permanently within the higher education sector" (Hatcher & Erasmus, 2008:57).

Conclusion

The development of the pedagogy of service learning as a vital part of community engagement in the South African higher education landscape has been established. The value and importance of the role of service learning as a form of experiential learning and the role that these forms of learning plays in a community context has been discussed and continues to be researched in higher education. The community, in partnership with higher education, challenges traditional learning models. A shared understanding of the definition of service learning and community engagement has developed in South Africa mainly through the contribution of the CHESP programme. Since its inception, CHESP has supported the "conceptualization, implementation and evaluation of 256 accredited academic courses in 39 academic disciplines in 12 higher education institutions" (Lazarus et al, 2008). CHESP has, in collaboration with the HEQC, been involved in a project that aimed to promote quality, the sharing of good practice and the building of quality capacity in the area of community engagement, including service learning. In her remarks the Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor, in September 2008, at the handover of the CHESP program from the Joint Education Trust to the CHE at Parktonian Hotel in Johannesburg said that CHESP has been seminal in making Community Engagement an integral part of teaching and research.

Chapter 3: Research design

Conceptual framework – Appreciative inquiry

The conceptual frame used for this study is appreciative inquiry. "Appreciative inquiry is the co-operative search for the best in people, their organizations and the world around them" (Cooperrider, Whitney & Stavros, 2005:3). It is based on the assumption that every living system has a hidden and underutilized core of strengths, its positive core, which, when revealed and tapped, provides a sustainable source of positive energy for transformation. It has been described as follows:

> "It involves the discovery of what gives life to a living system when it is most effective, alive, and constructively capable in economic, ecological, and human terms…….The discovery, dream, design, and destiny model links the energy of the positive core to changes never thought possible."
>
> (Cooperrider, et al, 2005:3)

Appreciative inquiry involves the systematic discovery of what gives a system life when it is most effective and capable in economic, ecological and human terms. Appreciative inquiry involves the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to heighten positive potential. It is an approach that mobilizes inquiry through crafting unconditional positive questions. According to Watkins and Kelly (2010:2), appreciative inquiry "can guide our work with families, communities and organizations based on the realization that what we learn from what works and gives life is more effective and sustainable than what we learn from breakdowns and pathologies." Ludema (2001) states that hope springs to life when people understand that they have the opportunity to construct the future, because the future is fundamentally undetermined and open to their influences. In short, it can be said that appreciative inquiry is an affirmative worldview that shapes what we look for in people and organizations.

The intention of the application of the approach is to discover and build on the strength and vitality of human systems as experienced and reported by their members. Appreciative inquiry "aims to identify good practice, design effective development plans and ensure implementation" (Shuab, Sharp, Judkins, & Hetherington, 2009:2).

Appreciative inquiry is rooted in social constructionism, which basically states that a social system creates its own reality. "AI takes this theoretical framework and simply places it in a positive context" (Cooperridder, et al, 2005:13). According to Cooperridder (2005), the following historical roots form the five basic principles of appreciative inquiry:

(1) The constructionist principle, which states that knowledge and destiny are interwoven through social interaction and discourse.

(2) The principle of simultaneity, which recognizes that to inquire, is to change, and inquiry and change occur simultaneously.

(3) The poetic principle, which focuses on the value of storytelling.

(4) The anticipatory principle, which states that much of what we do, is based on what we imagine, dream or anticipate will take place.

(5) The positive principle, which states that to have a positive approach to research, learning or organizations is just as valid as having a negative approach that always attempts to solve problems.

There is a clear difference between a deficit-based and a strength-based appreciative inquiry research model. The following chart outlines the differences between a deficit-based research model, which looks backwards in an attempt to analyze problems, and a appreciative inquiry strength-based research model, which looks forward to an ideal of what might be.

Paradigm 1: Deficit-based research	Paradigm 2 : Strength-based research
Identification of problems "Felt needs"	Appreciation of the best of what is
Analysis of Causes	Envisioning what might be
Analysis of possible solutions	Dialoging what should be
Plan of action	Innovating

Table 2 (Adapted from Watkins & Kelly, 2010:21)

The strength-based research framework of appreciative inquiry provides a means of focusing on what has worked so that the organization can move toward it's "most desired future, along the way addressing what needs to change so that the image of the future can be realized. Appreciative inquiry does not deny problems, it redefines them" (Watkins & Kelly, 2010:21). As a philosophy of science, social constructionism suggests that we have considerable influence over the nature of the realities that we perceive and experience. To a great extent, we actually create our realities and our world through cooperative symbolic and mental processes. The primary notion is that the future of our organization has not yet been invented; we can make anything we want of it. We can socially construct the future of our organizations in the direction of our ideals. The constructionist principle holds that human knowledge and organizational destiny are interwoven. Appreciative inquiry organizations form a perspective that attempts to determine the best of what is (Cooperrider et al, 2005:11). "Unlike traditional problem-solving methodologies, teams employing AI inquire into organizational success, best practices and peak performances" (Cooperrider et al in Peelle, 2006:448).

The stories of organizations and people are constantly being co-authored. Inquiry and change cannot take place separately, they occur simultaneously. Past, present and futures are endless sources of learning, inspiration and interpretation, much like the endless interpretive possibilities of good poetry, the poetic principle, in which the story is constantly being co-authored. "People

experiencing positive feelings are more flexible, creative, integrative, open to information and efficient in their thinking" (Isen in Bushe, 2007:3). The anticipatory principle states that the image of the future guides what might be called the current behaviour of people or teams. What you focus upon, becomes your reality. Building a sustainable momentum for change requires large measures of positive affective and social bonding. Matters such as hope, excitement, inspiration, caring, camaraderie, a sense of urgent purpose and the sheer joy of creating something meaningful together are all aspects that come into play when focusing on the strengths and potential of what is being researched (Bushe, 2007).

The following diagram outlines the appreciative inquiry "5-D" cycle.

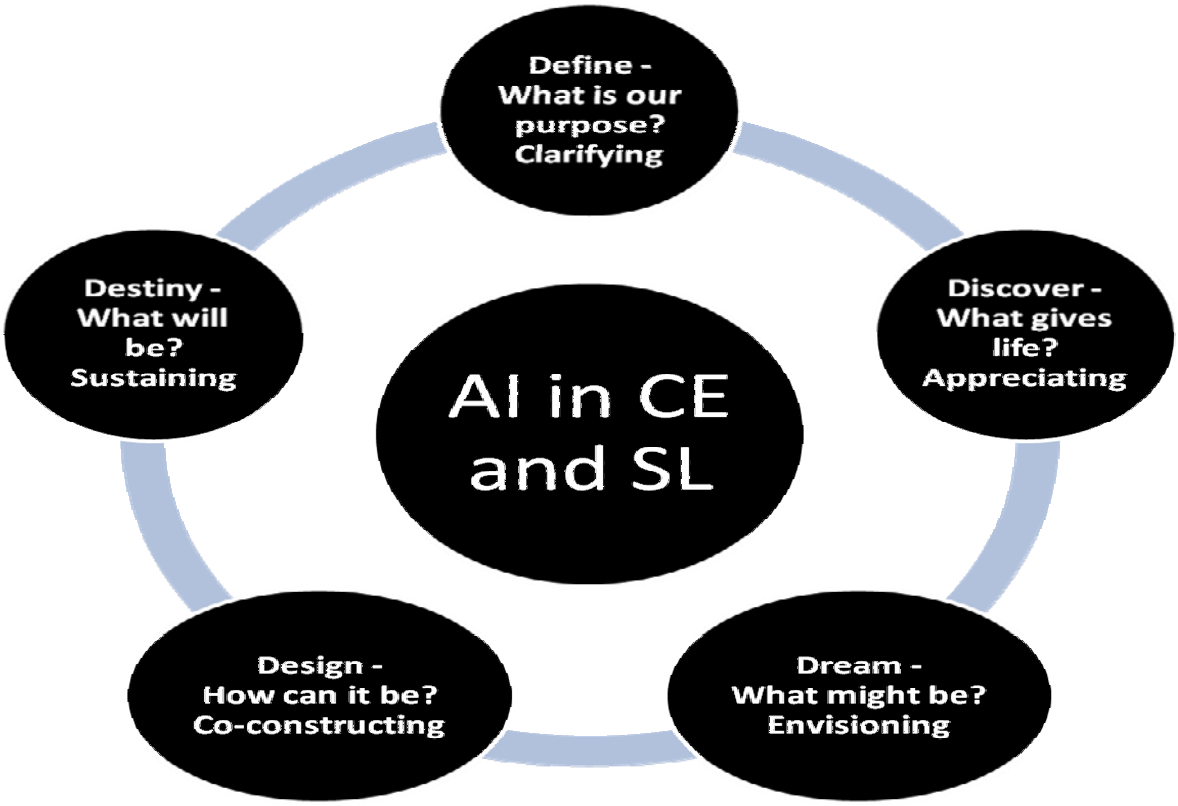


Diagram 5 (Adapted from Cooperrider et al, 2005:8)

The appreciative inquiry process that is outlined in the diagram above (Cooperrider et al, 2005) will be followed in this investigation. It comprises the following steps:

Step 1: Define

This step involves clarifying what the purpose is. It determines the context of and framework for the research.

Step 2: Discover

This step involves that you should appreciate what you have in hand, what is the best and what gives life. “The best and most positive experiences participants had in their organisations” (Shuayb et al, 2009:3).

Step 3: Dream

This step means that you should envision what could be and what the world is calling for. “Thinking creatively about the future” (Shuayb et al, 2009:3).

Step 4: Design

This involves that you should co-construct how things could be and determine the ideal context for you to flourish in. “Reflects participants views of good practice and visions” (Shuayb et al, 2009:3).

Step 5: Destiny

It involves sustaining what will be by empowering, learning and adjusting. “Moves towards action planning and working out what will need to happen” (Shuayb et al, 2009:3).

The entire interview process for this investigation was conducted in accordance with this pattern. The conversations and interviews was interwoven with the purpose of seeking out the best and attempting to focus on what could assist with the long-term sustainability of service learning and community engagement.

Research Methods

The small-scale survey was undertaken for this investigation and was conducted within the conceptual framework of appreciative inquiry. It will be located within a qualitative research paradigm. “Qualitative research attempts to make sense of or to interpret phenomena in terms of

the meanings that people bring to them" (Denzin and Lincoln in Creswell, 1998:15). This study is considered to be an exploration of the meaning that people bring to the current field of community engagement and service learning in higher education in South Africa. The appreciative inquiry process used was however not implemented to its full extent. Based on the results obtained, this study will later be used as the basis for a full appreciative inquiry intervention in the field of community engagement and service learning. The following is the overarching framework for the research questions that are to be answered:

1. What role did CHESP play in the establishment of service learning and community engagement in South Africa?

2. How, and to what extent, has service learning been embedded in community engagement, teaching and learning' and research cultures in HEIs in South Africa?

3. What are the key factors or structures that should be introduced or are already in place for the ongoing support of community engagement and service learning in South Africa?

The manner in which these questions are to be asked in the interviews will be framed in terms of the appreciative inquiry process that encompasses discovery, dream, design and destiny.

Data-gathering methods

In-depth interviews

The participants were purposefully selected in accordance with defined criteria. The survey was conducted with ten of the champions that have pioneered and continue to champion service learning and community engagement in South Africa. The participants were selected on the grounds of their previous and current involvement in service learning and community engagement. They are all practitioners and are situated in ten different HEIs and three NGOs. The group that participated in the research included academics, managers and partners in the community structures. They were selected from the ranks of people who were and are championing and implementing service learning and community engagement at the HEIs and

who have been involved with the CHE in the development of policies and capacity building programmes. Interviews with the selected participants place the researcher in the position of being an "instrument" and the "credibility of qualitative methods, therefore hinges to a great extent on the skill, competence or rigour of the person doing the fieldwork" (Patton, 2002:14).

The interviews were in-depth interviews and involved the use of a number of open-ended questions. This approach was used so that the "participants can best voice their experiences unconstrained by any perspectives of the researcher or past research findings" (Cresswell, 2002:204). This approach is in line with the appreciative inquiry approach that encourages thinking and planning that is "out of the box". A pre-arranged interview schedule was drawn up in consultation with participants (see appendix A). The researcher encouraged the participants to read the questions beforehand to enable them to reflect on and prepare for the interview. Notes were taken during the course of the interview and the notes were afforded the necessary confidentiality. These notes were transcribed onto tables where all the responses were captured (see appendix E). For ethical reasons, the names of the participants and of the institutions that they represent are not mentioned in the research findings. In terms of the appreciative inquiry 5D – cycle, the interviews took the format of discover, dream, design and destiny questions in order to interrogate and define the way forward for community engagement and service learning in South Africa.

The participants in the investigation were encouraged to tell their story of how they became involved and participated in the development of service learning and community engagement in South Africa. Over the past few years, all the participants would have accumulated resources and experiences that have influenced how they approach service learning and community engagement. The participants in this research project were selected to represent three different areas in service learning and community engagement, namely - academics, administrators and community partners. Persons in these categories are mutually dependant on one another. An attempt was made to discover their specific outlooks and frames of reference.

The following table illustrates how the data was captured. The data was captured in this format in order to obtain an overview of the various responses that were received from the participants.

"The sustainability of Service Learning in South Africa in the Post "Community Higher Education Service Partnership" Era										
	Question 1 PHASE 1: DISCOVERY	**What have you got in your hands?**								
		Describe how you got involved with Service Learning?								
	Interviewee 1	*Interviewee 2*	*Interviewee 3*	*Interviewee 4*	*Interviewee 5*	*Interviewee 6*	*Interviewee 7*	*Interviewee 8*	*Interviewee 9*	*Interviewee 10*
Codes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Ac	Ac	Ac	Ac	Ad	Ad	Ad	Ac/Ad	Com	Com
Comments	2002 started the adventure – still involved 2003 implemented first program Got involved in CHESP pilot program. Got a grant from CHESP in 2003 – started various programs	Through background in the field and in response to the White Paper and the Perrold report Involved in extensive community interaction before this directive Researched institutions in SA Excluded at first Secondarily included Huge USA influence	As an academic, a student and a director appointed by the DVC Not a job – belief in the philosophy	Through academic work and being involved in the pilot in SA. Also from a personal philosophy. Through being part of the institutional response to the white paper and institutional and national directives	Through a position in the HEI in response to the directive from the CHE	Through NGO work and further studies and the HEI creating the CE structure in response to the CE Audit requirements but also as a result of the engagement philosophy of the HEI and the V C	Through NGO work and further studies	Through the previous activism and HEI work as a senior academic and then through a position as director of CE at HEI	Through the volunteer program at the HEI and the CE office	Personal response to the needs in the community and being involved from the start of the pilots – National Forums
Conclusion	There are various ways that the interviewees have entered into SL. Through academic involvement, personal philosophy, community needs, positions and responses to the White Paper, CHE, previous work involvement									

Table 3 Sample of the discovery interview process

The responses of the participants were recorded. It is anticipated that the way in which the participants have reflected on the questions enabled the researcher and the participants to explore the vast terrain that has already been covered in this field in South Africa.

In-depth literature review

The investigator used the documentation available as a basis to validate the reliability of the interview results. There are several relevant documents available from the CHE, HEIs and CHESP. Many of these policy documents, papers, articles and audit reports have been reviewed. The reviewed documents include those available from the CHE, namely *South African Higher Education in the First Decade of Democracy, the Good Practice Guide and Self-Evaluation Instruments for Management of the Quality of Service-Learning* (2006), the research papers produced in 2010 and the document entitled Community Engagement in South African Higher Education. The CHE has also made available the institutional audit reports for the period 2004 to 2009 (http://www.che.co.za). The White Paper 3 that was produced by the DoE in 1997 has also been consulted. In addition, policy documents of various HEIs on community engagement have also been studied. The proceedings of the CHE-HEQC/JET-CHESP Conference on Community Engagement in Higher Education, which took place from 3 to 5 September 2006, were also found to be a useful resource.

Observer / incidental information

The final area that was used to determine validity and reliability was the observer/incidental information that has been gathered through observation of the development of service learning and community engagement in higher education. Information was gleaned from participation in three institutional audits; national conferences; service learning and community engagement forums; and interaction with people on campuses in the United States of America and Australia who have a specific interest in service learning and community engagement. There are also five different working groups that are currently discussing service learning and community engagement in South Africa that the researcher has attended. The investigator has participated in

the development of service learning and community engagement in six different HEIs in South Africa and three HEIs internationally over the last nine years. This information has been used throughout the process to determine validity

Sample size

There were ten participants who are all actively involved in community engagement and service learning who made themselves available to participate in the research. Eight other people were asked but they were not available. Due to the following reasons: current workload, study leave, change of direction, leaving higher education and a couple never responded to the invitation, . As already stated, the sample will be a purposefully selected one. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) point out that with this type of sampling, researchers handpick the cases to be included in the sample in terms of their typicality. There has been only a small group of champions of service learning who pioneered the work and only some of those individuals who were involved in the initial phases are still involved at this juncture.

The researcher attempted to interview people from various spectrums in community engagement. Using an appreciative inquiry approach, the interviewer typically interviews those persons who have had a strong impact on service learning and community engagement as it is they who could offer the researcher unique viewpoints and experiences on many levels in the field of service learning and community engagement (Cooperrider et al, 2005). There was some difficulty in executing the interviews as the exercise required visits to various venues across the country and many of the participants were not readily available for interviews due to being involved in educational activities. The participants were also selected from HEIs and community partners in different provinces in South Africa. This meant that interviews had to be schedule in conjunction with other conferences or forums. This made availability difficult for some of the participants. Consequently, it was beneficial to have a small sample.

Validity and Reliability

The validity and reliability of the in-depth interviews was triangulated through the literature and document review process and observer / incidental information gathered and any discrepancies were investigated.

Ethical Considerations

The participants were given a document that outlines: 1. the aims of the research, 2. the research approach and data collection and analysis, 3. what participation involves and 4. how the data will be used and presented. The document stated that the participants have the right to withdraw at any stage in the research process. Participants had to sign consent forms before the research could commence. The participants were given a copy of the interview schedule beforehand so as to more thoroughly prepare their answers. In working with the data collected, each participant was given a code and the data was thereafter associated with the code and not with participants' names.

In addition some of the data was used in a general or summative way with no attribution to individuals. Care was taken to ensure that the identity of each participant was not revealed and cannot be identified by a reader of the final report. Participants were given the option, if they wished, of examining the analysis of the data prior to its final submission, and may ask for comments to be added to the report.

All ethical procedures as required by the ethics committee of the University of the Witwatersrand were adhered to.

Outline of the research design.

Research Questions	Source of Information	Sampling Method / Size	Data Gathering Method
1. What role did CHESP play in the establishment of service learning and community engagement in South Africa? 2. How, and to what extent, has service learning been embedded in the community engagement; teaching and learning; and research cultures in HEIs in South Africa? 3. What are the key factors or structures that should be instituted or are already in place for the ongoing support of service learning and community engagement in South Africa?	Academics Administrators Community Partners	Small scale. Ten champions in the service learning and community engagement field	Documented interviews: each interview to be transcribed into a table (see appendix 2)
	Literature review	CHE/HEQC Audits 2004-9 CHE documentation CHE/ CHESP Conference 2006 Journals and articles	16 Audits to be researched Good practice guides; self - valuation and management of service learning and community engagement documentation; national policy and criteria; and conference proceedings Literature review
	Observer/ incidental information	Involvement nationally and internationally in service learning and community engagement for 9 years	CHE audits, SAHECEF board, positions in HEIs in service learning and community engagement

Table 4 Research Design

Chapter 4: Research results

Introduction

The initial phase of the research was focused on the pre-CHESP era as well as on the implementation of the CHESP process. The intention of the first question was to enable the participants to reflect upon their involvement in service learning and community engagement during the period from 2000 to the present. The research aim was to determine what had been the main influences on the participants during their journey in the above specified period. The reflection was necessary in order to enable them to direct themselves at the future. In this regard, Cooperrider et al (2005:27) says that "what we find becomes the data and the story out of which we dialogue and envision the future." It was also important to explore what resources were available to the participants and to the institutions or organizations that they represented; how they developed their personal vision for service learning and community engagement; and what was the institutional mandate that they had received. The ten participants were separated into three distinct categories - namely academic, administrator and community partner. Their responses were recorded.

Outline of the phases of the investigation

In the "discovery phase", it became clear that all ten participants have a rich and diverse background in service learning and community engagement. The participants engaged in "the open sharing of discoveries and possibilities" (Cooperrider et al, 2005:6). The sharing was facilitated by the open-ended discussions that the researcher undertook with the participants. This approach also enabled the participants to reflect upon the reasons for their involvement in service learning and community engagement.

In the “dream phase”, the attention was directed at the dream that the participants have for service learning and community engagement. The overarching question to be answered was “If resources were not an issue, what would your dreams be for implementing service learning?” The phase commenced by considering how the stories that the participants told and the resources that they were given have influenced their dream and vision for the future, i.e. how the past has dictated the direction of the future. According to Cooperrider et al (2005:39), the dream phase is both practical and generative. It is practical in the sense that it is grounded in the history of service learning and community engagement and it is generative in that it seeks to expand the vision that the participants have for service learning and community engagement without having any of the constraints and restrictions laid on them from their past experiences.

The “design phase” draws on the context of what has been discovered and what has been dreamt about. There is also the possibility of building on the foundation that has previously been created. When there are faults in the foundation, they should be strengthened, undergirded and supported. This phase enables the participants to discuss what could potentially be built on that which has worked in the past. This phase, according to Cooperidder et al (2005:40), involves the collective construction of the future of service learning and community engagement in terms of “provocative propositions based on a chosen social architecture.”

The last phase of the interviews involved the “destiny phase”, which is also known as the “do phase.” This is the action phase. The destiny phase always moves towards the ideal, but it simultaneously recognizes that the participants will not necessarily achieve the ideal or perfection. However, the participants can, by again starting at the beginning, begin to discover what they already have. It is acknowledged that there are tremendous challenges in the field of service learning and community engagement in HEIs but the discussion could lead the participants to nurture “a collective sense of purpose” (Cooperidder et al, 2005:41).

The discovery phase – “What do you have in your hands”?

The discovery phase is one of adventure and excitement. The response to the new role that was assigned to one of the participants demonstrates these characteristics. He was appointed as a

senior academic on the grounds of his previous activism and his work in an HEI. This background provided the platform for his appointment to the position of director of community engagement at an HEI where he could utilize his experience and training in a new and growing field. Another interviewee described himself as an academic, a student and a director of community engagement. Although he was appointed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, he was told that his new position should not be considered to be merely a job, but that it is underpinned by a 'belief in the philosophy of community engagement and service learning."

One participant had extensive involvement in community interaction before the CHESP programme commenced. He had participated in research being undertaken in a variety of institutions in South Africa. In one of the HEIs in which he had worked, he was involved in NGO work. Some of the research studies that he conducted provided the framework that assisted the HEI to create the community engagement structure that was needed to respond to the CHE audit requirements. It should be noted that the structure was not created primarily in response to external CHE imperatives but resulted from the engagement philosophy of the HEI concerned, which had the support of the Vice-Chancellor.

The community members who participated in the interviews became involved in the NGO sector in which they had worked and then embarked on further studies within the field of community engagement. Their entry into working with HEIs commenced with their engagement in volunteer programmes and by being part of the initial service learning programmes. They formed relationships with student volunteers and community engagement offices. Through their involvement with national forums and pilot programmes, they were enabled to link their personal philosophies regarding community service and regarding higher education. The participants had all been grappling with the question of how they should approach community needs and student learning. All the participants considered their journey of being involved in service learning to have been one of choice and passion. Their description of it as being "starting an adventure" was a common theme in the interviews. Their belief in the philosophy of service learning and community engagement as "not being a job, but a passion" illustrates the context of how some of the participants described their involvement in this field.

The participants who are academics indicated that they are excited about the pedagogical opportunities that this form of learning creates. By participating in national initiatives and cooperating with international peers, they gained experience. Opportunities opened up for the HEIs and the role players involved, namely the academics, students and community partners. One academic said that he had become involved because the HEI he had worked at created "an opportunity to write and develop service learning capacity building programmes." It was through the establishment of a community engagement office with service learning as its core focus that many of these developments were supported and that promoted the implementation of service learning.

One academic participant stated that he felt very strongly that there had to be a key focus on the entire spectrum of community engagement. He stated that service learning is "only one component of community engagement." He advocated that there should be many more conferences and capacity building programmes that have an all-embracing aim. This ideal, he commented, could be achieved through "research and engagement with other HEIs and community partners."

An academic participant, whose involvement in service learning and community engagement stemmed from a personal philosophy and interest, progressed to having extensive interaction worldwide with Campus Compact, USA-based programmes and international experts. His interaction took place through collaboration on the national and international level. His participation in conferences and working groups, research and presentations on the national and international platforms led to his greater understanding and commitment to service learning and community engagement.

One of the champions of service learning and community engagement in South Africa in the recent past stated that he had not participated in many of the previous developments. However, he became involved through cooperating in studies with colleagues and capacity building programmes. His real interest had emanated from his involvement from a corporate social investment (CSI) perspective. This involvement had developed through his previous exposure to

international NGOs and development forums. His experience has been used to develop an office for an HEI that has a corporate approach and is funded by the CSI.

One participant became involved in community engagement and service learning through previous HEI experience. He started several service learning programmes in a private HEI. The learning programmes were also linked with experiential learning. In his position as Director of Community Engagement, he focused on the development of volunteer programmes. His previous NGO work helped him to develop an understanding of how HEIs should become involved in communities.

The participants were unanimous in their view that the CHESP initiative and the funding that was made available for the development of service learning in South Africa has played an important role in higher education. They view the role that CHESP fulfilled from two very distinctive perspectives, namely that of the group that participated in the CHESP initiative and that of the group that did not participate. It is unclear what process was used to select the participating universities. There is an indication that the HEIs that were not included, view the selection process as neither fair nor transparent. It has emerged that the support given to the participating HEIs placed them at a very advantageous position in respect of the development of service learning and community engagement on their campuses. The participants are all agreed that CHESP funding instigated the development of service learning in South Africa. This funding and support assisted in providing them with exposure to the theories and pedagogies of service learning that were initially imported from the USA. However, this knowledge has been changed and has developed into indigenous knowledge. The representatives of the selected HEIs attended workshops which were of cardinal importance. The insights obtained from the workshops led to the introduction of capacity building programmes. Support for the programmes came from visiting academics from the USA who provided guidance and materials. One of the key resources for these developments was the funds that CHESP provided.

Academics, researchers, community partners and administrators received funding for the establishment of service learning and community engagement programmes. These funds provided a platform for engagement in and discussions on the concepts from which an

indigenous body of knowledge began to emerge. In the opinion of the participants, the CHESP programme had enabled the preparation of the ground for future developments. A new language and pedagogy entered the South African HEI educational landscape.

At this stage, the participants began to gain consensus that the emphasis in South Africa on the implementation of service learning had evolved by incorporating the new knowledge into previous learning and by developing a uniquely South African model. This progression was achieved through collaborative research and partnerships among the South African HEIs who are now involved with the South African Higher Education Community Engagement Forum (SAHECEF). These HEIs have become involved in the development of their own programmes and material. This process can also be considered to have been a response to several uniquely South African logistical challenges such as transport, risk management and planning issues.

Four of the participants who have administrative responsibilities stated that they had faced a common challenge in respect of encouraging academic and professional staff to become involved in the programmes. It is interesting to note that some of the participants say that several of the original academics who had been beneficiaries of the capacity building and development initiatives are no longer involved. This fact could have given rise to a dearth of academic leadership in the service learning and community engagement in many institutions.

In four of the ten institutions involved in the investigation, service learning and community engagement are together positioned as a mainstream academic activity. The participants concerned indicated that service learning is fully part of the institutional framework of the institution. In these institutions, there is practical support from senior management and general consensus that service learning and community engagement are part of the core business of the HEI. However, this situation does not translate into service learning being fully supported by all academics and management members. The support that is provided by the top managers does not necessarily translate into substantial grassroots activity.

It appeared that only one HEI considers service learning and community engagement to be a midstream activity. Although progress has been made in this institution on all fronts, there is

still a long way to go before the institution will regard service learning and community engagement to be a mainstream activity. In the case of five of the HEIs, service learning and community engagement are still considered to be fringe activities. The fringe activities are considered to be supported by a radical element that is passionate about the potential of teaching and learning, research, and community engagement within these HEIs. The participants said that, although progress is being made in respect to changing the perception that service learning is a fringe activity, real change will only occur when service learning gets support in terms of funding, promotion and recognition in higher education. Only then will it be perceived to be a mid stream or mainstream activity.

The participants from the community partnership organizations indicated that, from their perspective, they would like to see service learning and community engagement to be considered to be a mainstream activity and nothing less. They are taking the partnership seriously and have an expectation that the HEIs will do the same. In respect of all of the representatives of HEIs that participated in this investigation, it was reported that research departments, offices or units have been established to manage community engagement. The structures and names of the units vary but they are all similar in the aim that they pursue. They are responsible for volunteers, service learning programmes, partnerships, community-based research and, in some instances, for internships. It is through these offices that a large group of students have volunteered and have created a platform for community transformation. In one particular HEI, there are 5000 students on the volunteer database.

All of the participants indicated that they had benefitted from being involved in service learning and community engagement. The factors that they noted as being beneficial included that they have experienced opportunities that would not normally have been available to them: they have had the opportunity to travel, they have been able to interact with colleagues on a worldwide basis, and they have been exposed to leading service learning practitioners who visited South Africa and their campuses. One participant indicated that their participation had exposed them to a “philosophy/pedagogy that is worthwhile implementing.” One of the academics, who were interviewed, voiced the opinion that service learning provides the best preparation for students to engage with the difficult issues with which our nation is faced. The participants in the

research also expressed the conviction that they have a sense of pioneering something in South Africa higher education.

In the area of partnership development, one respondent stated that “there are opportunities for reciprocal partnerships, which in turn will lead to mutual learning opportunities.” Some academic participants had considered the benefits of mutual learning opportunities and they have been given the opportunity to make recommendations on the way forward for their institutions regarding teaching, learning and research in community engagement. Community engagement provides the opportunity to move community-based research into the forefront of research in the HEIs. A respondent added that service learning and research forms part of the entire way forward for them in community engagement. The research would identify possibilities for service learning programmes to be presented in a community. These perspectives are in line with the views of Odora-Hoppers (2011:8) who states that “community engagement should begin to open channels through which people can discover themselves….from which to put new content, meaning and strategy to whatever developmental visions” they may have. Community engagement would occur as part of, but not exclusively in, volunteering, internships, outreach programmes and putting practical action steps into operation for effective engagement.

The majority of the participants were of the opinion that, generally, the programmes are informed by community needs. Situational analysis or needs assessment has been done by the members of staff in the community engagement units. A practical example of this alignment is the case of one HEI in which research has been conducted into early childhood needs in the community. For the purpose, 28 centers were investigated and the HEI’s response to the investigation has been to negotiate with all the stakeholders on the basis of the outcome of the research. One participant stated that it is clear that “the communities’ needs have determined what is done.” Databases of community partners and community engagement programmes have been established in eight of the HEIs that were represented by the participants who were interviewed. However, they could not vouch for the accuracy of the databases. The larger the campus, the greater the uncertainty about the accuracy of the database.

In the initial phase of the introduction of service learning, CHESP, using the Ford Foundation grant, provided all the funding. The HEIs were expected to provide the institutional support and commitment in the form of establishing structures and processes to enable service learning and community engagement to be established on the campuses. The involvement of the HEIs included policy development and the establishment of new units and courses. Seed funding was provided to interested academics, which incentivized them to become involved in service learning and community engagement. Students also received funding and logistical support for the implementation of some of the projects. Two of the participants in the investigation reported that the promised support never materialised as the financial, technical and human resources that were supposed to have been made available by the HEI were never provided. Consequently, there has been a lack of consistency in the HEIs provision of resources.

Some of the participants had been involved in the CHESP programme and some had been excluded. Six of the participants were of the opinion that the CHESP resources that had been available played a pivotal role in embedding service learning in their HEIs. Unfortunately, the resources that had been provided have not created a sustainable process for the implementation of service learning. There are many costs that are of a recurring nature and therefore require ongoing funding. The grants received by the HEI were based on the process used to design programmes. On occasion, these funds were accessed with difficulty and sometimes it was not possible to access the funds at all. Some members of staff had great difficulty in meeting the stated criteria. Some of the controls that were applied, were considered to be necessary while in certain cases they were considered to be obstructive. Regardless of the difficulties that the participants had faced, the majority opinion was that this source of funding had enabled service learning and community engagement to make inroads in HEIs in South Africa. Although there were HEIs that had never received funding, they also benefitted from the resources that the CHESP programme brought to South Africa. The funding had supported the sourcing of international expertise, programme development, capacity building, conferences and the development of resource material. The commendable approach that many HEIs have of sharing and disseminating information and resources has enabled all interested parties to benefit. As a consequence, the resources that were implemented had a far wider impact than originally expected. The HEIs that were not part of the funding cycle had also benifitted from the

resources created during this period. The HEIs that did not receive funding had to attempt to create other streams of revenue. The other sources of funding that the HEIs accessed was that of the National Research Foundation (NRF) and corporate social investment (CSI) funds.

The dream phase: "If resources were not an issue, what would your dreams be for the implementation of community engagement and service learning?"

All of the participants involved in the investigation were in agreement that an organization such as CHESP was essential for the continued growth, success and sustainability of service learning and community engagement. Such an organization would be the entity in which resources, skills, expertise and experience were transferred and which would also provide a central information point. Two years after the termination of the CHESP programme SAHECEF (see appendix D) was established. Only one of the participants in the investigation was not aware of SAHECEF and they were all enthusiastic about being part of it. The establishment of SAHECEF has been relatively organic in that it has been initiated by champions in the field of service learning and community engagement. It has not been imposed by government, the CHE or any other structure.

One participant indicated that the most ideal environment in which service learning could flourish would be one in which there is "support from senior management through to grassroots involvement." Their desire is that there should be local HEI support as well as regional support. They consider service learning to be part of community engagement and envisage that it would flourish if there were committed staff as well as community and student involvement. The implementation of the programmes would be informed by research, supported by management and resourced by funding. The partnerships established through service learning and community engagement would then enable the integration of communities and HEIs to occur in terms of learning from one another.

The participants were requested to state what key resources would be needed for service learning to flourish. The resources, other than funding, which all participants identified as a need, are:

- People: leaders, management staff, academic staff and committed students.
- Institutional: incentives, community mapping, funding, time allocation and planning.
- Academic: capacity building; community profiling; comprehension of service learning and community engagement; and research.
- Partnerships: liaison, risk management and reciprocal relationships.
- Research: A long-term investigation into the impact of service learning. Such an investigation would require time. Evaluation of life changes; it should not only involve skills, but also life issues; community-based research; research with community participation; community mapping of South African practices and the conceptualization of service learning; research from the first year on how the community views itself; impact studies on capacity building; research on what is currently being implemented; participatory research, specifically in each school; research into the community voice; interdisciplinary research; and sustainability.

The participants in the investigation who represented the partnership organizations had strong opinions on how the HEIs should engage with communities regarding research and the ethical considerations that should be in operation to protect all the stakeholders. They indicated that in the realm of how service learning and community engagement interact and intersect with the community there is no exact science and the interaction will constantly change as the community changes, unfolds and emerges. One of the HEIs had identified partners who were unemployed and, in only some instances unskilled. An NGO assisted the HEI in gaining access to the community and thereafter the NGO and the community were involved in the design of the programme and the assessment of the students. This type of collaboration enables all parties to work closely together. The HEI is seen to be prepared to learn from the community. All parties consider themselves to be equal partners and are aware of the value that they add to learning. It is important that the community should not be perceived to be a test or research sight. The one representative of administrative personnel in the investigation typified community partners in "a number of programs as co-facilitators."

According to six of the research participants, students' comments on service learning and community engagement vary considerably. The one academic included in the investigation had

found that some of the students do feel coerced into being engaged with the community in ways to which they are not accustomed and with which they are not comfortable. Based on the feedback that they had received, there are always a small number of students who indicate that they are completely negative about the experience. This negativity is in stark contrast to the views of other students who have continued to be involved long after their allocated time of volunteering has expired and who have thereafore built aspects of their careers around community engagement. The one HEI represented in the investigation continually has to turn students away, because it cannot cope with the large number of students who want to get involved.

The participants reported growing respect for students groups, both locally and abroad, who have become dynamically involved. Once students become engaged and involved in the process and barriers and fears have been overcome, they usually provide very positive learning feedback. One community participant who was involved in the investigation stated that the community had benefitted from the thousands of students who had joined the programmes over the years. There have been students who continued to be engaged in the community long after the formal education programme had terminated. In 2010, a student group was formed and called the Association of Community Development Leaders in Tertiary Institutions (ACOLDTI). This student group was formed by students and for students who are engaged in community activities and development with the emphasis on being able to relate to one another.

All the participants in the investigation expressed their commitment to the dream of an integrated community engagement centre in which service learning and other forms of engagement take central position. The common themes that they highlighted are:

1. The establishment of an effective office/directorate of community engagement.
2. A centralised administration that, through institutional support, deals with many of the logistical issues that arise from engaging in communities.
3. The involvement of all faculties or schools and the spreading of the workload among them. This arrangement would lead to a greater understanding of service learning and

community engagement. The element of lifelong learning in this field is unique and should be explored to a greater extent.

4. Community engagement should receive recognition on par with teaching and learning. Involvement should also lead to awards and promotion. Such recognition would only be possible if service learning and community engagement are established at institutions through the formal policies and programmes.
5. Undertaking research that is embedded in and customized for an African context and in so doing develops a broader understanding of service learning and community engagement. This development should include writing and research in collaboration with other HEIs.
6. Continuation of capacity building programmes in all HEIs. The programmes should create knowledge in collaboration with external partners and develop capacity with NGOs. This initiative should be accompanied by an improvement in the liaison between the role players.
7. Continued growth in the influence of SAHECEF, both locally and abroad.
8. SAHECEF should become the voice of HEIs in the CHE and the Department of Education regarding community engagement and service learning.

The design phase – "What is currently being planned or designed for the implementation of community engagement and service learning?"

From the information gathered from the HEIs surveyed as well as from previous research into service learning programmes that were funded by CHESP, it is apparent that all the HEIs have service learning courses that are taught in partnership with their local schools. The local schools include early childhood development centres through to high schools. The students who are involved in the programmes are enrolled for a range of study programmes, including Social Work, Health Sciences, Environmental Science, Education, Science, Engineering, Psychology and Community Development. This community engagement is one in which the HEI forms a partnership with a school and the students of the HEI work in the school where they apply the theory that they have been learning. The schools have included community projects in their curriculum, primarily through the Life Orientation course. However, these projects have

generally not developed to the extent that they have in HEIs. It appears from the interviews that schools are not involved in service learning and community engagement in any meaningful way. Learners are required to do volunteer hours that are signed off by NGOs. It is difficult to monitor this arrangement and it is not linked to a school's academic curriculum. However, one HEI reported that there are a number of schools that run programmes in their area that are based on service learning principles. The schools are private schools that have large resources. These schools have adopted certain principles from the service learning capstone courses that are run in the USA.

The NGO, PBO, CBO and FBO sector is the main partner of all the HEIs in the field of community engagement. The HEIs view themselves as collaborating with these organizations. The experience of the organisations in this sector is that the partnership is not always fully reciprocal. An interesting observation that was made, is that the NGO sector has felt supported at times, yet used not listened to at other times, but still always included to some extent. The representatives of the NGO sector were also of the opinion that their national representative organizations, such as SANGOCO, have not engaged with the HEIs. The lack of engagement has created an opportunity to develop a national platform through which the parties could speak to one another. As community partners are now included in eight of the community engagement offices that participated in the investigation, there are at present more opportunities to build reciprocal partnerships. The opportunity of working with non-profit organizations has opened up a great deal of scope for development and expertise that can be shared across the sectors. The partnerships that one of the HEIs has established, has led to the marketing of non-profit organizations, staff capacity building and members of staff being recruited from the graduates of the HEIs.

Two of the participants indicated that their HEIs have invited the community partner organizations to be part of the senate committee on community engagement. These organizations have now not only been given a voice, but also have a vote. This arrangement has enabled the organizations to be senior role players in the implementation of service learning and community engagement. By being part of the committee on community engagement, they have participated in the design of community engagement programmes, both in terms of volunteering

and of service learning. At one HEI, the number of partners has been limited to achieve greater effectiveness of and depth in the partnerships. Once these partnerships were established, they continued to develop. Some have been given access to resources in a partnership relationship. The resources include office space; facilities; bursary and scholarship opportunities; and the availability of lecture theatres and library resources. The sustainability of these relationships should be examined and research should be undertaken on this sector. Nduna writes that:

> Virtually all South African higher education institutions are interested in developing effective citizenship among students, and to form creative university-community partnerships but since SL is a new innovation in South Africa, it will take time for the planning and implementation to function properly. One way of ensuring that this happens well is to involve all the relevant stakeholders in its planning, implementation and evaluation.
>
> (Nduna, 2007:75)

According to Nduna, there is a paucity of research on the relationship between the HEIs and the community. As Nduna indicates, it will take a concerted effort from all the role players to address this issue satisfactorily. The involvement of all stakeholders at every level of interaction is important, because each aspect will inform the others. Research and scoping will inform the process of teaching and learning, which, in turn, will provide feedback to the planning cycle. The gap between those who have received funding and those who have not has been identified and some of the individuals interviewed have submitted research proposals to address the issue. There is much discussion and development taking place on the issue in the HEIs. At present, all of the HEIs that were investigated have policy and procedure documents available in the public space, even if these documents are in draft form. SAHECEF, through its Governance and Management Working Group, is currently creating a resource on its web page of all the documents that are available. The document of the University of the Free State entitled Community Service Policy proposes a model that involves "a truly robust and responsive university that uses its teaching, research and community service capacities to make a significant contribution to the development of its province and also that of its wider region, South Africa and Africa" (2006:2). This call has been echoed by all the participants in this investigation in their own contexts.

The following is a summary of the responses given in the interviews:

1. There will be continued curriculum development in 2012. All courses at the HEI concerned will include one service learning unit.
2. Service learning capacity building has taken place internally and there are now three HEIs in the region that are partnering for the continued development of effective capacity building.
3. Champions have been identified at the HEI concerned to take part in the capacity building process. The implementation of service learning in courses has commenced and funding is available for implementers. A process of continued mentoring and support has been put into operation.
4. Four HEIs had implemented a service learning capacity building programme in 2009. Subsequently, twelve other HEIs have attended the capacity building programmes. This training has been supported by monthly service learning meetings and a community of practice has been established. The Community Engagement Directorate is supportive of the initiative and has done all that it can to enable the processes to continue.
5. In the introduction of new courses and in the implementation of service learning, expertise has been brought in to create a community of practice.
6. A directorate of community engagement has been established in the one participant's HEI. Its introduction was preceded by a history of activism.
7. There has been a diverse application of service learning in courses. Furthermore, seed funding is now available for research and service learning programmes. A new magazine/newsletter is being produced each semester to communicate relevant information on campus and across the HEIs in South Africa.
8. There are multiple facets of community engagement at the HEI concerned, service learning being only one of them. Primarily community-based research projects are being used to inform the curriculum of the service learning courses that are being presented.
9. Service learning and community engagement have been decentralised to faculties. Each faculty is responsible for developing its courses and the courses are no longer funded centrally. At present the HEI is reconceptualising what community engagement and service learning is. The HEI will continue its reciprocal partnering with other HEIs in this new transitional development phase. The volunteer action that has been a focal point of the

student participation is set to continue, but it will be situated within the student governance structures.

The participants were not aware of anything that was being planned or developed with regards to service learning by the CHE or the HEQC for the near future. It appears that very little has taken place since the transfer of the CHESP programme to the CHE at the Parktonian Hotel in 2008. Since that event there has been only one publication by the CHE on community engagement. That publication adds to the debate of community engagement in higher education, but does not engage with some of the real issues that have emerged in community engagement in South Africa. The participants in this investigation were of the opinion that the CHE should provide more structure and that the CHE was not providing the capacity or any of the other support needed.

There are a variety of institutional funding models for community engagement. All the HEIs reviewed did not consider the models to be effective. None of the HEIs feels that adequate funding is made available, especially in the light of the expectation that the HEIs should redress the issues of the past. In the paper presented by Thomson, Smith, Tolken, Naidoo and Bringle (2008:12), it is stated that, although community engagement and service learning are acknowledged to be part of the mission of some universities, neither the HEQC nor the Department of Education has provided adequate financial means to achieve the goals of these initiatives. A notable distinction between South Africa and other countries, such as the USA, is the pivotal role that the HEIs are expected to play in South Africa in the broader transformation agenda of the state. Although that role has not been adequately supported with government funding, the policy mandate received from the government is clear and according to Castle and Osman (2003) universities should become more responsive to the socioeconomic realities of the country.

In the NRF's Framework Document (2010:1) it is acknowledged that the "generation of knowledge and advancement of science, as well as the development of human capacity, are central activities in the pursuit of its mandate to contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of all people in South Africa." The NRF has therefore established a community engagement programme to support research activities that are aimed at improving understanding of the full spectrum of community

engagement. This programme includes the full suite of activities that such activities imply. It would include research into "negotiating the terrain of knowledge production as a site of multiple processes and relations, interrogating the ways in which tacit knowledge is surfaced in the complex process of community engagement; and assessing the impact for, and changes in communities as a result of newly coded knowledge." This funding is available to rated and unrated researchers, full-time and part-time researchers, co-investors and grant holders and it can be linked to student support. The contextualisation of the research is important and funds can be allocated to field workers, interpreters and other collaborators, which may include NGOs in the field.

Five of the participants in the current investigation concluded that research is one of the ways in which the course of higher education could be influenced and therefore such research should be a key item on the agenda of the HEIs in the future. The NRF is also not the only source of funding that is being utilized by the HEIs. There is an increasing shift towards CSI funding that has a strong research focus. Such research could include case studies, typologies, appreciative inquiry about community engagement and community assessments.

In regard to cooperation between the HEIs, the response of most of the participants is that generally there is some collaboration across the campuses, but it is not widespread. However, they acknowledge the need for collaboration. There have been some examples of local collaboration that are expanded upon in a subsequent section of this report. Unfortunately, until the inception of SAHECEF, the HEIs had indicated that there is often more international than local collaboration between them. Even though collaboration is regarded as essential, it is not always regarded to be practical. There has also been a lack of trust between the HEIs in this area and there have been instances in which academic jealousy has jeopardized collaboration. There have also been some important differences between the approaches of the various HEIs to service learning and community engagement. In one instance, such a difference led to an HEI not attending or participating in any of SAHECEF initiatives.

At present, there are several instances of regional collaborations. Several HEIs have submitted joint applications to the NRF for funding from the Community Engagement Research Funding programme. There are also several collaborative service learning capacity building programmes in

operation. Some HEIs are utilizing the expertise available in South Africa in respect of their formulation of policies and procedures regarding community engagement. Although the CHESP programme did benefit the HEIs as a whole in South Africa, this programme was active in only a few HEIs. However, the participants in this investigation are of the opinion that the national body that has been formed, the SAHECEF, embodies all the relevant principles. As an organization, SAHECEF is committed to "advocating, promoting, supporting, monitoring, and strengthening community engagement at South African Higher Education Institutions, furthering community engagement at higher education institutions in partnership with all stakeholders with a sustainable social and economic impact on South African society and fostering an understanding of Community Engagement as integral to the core business of higher education." (SAHECEF, 2010:1)

The interviews indicated that the participants want an organisation that will embrace their academic requirements and give them a voice in the contexts in which they want to be heard. There is also a need for a platform through which they can lobby their perspectives. For the purposes of transparency, it should be noted that five of the participants were involved in the establishment of SAHECEF.

The following are the objectives that the SAHECEF has established and that have been agreed upon:

- Advocate and champion community engagement in South African higher education with relevant stakeholders.
- Share experiences and best practice in terms of community engagement.
- Explore opportunities for cooperation between South African HEI's in terms of community engagement.
- Encourage the establishment of partnerships between South African HEI's and other national and international stakeholders in terms of community engagement.
- Facilitate the generation and management of knowledge about community engagement in a South African context.
- Facilitate the dissemination of new knowledge.
- Promote community engagement as a vehicle for development and transformation.
- Facilitate the establishment of a national community engagement resource centre.

- Facilitate the organisation of national community engagement conferences and provide platforms for debate about practices, monitoring and evaluation. Promote debate about innovative practices in the field of community engagement in the context of higher education.

(SAHECEF, 2010:1)

In general, the participants were of the opinion that the scope and practice of the SAHECEF should be determined by the practitioners and stakeholders that are involved in service learning and community engagement. Furthermore, the organization should embrace all role players and aspects of community engagement. This is ultimately how its scope and practice was determined. Therefore the "management of the South African Higher Education Community Engagement Forum resides in the Board that is responsible for the overall functioning of the organisation and the development of policy within the accepted practices and regulations of the South African Higher Education sector" (SAHECEF, 2010:1).

The destiny phase: "What direction do you see service learning taking?"

The participants stated that they were not aware of any developments other than that of SAHECEF. The establishment of SAHECEF was acknowledged by all as being one the most positive developments in higher education in South Africa. They expressed the hope that this organization would be able to address the lack of cohesion of service learning and community engagement in South African HEIs. It is clear from SAHECEF perspective that the organization would position itself to work alongside the CHE. It is for this reason that the CHE was invited to the inaugural conference of SAHECEF and Dr Judy Backhouse delivered a keynote address, in which the CHE's support for SAHECEF was stated.

The research question stated above had to be rephrased because it appeared from the interviews that, from the participants' perspective, there has been very little interaction with the CHE/HEQC. The participants have interacted with the various quality assurance offices or directorates but only in the context of audits. The role of the CHE/HEQC has therefore become clear in the past few years, namely it is for audit purposes only. From the perspective of the HEIs, the CHE should be involved but it has not provided the resources, structure or finances for the way forward. The support and development of service learning and community engagement would best be positioned within

SAHECEF. The response from the HEIs is that SAHECEF will provide the best national body to advocate and represent the HEIs with regards to service learning and community engagement, because it encompasses all the role players and can bring leadership for the way ahead.

All of the participants were aware of the next round of audits that are looming and are working at the development of a response that is based on the previous set of recommendations that they had received. The HEIs are concerned about the need to prepare for audits and to develop reports without government funding being made available. The NRF funding that is available to the HEIs is viewed with some scepticism because, in the view of the HEIs, the funding has only been available to certain HEIs in the past and the majority of HEIs have been excluded. This view will be either reinforced or disproved very shortly.

Some HEIs are developing new frameworks that are based on the national criteria but they have also added some of their own quality assurance measures. One of the HEIs is using a balanced scorecard approach and is adapting other corporate measurement tools to assess the effectiveness of its programmes. Yet others have done extensive work on developing database systems that will help them to manage the community engagement process. There is also a new move to develop legal risk frameworks. This risk is a common problem for all the HEIs in South Africa and, in comparison with international standards where insurances and support structures are mandatory, a large gap exists in the South African context. This gap was verified by all the participants. Another area in which there is room for improvement is the inclusion of partner organizations in the development of quality assurance processes.

The CHE, in partnership with the NRF, commenced a project on community engagement in July 2008. Following a workshop on community engagement that was held on 22 August 2008, the CHE commissioned a position paper in order to advance the objectives of community engagement as set out in the 1997 White Paper on Higher Education. A draft of this position paper was submitted to the Minister. The commissioned paper was compiled by Professor Martin Hall, and was presented at a symposium that was held on 19 March 2009. There were 36 participants at the conference, including representatives of universities, HESA, the NRF and the Departments of Education and of Science and Technology. Dr Molapo Qhobela, the Deputy Director-General of Education, represented the Department of Education. Professor Loyisa Nongxa, Ms Judith Favish, Dr Jerome Slamat and Professor Johan Muller formally responded to the commissioned paper. The symposium debated the

concept of community engagement and its implementation in institutions. The papers and responses were published in the CHE's Kagisano series in January 2010. The advice that was derived from these interventions was to be submitted to the Minister of Higher Education and Training. There was much discussion amongst the contributors to the conference. Professor Hall made four recommendations (2010:48):

1. The concept of community engagement as set out in the 1997 White Paper should be revisited.
2. Appropriate incentives should be provided for models of good practice.
3. The HEQC should be requested to review institutional and qualification criteria.
4. The NRF should make funding allocations for research on community engagement.

There was much disagreement by the other contributors and they have duly made their recommendations.

Unfortunately, the Minister has been silent on these issues. In the past two years there has been no article published or statement made that indicates that there has been a change in the approach of the Ministry of Higher Education to community engagement and service learning. The Minister of Higher Education was invited to address the inaugural launch conference of the SAHECEF. It was announced that the keynote address at the launch will be delivered by the Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande. Unfortunately he could not attend. In 2006, the then Minister of Higher Education, Naledi Pandor, "pledged her support for community engagement in higher education and indicated that the Department of Education was ready to consider earmarked funding for community engagement" (Lazarus et al, 2008:80). Thereafter discussions were initiated. However, four years later there are still no funds that have been earmarked for community engagement. The commitment of the government must therefore be questioned.

The participants in this investigation were all asked whether they would do anything differently if they were given the opportunity to start again. Their responses are summarized individually below.

Interviewee 1

"I would not start in such a rush again. I would make the concept of service learning clear to all lecturers and focus on the value of the pedagogy of service learning. I would make service learning prominent as one of the flagships of the HEI. To do all of this, I would ensure that there is senior management support in word and in deed before commencing"

Interviewee 2

"I would first of all ensure that I have institutional support. Thereafter, I would do things the same way. I would focus on the community partners first and then embed service learning in community initiatives. Thereafter I would create sustainability through a centralized directorate with support structures in each discipline. To ensure sustainability in my HEI as well as in others, I would continue to be involved in training trainers in the HEIs and would collaborate regionally and relationally. This training would also extend to the student groups, because I believe in mentoring the scholars who are involved in community initiatives. There must be benefits for everyone involved in service learning and community engagement. In summary, the following are six keys matters that I identify:

1. Institutional and leadership support
2. Ground the work in community initiatives
3. Do capacity building
4. Link service learning and community engagement
5. Develop the structures systematically
6. Customise the programmes for the African context"

Interviewee 3

"I would promote service learning as a philosophy and not as pedagogy. This emphasis would be linked to the overarching concept of community. I see service learning being promoted as a worldview. It should infiltrate all the aspects of the HEI. The HEIs in South Africa should be challenged to do things differently. There should be a new visionary approach to higher education. It is only possible if you get "buy in" from all the stakeholders. The national development will be well served if there is a commitment to SAHECEF."

Interviewee 4

"I would first of all focus on capacity building and then encourage ownership of the process. I would identify champions from the bottom up and the top down."

Interviewee 5

"I am just starting out. Therefore I am enjoying linking with other parties who are involved and collaborating with them. By being a part of SAHECEF, the collaboration has been easier and more productive. A lot of hard work is still needed for SAHECEF to reach its full potential."

Interviewee 6

"I would ensure that the process is Vice-Chancellor-driven in order to gain maximum support. The HEIs response to community engagement and service learning should also be based on research. This base would create the possibility that the initiative is more creative and that it would therefore have a long-term impact. The longevity of the programme could be enhanced by giving the community and the students a voice in the discourse. Involvement in SAHECEF would also be one of the key objectives."

Interviewee 7

"I would ensure that the process is continually supported by the Vice-Chancellor and other members of senior management and the senate. There should be ongoing research and scoping of the terrain. Such monitoring could be achieved by giving the community and the students a voice in the discourse. The members of staff should also be heard. There should be a systematic allocation of time for staff for their involvement. An important strategy would be to attract corporate social investment funding. The corporate world should be seen as a key stakeholder for the HEIs with regards to funding as well as in terms of the expertise that they can offer. SAHECEF will also be a key organization to support and should be part of the process."

Interviewee 8

"A department of community engagement has been established. There is a citizenship focus that includes volunteering and service learning. I would advocate the development of service learning modules that are generic as well as specific to certain disciplines. The management structures in all the schools should be involved in all the various elements of community engagement. It is

vital that community engagement should be credit bearing, which is only possible with the support of the deans. The next stage will be to develop interdisciplinary programmes. SAHECEF should also provide a greater network for collaboration."

Interviewee 9

"There should be continued support of volunteering and it should be developed. There should be a research component that informs practices."

Interviewee 10

"It is important to identify a community voice. There should also be a focus on sustainability. The best way for service learning and community engagement to develop and grow, is to encourage or create interdisciplinary teams that work together at the venue of one partner, thereby involving all of the HEI's expertise. These relationships should be reciprocal. In a collaborative partnership between the HEI, the partner and the community the participants should all ensure that there are concrete development plans and there should be a move towards action plans. Short-term interventions should become long-term solutions. No quick fixes should be allowed as they are detrimental to all parties, but often the community suffers most. It is important that the partner organizations and the community are included in the establishment of SAHECEF."

Conclusion

Through the voices of the participants the following are key aspects: There are no quick fixes. Resources of time and people need to be allocated to the field. There is must ne executive support as well as grassroots buy in. Reciprocal sharing of knowledge needs to take place. There must always be a community voice. Planning needs to be all encompassing. All participants agreed that there must a commitment from all stakeholders to community engagement.

Chapter 5 Discussion of the results

Introduction – Discussion of the audit reports

This chapter will revisit the research questions. Through a discussion of the results of the research, the research questions will provide a framework to draw conclusions from and then make recommendations in chapter six. In order to understand and contextualise what is currently being planned with regards to service learning and community engagement, it is necessary to know what pressures the HEIs experience from the CHE and HEQC as another round of audits is approaching. The previous round of audits, which was undertaken by the CHE from 2004 to 2008, produced the following types of comments regarding service learning and community engagement:

1. The HEQC recommends that ……. engage in an institution-wide debate about the meanings of its notion of community, the nature and purposes of the interactions with different communities, and how these give effect to the institution's objectives of self-renewal and its commitment to redress past injustices in South Africa.

2. The HEQC recommends that …….. give serious consideration to the development of principles, processes and monitoring mechanisms to assess the quality of current and new community interaction activities.

3. The HEQC recommends that the …….. enhance the leadership of and structures related to the quality management of its community engagement activities, thereby continuing with its plan to formalise, co-ordinate, integrate further community engagement into the strategic framework of the institution.

4. The HEQC recommends that …….. give serious attention to all aspects of community engagement, with an initial focus on its place in the overall institutional strategy and its integration with the other two core functions. This should be reflected in an appropriate policy framework and organizational apparatus, the allocation of adequate resources and the regular monitoring of implementation in this area of work.

5. The HEQC recommends that ……. reconceptualise the notion of its community and, in the light of this, develop and implement a community engagement policy which integrates community engagement into the curriculum, and ensures that monitoring and review mechanisms are incorporated into the policy.

6. The HEQC recommends that ……. should develop a conceptual framework to guide the implementation of a vast array of community engagement activities in order to facilitate both the quality assurance of these activities and the appropriate integration of community engagement into the curriculum.

7. The HEQC commends …… on its continued commitment and initiatives to establish community engagement as a credible core function and the significant contribution that it makes to social development through viable partnerships.

8. The HEQC recommends that …….. conduct an institution-wide debate to determine its understanding of community engagement and develop a plan with allocated budget, targets and allocation of responsibilities.

9. The HEQC recommends that ……. consider identifying specific criteria to assess the quality of the different approaches to community engagement used by the University.

10. HEQC recommends that ……. develop and implement a quality management system for the four traditions of community engagement.

11. The panel noted that there are many admirable community engagement initiatives currently in place. However, the panel's observations concur with the institution's analysis that CE is mostly an *ad hoc* activity of a voluntary and philanthropic nature. In this sense, the panel suggests the development of a clearer conceptualisation of community engagement and more systematic integration into programme development. The full quality cycle should also be embedded in community service activity from institutional to project level.

12. The HEQC recommends that …… engage in an institution-wide debate on who constitutes its community for the purposes of engagement, develop a framework, policies and implementation plans by means of which community engagement can be quality managed and integrated into the curriculum, establish an institutional structure to direct its activities, and allocate responsibilities.

13. The HEQC recommends that …….. review its current approach to community engagement in the light of some prevailing conceptual ambiguities and quality related gaps, and work towards the development of an integrated institutional policy framework that allows for the inclusion of social responsiveness through scholarship, SL and community outreach. Such a

framework could provide a more coherent set of parameters for implementation, resourcing and budgeting, and quality monitoring of community.

14. The HEQC recommends that …… develop suitable mechanisms for the quality management of the community engagement core function, which takes into account the differences between CE, SL and voluntarism. This should include the development of a closer interaction between the quality related arrangements and requirements for community engagement and those for the other two core functions.

15. …….. does not have a coherent conceptualisation of community engagement or a policy that informs the quality assurance of these activities. The panel noted with appreciation the inclusion of community engagement in the promotions policy. The panel encourages the institution to finalise its draft policy on community engagement and to ensure that a member of the senior executive be given this responsibility as part of their portfolio. The panel identified a number of interesting community engagement initiatives and projects, and would like to urge the institution to develop this core function providing the appropriate resources, conceptual framework, coordinating structure, and enabling policies so that individual efforts can be made part of an institution level drive in this direction.

16. The HEQC recommends that …… develops an overall strategy, plan and procedures to fully realise the potential of its approach to community engagement.

(CHE, 2004 – 2009)

The CHE has made many recommendations. Most of them revolve around the institution-wide debates concerning the conceptualizing of community engagement, development of quality assurance systems, formalization of policies and procedures, development of structures, formalization of leadership, management of community engagement, the notion of community and partnerships being clarified, and the integration of community engagement into the institutional framework. These are all very necessary changes that need to be made if the third leg of the task of the HEIs is to be further supported and established by the governing structures of higher education. However, once the audit is completed, the support appears to end. From an anecdotal perspective, the author of this report was involved in three audits and in none of them did the panel include any of the

leading role players with regards to service learning and community engagement in South Africa. If the audits are to be developmental and supportive, it lacks the voice that the CHE is supposed to be giving to service learning and community engagement practitioners. If the HEQC were to take service learning and community engagement seriously, matters would have to change. It is possible for the panel to check that all the boxes are ticked, but if its members have no insight into what the HEIs face in regard to the implementation of this third leg of higher education they will not be able to provide informed recommendations for HEIs.

The role of the CHESP in the establishment of service learning and community engagement in South Africa

In South Africa, unlike most other countries, community engagement and service learning in higher education has been legislated and formalized. "It can be argued that the external segment of educational change (top down approach) has dominated since 1997" (Bender, 2007:130). The 1997 White Paper and the Perrold Report (1998) played a large role in positioning service learning in South Africa. The response from the HEIs was to create positions and institute processes to address the legislative imperatives with which they were confronted. National and international forums played a significant role in this phase. The institutional responses to the White Paper and national directives gave rise to a new awareness of what was required in community engagement and service learning.

This White Paper led to the establishment of the CHESP initiative, which has played a significant role in the establishment of service learning and community engagement in South Africa. These developments led to some HEIs becoming involved in the CHESP pilot programme. CHESP made grants available and the HEIs initiated various programmes. It should be noted that not all the HEIs were given access to this funding. For example, four of the institutions represented in this investigation did not have access to the funding, but nevertheless chose to proceed with the implementation of service learning as part of community engagement.

The implementation was not done independently, but was done in conjunction with the criteria and processes that were established by the CHESP initiatives.

The participants and the literature available on the CHESP programme acknowledge that the programme played a highly significant role in the establishment of service learning in South Africa. Service learning and community engagement have been embedded in teaching and learning; and research cultures in the HEIs in South Africa. All of the current initiatives, including those that are not participating in national structures, have their practices and procedures rooted in the work of the CHESP programme. A few individuals became involved in the piloting of service learning in South Africa. However, it was not the first time that the HEIs and academics were engaged in community service. In the course of the interviews, all the participants expressed themselves strongly about the role of the HEIs in the transformation process in South Africa. The significant difference on this occasion was that for the first time service learning and community engagement had become a legislative imperative. According to the participants, the CHE played a catalytic role in propelling the implementation of service learning forward.

In response to the national educational directives, the HEIs began to focus on institutional planning. Many of the institutions focused on researching the subject, since they had very little prior knowledge of service learning and community engagement in South Africa. This action was followed by capacity building programmes, which were offered to participating HEIs. The training programmes developed to the extent that the initiators of the programme began to run capacity building programmes for other members of staff in the HEIs. Thereafter participation followed in national workshops that were funded by the Ford Foundation. The workshops encouraged further research on service learning in the HEIs. These initiatives heralded the starting point of the South African HEIs finding a voice of their own in the field of service learning. Many HEIs are currently implementing service learning as part of their academic programmes. In the field of research there has been both organic growth and development towards conceptualizing the role that the HEIs play in civic society.

Not all of the HEIs that participated in the CHESP programme are positive about the outcomes. There are those that feel that the process was too rigid, particularly in terms of the influence that emanated from the USA. In a sense, the CHESP programme could have been seen as a form of academic colonialism. Another perspective on the CHESP programme was that it had very little lasting influence. The service learning programmes that were operating with CHESP funding all ceased when the funding cycle ended. Today there is very little evidence that there ever was a CHESP programme at one HEI represented in this investigation. The office that was created to manage the process has been restructured and currently has a very limited role in service learning programmes and community engagement. This HEI has therefore questioned the validity of the CHESP programme.

The HEIs that were not included in the CHESP programme were concerned about the reason for their exclusion. However, they no longer have a negative sentiment towards the CHESP programme as they do feel that they have benefitted from it indirectly. The research that had been done, the Guides to Good Practice and the papers that were produced have all assisted the HEIs to develop their own service learning and community engagement programmes. Nevertheless, some participants were of the opinion that they or their HEI have not benefitted from the CHESP programme.

Teaching, learning and research in service learning and community engagement in the HEIs in South Africa

At the commencement of service learning and community engagement, it was evident that the HEIs were not well informed. The involvement of some institutions was merely a response to the 1997 White Paper for the Transformation of Higher Education. The directive of the White Paper nevertheless led to many people becoming involved. Although the process was “Americanised” and not embedded in an African context, the HEIs did become involved. However, a challenging aspect of the initial phase was that those involved were of the opinion that, generally, the guidelines were provided by international experts and that South African expertise was not involved directly enough in the introduction of these guidelines. Notwithstanding this objection, the initial phase was described as an exciting one. The positive outcome has been that this

resource of knowledge does exist and should be utilised in some way. In the beginning, institutional leaders were generally not informed or involved but now they are far more engaged and they participate or are represented at most strategic national meetings. However, according to all the academics interviewed, this involvement does not translate into the offering of many service learning courses at the undergraduate level.

Even though the participants in this investigation acknowledge that the intervention of the government to address imbalances through CHE policy and the 1997 White Paper on Higher Education fulfilled the role of a catalyst, all the participants from the HEIs believe that they have always been engaged with communities and that community engagement has always been a vital part of higher education. The HEIs that have always been involved in service learning, believe that it has been formalised through the implementation of the audit criteria. It is now formally part of CHE policy. On a national level, the CHE audits have indicated clear processes that should be followed, but, according to the participants in this investigation, the CHE has not provided any form of support or funding.

The attention and status that service learning and community engagement have gained on campuses have been achieved through champions who believe in the process. These champions have been involved in policy development and lobbying from the early stages. The HEIs that have been involved in these developments have had the privilege of being pioneers and trendsetters in South Africa. Communities and the HEIs have formed new partnerships. From an academic perspective, service learning, as a form of experiential learning, has enabled the HEIs to link with communities in a practical and pedagogical way. Research papers have been presented at conferences, both nationally and abroad, which have given the HEIs prominence in certain academic circles. This status has enabled the HEIs to become a significant role player in this field.

Teaching and learning are radically different in a service learning context as service learning is based on community needs and practical experience. “We have to take Community Engagement first OUT of the university and place it where knowledge is produced – where modernity axed some people out the knowledge production system.” (Hoppers, 2011:80) This type of learning is

embedded in communities of practice. Once these communities of practice are established, learning is implemented and assessed is in the field. Classrooms that are established in the field can be far more practical and, for the champions of service learning and community engagement, they are deemed to be more relevant and meaningful for the students. The community has become more involved in the HEIs and vice versa. “We have to make universities aware of lifelong learning which takes on what people know: knowledge rich but economically poor” (Odora-Hoppers, 2011:8). Boundaries should be broken down and not built up. Research can focus on the community and several research projects have been undertaken with the involvement of the community. The community has also participated in a several programmes as co-facilitators and co-researcher. However, there still appears to be a dearth of the community’s voice in the area of research.

The HEIs have been able to attract funding for new programmes from corporate social investment sources and have been able to execute some significant research projects. Lately, the National Research Foundation (NRF) has also provided funding. An example of the latter funding is the Food Securities Project. Food security was considered to be of national importance and funds have been made available to all three sectors of the HEI, i.e. teaching and learning, research, and community engagement. Service learning has influenced community engagement by adding an experiential learning component to what was initially an outreach project. It has made the process accessible, which adds an element of quality assurance and, in turn, gives it academic credibility. For service learning to be relevant, research is required to identify the real needs within the community.

HEIs have formed strategic partnerships with communities. Even before the publication of the 1997 White Paper there had been a strong focus on these partnerships. Unfortunately, funding cycles have had an influence on the way in which the parties collaborate. There are some community role players that have been engaged with the development of community engagement frameworks within the HEIs. Other HEIs have not had the financial resources to continue to engage the community. Many faculties and schools within the HEIs have incorporated components of community engagement and service learning to a greater or lesser extent. There are also research projects in the HEIs that have linked in a more significant way

with NGOs through partnerships and created a three way relationship between the HEI, NGO and community, thereby building the concept of mutuality and reciprocity.

Partnerships with communities have been the foundation for the building of learning programmes. The nature of the partnerships has also changed over the years. There are a few community leaders who have found their voice in these developments. These community leaders have attracted attention at the national level and on various forums. They have had an influential role in the development of service learning and community engagement. The individuals that have been privileged to be part of the programme state clearly that the inputs of these leaders should be given greater attention. It is the only way in which there will be genuine reciprocal partnerships in service learning and community engagement or any other form of meaningful engagement.

Key factors or structures that should be introduced or are already in operation for the ongoing support of community engagement and service learning in South Africa

It is in this respect that challenges start to emerge for the HEIs. The first key resource that is required is people and the second is funding. The availability of both these resources was explored in the investigation. In respect of all the HEIs on which data was gathered, exact figures could not be obtained of the number of staff or finances that are allocated. The dearth of exact figures is due to the fact that several variables come into play: shared space, office resources and multi-tasking of many members of staff. What is apparent is that there are deficits in all the HEIs in this realm. In all the HEIs that participated in this investigation, a small number of members of staff are engaged in each community engagement office or directorate. Typically there are between two and four members of staff who work in the community engagement area. There are no large departments with sufficient staff for service learning and community engagement in any of the HEIs in South Africa. The time allocated for other academic and professional staff for involvement in community engagement is represented in the workload models although it appears that it is seldom taken seriously in performance reviews. Some HEIs provide for capacity building, yet it does not appear that it has resulted in sustainable involvement in community engagement. Only one HEI indicated that funding was available, but the lack

availability of staff was indeed an issue. In another HEI, an office was established recently and the vision of the Vice-Chancellor is to have 10 000 students involved. This development is to be supported by an office run by members of staff.

One HEI has created several formal structures as vehicles for the quality assurance of community engagement. These structures are also used to audit the flow of resources, thereby enabling significant development in the formation of partnerships between HEIs, communities and businesses. The goal of this particular HEI is to produce tangible, long-term evidence of the partnership in terms of measurable interventions. The HEI has introduced several measurement tools such as a "balanced scorecard" as well as other corporate social investment indicators. This HEI has generously made all its resources and tools available to other interested HEIs.

One of the important developments in HEIs has been the initiative to establish the SAHECEF, which is discussed more extensively in the next chapter. All the participants as well as all the HEIs, with one exception, have embraced the establishment of the SAHECEF. The timing of and the thorough preparation for the launching of the SAHECEF are considered to be the key factors in the support that it has enjoyed from so many role players. This organization is planning regional capacity building activities and regional engagement and research collaboration. A national conference is planned for November 2011. From a student's perspective, an important development has been the establishment of The Association of Community Development Leaders in Tertiary Institutions (ACODLTI). The vision of the Association is to promote community development programmes and encourage the HEIs to take a greater interest in these programmes. Its mission is to build sound working relations with all of its stakeholders in order to provide support throughout the implementation of community engagement. It will, through community outreach initiatives, support and develop national projects that ensure community and social development. It also proposes to "initiate higher education structures for community engagement and to develop student structures that are aimed at achieving this goal" (ACODLTI, 2010:4).

Higher Education South Africa (HESA) has also been involved in the development of service learning and community engagement in the HEIs. This organisation states in its Strategic

Framework 2010 / 2020 that “universities will have to take a far more strategic approach towards their community service priorities” (2010:5). Community engagement should be based on the various developmental goals set by the government and should also take into account the effect of the worldwide financial crisis. HESA’s response to the funding issue is to encourage the HEIs to create a third stream of funding. This would be from research, CSI funding, endowments, grants, for mission-related or engagement opportunities. The HEIs in South Africa have established many international collaborative projects. These projects include presentations made by South African academics and researchers to international audiences in the field of service learning and community engagement. Many of the HEIs in South Africa are a member of the Taillorres Network, which draws on service learning and community engagement practice from a global perspective. An increasing number of partnerships are being formed with members of the Australian Universities Community Engagement Association and the Australian Co-operative Education Network. All of the representatives of the HEIs who participated in the interviews have pursued international collaboration and have been involved in reciprocal partnerships at varying levels. What is clear from the investigation is that the South African HEIs are significant international role players in the field of service learning and community engagement.

The allocation of resources is the ‘Achilles heel’ of service learning and community engagement in the HEIs in South Africa. There is great controversy in this area, particularly with regards to finance. When the funds that are made available for teaching, learning and research are compared to those made available for community engagement, a large disparity becomes apparent. In some instances, community engagement receives an allocation of less than 1% of the overall budget. In some HEIs, an allocation of 5% of the HEI funding for community engagement, but this has not happened. There have also been budget cuts in the wake of the current financial crisis and in certain HEIs these cuts have resulted in the budget for community engagement being trimmed first. One of the participants was particularly discouraged because a significant proportion of the community engagement funding has been diverted elsewhere. At another HEI, most of the institutional resources are still available, but some previous champions of community engagement, although still at the HEI, are no longer involved due to a lack of support from the schools in which they participated. There is often no allocation of time and no academic recognition for what they do.

Regardless of these challenges, there are some exceptional developments taking place. In some regions, the HEIs are seeking to partner with one another and to share as much of their resources as possible. As a result of this goodwill, positive collaboration is taking place. Technology is facilitating such cooperation on a national basis. Because the geographical positioning of many HEIs is a barrier to collaboration, attempts are being made to create collaborative opportunities through the presentation of seminars and e-resources.

Cooperation is the one area in respect of which there was a unanimously positive response about what had been in the past and could be in the future. The University of Johannesburg Conference and the CHE Bantry Bay Cape Town Conference were both considered to be seminal in service learning taking root and encouraging the HEIs to pursue the establishment of service learning and community engagement on their campuses. Some of the HEIs presented papers on service learning for the first time at these conferences and it was also the first time that so many service learning practitioners were provided with a national platform. According to Bender (2007) the Bantry Bay conference was a "milestone in the community engagement movement in South Africa."

The next national gathering that included all the HEIs, CHE and other stakeholders was at the launching of SAHECEF in November 2009. This occasion was also considered by all the participants to be a very positive step. As a result of the launch and the subsequent SAHECEF board meetings, SAHECEF established five working groups: teaching and learning, partnerships, governance and management, volunteerism, and research. These groups have met in order to produce strategies for the way forward. Their proposals will be presented at an international conference that will be hosted by SAHECEF in November 2011 at the University of Fort Hare.

The general institutional commitment to service learning and community engagement has continued to develop. There is a desire to witness how service learning benefits from innovative teaching and learning practices and research in higher education. Once service learning is embedded in the culture of teaching, learning and research and is not merely a response to the demands of the CHE audit, substantial headway would have been made in incorporating service

learning as part of the mainstream focus of higher education. It is within this framework that the pedagogy of service learning will continue to be developed and discussed in communities of practice and where it will be positioned to a greater extent in mainstream education throughout South Africa and beyond.

The participants in the investigation and all the HEIs involved in the SAHECEF agree that collaboration will bring about a focus on institutional capacity building. This focus will result in policies, procedures and practices being established or reviewed in all the participating HEIs, and, in turn, the expertise that exists on some campuses will promote the sharing of some of the best practice models for service learning and community engagement in the HEIs. This expectation has led to a greater recognition of service learning by the broader academic community and, although this recognition has only commenced, there is great scope for development in this area.

All the HEIs have their own quality assurance cycles or processes in operation. Most of these cycles have been developed in line with the CHESP programme and the criteria that the HEQC has determined. According to Hatcher and Erasmus (2008), a unique situation exists in South Africa in that there has been a reliance "on a strong state model of control for Higher Education." The audit criteria of the CHE contain all the details for programme accreditation, specifically regarding service learning and community engagement. The publication entitled *A Guide to Good Practice for Managing the Quality of Service Learning* (CHE, 2006) provides a description of all the indicators that the HEIs require.

Conclusion

The participants in the investigation have provided a great deal of information on the way forward for community engagement and service learning in the HEIs in South Africa. There are champions and a large number of academic and community role players in our nation who have a vision and are committed to community engagement and service learning as one of the ways to redress the inequalities of the past. This situation is an interesting phenomenon because contrary to other countries where service learning and community engagement have been allowed to

evolve through decentralized organic structures, in South Africa it was mandated through government structures. What has then emerged is that this mandate has been embraced and the development of service learning and community engagement in the HEIs appears to be far more prominent from a grassroots developmental perspective than one that is driven by the CHE. This differential is notable in that the developments go far beyond what would be expected with so little clear and tangible support being received from the Ministry of Higher Education.

In the final analysis, the board of SAHECEF, which comprises of 23 HEIs, has committed itself to continued support for community engagement and service learning programmes and directorates in South Africa, with or without funding. Each of the research participants have also committed themselves to continue the work that they have started. The cycle of implementation that has started in the HEIs will continue to move forward. There are many different approaches and strategies for implementation. These approaches are expressed in policy documents; academic and research papers; and student activism. In the subsequent recommendations, attention will be given to the ways in which service learning and community engagement in higher education in South Africa could continue to be implemented and sustained.

Chapter 6: Recommendations and Conclusions

Strengthening of partnerships and resourcing of community engagement and service learning in the HEIs

The key resource that was identified in this investigation is the relationship capital existing between the HEIs and the NGO sector. For current purposes, the HEIs include all the role players, senior management, academics, professional staff and students in these partnerships. Although institutional support exists, challenges still arise in respect of the financing. The academics experience capacity and time constraints, but many are willing to participate nonetheless. In many HEIs, student committees have assumed the responsibility for fund-raising. However, there was general agreement among the participants that the largest resource is the students themselves. They have the enthusiasm, energy and potential that is sometimes lacking with the other role players.

The role of CHESP has been acknowledged, but it is clear that the new structure that has been formed, SAHECEF, needs to be the organization in higher education that will pave the way with new strategies and frameworks. Its role will be to "draw up policy, guidelines and regulations for its functioning, to develop and manage financial resources and other assets, to cooperate with institutions and communities and to play an advocacy role for community engagement in Higher Education" (SAHECEF, 2010:2). The execution of this task will enable the advocacy that is needed for it to take place. There is limited support available from government. The one source of funding that has recently been made available is through the National Research Foundation. The initial funding from the National Research Foundation was only allocated to the comprehensive universities. However, it has since been made available to all public universities. The availability of these funds could facilitate robust research, stimulate conceptual debate and create new forms of knowledge. Research that contributes to a deeper sense of understanding of the field is what will be funded. The discussion forum that was held in 2008 and the Symposium

on Community Engagement that was hosted by the National Research Foundation at UNISA in 2009 pointed to the need for dedicated research and attention that should be given to the notions of community engagement.

There is a need to maintain the existing relationships and build new ones in the HEIs as well as to develop succession plans. The current champions in this field are at the senior management level with corresponding age demographics. The interviewee's averaged out as a middle-aged group. Serious attention should also be given to staff retention and support. Such attention should include the provision of management by the community engagement office with logistical and emotional support being available for staff and students. The SAHECEF Governance and Management Working Group (2011:1) have recommended that the following matters be addressed:

- Successful governance and management structures for community engagement at HEIs
- Executive representation and responsibility
- Community engagement committees structures
- Staff establishments
- Data and management systems
- Relationships with community structures and with academic departments and faculties
- Quality assurance cycles
- Alternative funding models
- Incentives for staff, students and communities are also to be tabled for discussion

The way ahead will require the HEIs to shift even further when it comes to engaging in a tangible way with communities. To embrace the full potential that exists on the campuses and within our communities requires a movement forward towards engaging with one another. Such engagement is mirrored in the following quotation:

> "Engagement is the partnership of university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good."
>
> (CIC, 2005: 4)

At present there are many possibilities for service learning and community engagement in South Africa. There are many NGOs too, more so than in most other countries in the world. The embracing of all the resources will require a very large amount of funding as well as the involvement of many people.

> How to build partnerships between partners of unequal influence is neither straightforward nor assured, especially when one organization provides the financial resources in an exceptionally resource-poor environment (as is the case with community NGOs and outside funders) and the other partner is a university with well-established cultures and deeply embedded policies.
>
> (Thomson et al, 2008:24)

There are visible and evident shortages in both the areas of funding and capable people. There continues to be a dream of continuing to build sustainable partnerships but there are also huge challenges to be faced in this realm.

Ensure the embedding of service learning and community engagement in teaching, learning and research in the HEIs

From the research published in the field, it appears that there is a commitment on the part of the champions and role players to continue the pioneering work involved in developing and supporting service learning as a form of community engagement in South Africa. The champions and role players consider it to be an opportunity to provide leadership and academic influence in the spheres of higher education on the global stage. There are a number of important lessons that the South African models have had to learn and these lessons will be used to inform the next phase. The framework and guides that were provided by the CHESP programme have enabled the HEIs to be well positioned for their future task in South Africa. The research and curriculum development that was supported through CHESP funding has enabled a great deal of foundational work to be done so that the next generation of practitioners can move forward. It should also be acknowledged that this type of national strategy regarding the development and embedding of the pedagogy of service learning and community engagement in higher education has not been devised in any other country.

Research indicates the lack of two key resources, funding and competent personnel. Few HEIs have addressed the shortage of expertise in the field. Service learning capacity building programmes are currently being offered at NQF level 9. There are also opportunities for promotion in this area as new directorates of community engagement are being established. Much more collaboration is required in respect of funding specifically for program development is required. Some of the HEIs have developed excellent data management systems that facilitate in-depth future planning. Capacity-building programmes are being shared amongst the HEIs. The majority of the participants were of the opinion that there should be more sharing of resources amongst HEIs and that such sharing could include everything from policies and procedures through to curriculum and staff.

The apparent lack of support or interest at the ministerial level has not deterred this movement in higher education in South Africa in any way. It appears that, since the CHESP programme ended, there has been greater participation in service learning and community engagement than before. The greater majority of universities are involved in SAHECEF. Regional collaboration is taking place. Many new partnerships have been formed through SAHECEF. The possibility still exists that the limited finances that are allocated to community engagement will be reallocated within the HEIs due to financial constraints. In the one HEI in which funding is available for service learning and community engagement programmes, service learning and community engagement is not flourishing. The interviewee reported that it was, regrettably, due to the fact that members of staff are not interested in going beyond their comfort zone to become involved outside of the lecture theatre. This means that they are not available to attend capacity building programmes that are funded and are not prepared to venture into communities to support or supervise their students as they work in the field. In all of the other HEIs there are elements of this attitude, although it is not stated as blatantly. The conclusion that could be drawn from this situation is that there cannot be “a one-size-fits all” approach, since not all academics consider community engagement and service learning to be their core business.

For community engagement to continue to grow, SAHCEF as well as each HEI should have the necessary support and structures in operation. The establishment of community engagement offices or directorates in most of the HEIs in South Africa appears to indicate that the directive

from government is being adhered to. The way that the HEIs respond to the directive in the next few years will set the trend for the decades that follow. The working groups that have been established in SAHECEF: teaching and learning, partnerships, governance and management, volunteerism, and research, provide a platform and a context for the HEIs to collaborate and discover, dream, design and reach the destiny that is possible. This perspective is evident from the following statement by an interviewee.

> "The best way for service learning and community engagement to develop and grow is to encourage or create interdisciplinary teams that work together …….. Through the collaborative partnership between the HEI, the partner and the community they must all make sure that there are concrete development plans; there must be a move to action plans. Short term interventions must become long term solutions. No quick fixes must be allowed as they damage all parties but often the community more than anyone else."
>
> (Interviewee 10, 2010)

Conclusion

The sustainability of service learning and community engagement in higher education in South Africa is dependent on the factors that have been mentioned in the preceding sections. There is an acknowledgement of the need for strong and supported governance and management and for strong reciprocal partnerships. Community engagement and service learning should be embedded in teaching and learning that is informed and supported by research. If the parties concerned are envisioned and base their strategies on what works and gives life and not on breakdowns and failures, more effective and sustainable organizations would exist (Watkins & Kelly, 2010).

In his presentation at the 'Closing the Gap in Education Conference' held at Monash South Africa by the Monash Institute for the Study of Global Movements, Bloch stated that he believed that there is a "brief window of opportunity, a 'policy space', in which we are all called to come forward, to put shoulders to the wheel and to take responsibility together and urgently, with commitment, to renew our education" (2010:15). The policy framework exists and the window of opportunity is wide open.

There are many shoulders that are attempting to work together to move this vehicle forward. The possibility of co-constructing the journey ahead is a real one. In the third pillar of higher education in South Africa there is the opportunity for transformation to take place, through collaboration and multi-sector partnerships. “Community Engagement should not shy away from issues that affect society that closely” (Odora-Hoppers, 2011:8). There is the potential for higher education to play its role on the South African stage, but it will take an unwavering commitment to academic excellence and dynamic reciprocal partnerships for this goal to be achieved.

Appendix A: Interview Schedule

Phase 1 Discovery

1. **What have you got in your hands? i.e. How has the last 9 years influenced your current philosophy/positioning with regards to SL and CE?**

   Prompts:

   1. Describe how you got involved in SL and CE
   2. How has your understanding of SL developed?
   3. What role did CHESP play from your point of view?
   4. How would you have described SL and CE in the first phases of implementation in SA and how would you describe it now?
   5. In your opinion where would SL and CE be positioned as a pedagogy in SA currently? (fringes, midstream, mainstream) Explore the reasons.
   6. However, SL and CE have gained national attention in HEIs, how and why?
   7. Have there been any tangible benefits from your perspective in HEIs, have there been any tangible benefits for your HEI/ organization, have there been any tangible benefits for you?
   8. How has SL influenced CE, teaching and learning and research in HEIs?
   9. How have NGO's, PBO's, FBO's and other community based organizations been included and how have they been involved in the positioning of SL?

Appendix A Interview Schedule, continued

Phase 2 Dream

2. **If resources were not an issue what would your dreams for the implementation of SL and CE be?**

Prompts:

1. What were the resources put into SL?
2. Is there a role for a 'CHESP' in the future?
3. How were these resources CHESP accessed and utilized and was it the best utilization of these resources?
4. Describe the most ideal environment for SL to flourish?
5. From your perspective what would be the three to four key resources needed?
6. What research would you want to see commissioned?
7. How will teaching and learning be different if influenced by SL?
8. How will the community be different if influenced by SL?
9. How will the students be different if influenced by SL?
10. What are your personal goals regarding SL?

Appendix A Interview Schedule, continued

Phase 3 Design

3. **What is currently being planned or designed for the implementation of SL and CE?**

Prompts:

1. In Schools
2. In HEIs
3. In the CHE/HEQC/Nationally/Internationally
4. In NGO's, PBO's, CBO's, FBO,s
5. Are there any resources to work with?
6. With what exists, how can these resources be optimally used for the future?
7. How do you see collaboration strengthening SL initiatives?
8. What current collaborative initiatives are taking place?
9. How have previous national conferences assisted in the promotion and development of SL and are there any further conferences planned?
10. Is there a need for a national body, a South African Campus Compact to replace CHESP?
11. If there was a need for a national body, who would determine the mandate and scope of practice for the body?

Appendix A Interview Schedule, continued

Phase 4 Destiny

What direction do you see SL and CE taking?

Prompts:

1. What are the goals of the current national strategy and HEIs with which you are familiar?
2. What do you hope is achieved?
3. What measurables are in place?
4. Are these realistic?
5. Is the CHE/HEQC the right place for the CHESP initiative to reside?
6. How do you think under the new minister of Higher Education the agenda for service learning and community engagement will develop?
7. In your observation are there any indicators that you know of in the minister's statements and proposed policy changes that suggest this to you?

Conclusion

Having been involved as a champion of SL and CE if you had the opportunity to start again, knowing what you know now, what would you do?

Appendix B

Ethics Clearance

Name:	**Craig Rowe**
Department:	**School of Education**
Full Time or Part Time:	**Part Time**
Contact Number:	**083 302 0804**
E-Mail:	**craig.rowe@adm.monash.edu**

Title of Research Project

CE and SL in South Africa 2009

The Post Community Higher Education Service Partnership Era - A small scale survey of SL in South Africa

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Is this research for degree purposes? If so, for what degree, and has it been approved by the relevant higher degrees committee or other relevant unit?

Yes – to be submitted towards M Ed in Adult Education (by coursework and research report)

The research proposal has been submitted on the 31 July 2009

Where will the research be carried out?

Throughout South Africa

Who is the researcher and who will supervise the project?

Researcher: Craig Rowe – 083 302 0804

Supervisor: Jonathan van Niekerk – (011) 717-3223/3083

PLEASE DESCRIBE FULLY THE PROCEDURES YOU PROPOSE TO CARRY OUT ON SUBJECTS AND INFORMANTS IN THE PURSUIT OF THE RESEARCH AIMS BY ANSWERING ALL THE QUESTIONS

Protocols submitted to the committee must have the information that will enable it to judge the safety of procedures or confidentiality of information for research on human subjects.

The following questions have been designed for this purpose and should therefore be answered as fully as possible.

Give a brief outline of the proposed research.

Background and context

Historically institutes of higher education have been seen to be isolated from the real concerns of the world. They have appeared as ivory towers and bastions of knowledge to which mere mortals could only but aspire to. In 1997 the White Paper for the Transformation of Higher Education challenged the institutions to redress the past inequalities and be agents of change and transformation in the higher education system. There is a call in the nation for education that is relevant and applicable for the development of our nation. Institutions of higher education are being challenged to be part of this process. The call will only be successful if there is a partnership between higher education institutes (HEIs) and a variety of other role players in the community. They must "lay the foundations for the development of a learning society, which can stimulate, direct and mobilize the creative and intellectual energies of all peoples towards meeting the challenge of reconstruction and development." (Department of Education, 1997:5)

In South Africa each Higher Education Institution (HEI) has to adhere to the criterion set out by the Council for Higher Education to maintain the accreditation and registration. There are three areas that they are evaluated on namely Teaching

and Learning, Research and CE. CE is the area in which SL falls. The institutions are then evaluated and much of the criteria is only possible through the well structured implementation of SL programs. However since the closure of the Community Higher Education Service Program (CHESP) which ended in 2008, no funding from government or any external source has been available to support the implementation of SL. The challenge that I see is that if SL and CE programs are going to continue to be widely implemented it is going to take institutional commitment. This would mean finances, staff, capacity building, resources, curriculum development and accreditation. There was through the CHESP program support in all these areas. With this support no longer there how willing and able are the HEIs to continue this process.

Proposed Research

The aim of the research is to investigate what is being done and how best to support and encourage the continued implementation of SL in South Africa. The researcher hopes to discover how SL and CE can be sustainable in South Africa. This research will identify what SL practices are being established by HEIs in South Africa in the post CHESP era. HEIs previously over a period of nine years received external support from CHESP. In 2008 the CHESP project was handed over to the Higher Education Quality Committee. Since then support and funding previously supplied by CHESP has ended. The researcher aims to discover how and why, even though since 2008 HEIs have received no external support, SL has continued to be implemented in many HEIs.

What research procedures are to be used?

A small scale survey will be conducted within an Appreciative Inquiry conceptual framework. Appreciative Inquiry can be located within a qualitative research paradigm, and qualitative researchers attempt to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of meanings people bring to them" (Denzin and Lincoln in Creswell, 1998:15).

The research questions that will be asked are:

- What role did CHESP play in the establishment of SL and CE in South Africa?
- How and to what extent has SL been embedded in the CE, teaching and learning and research cultures in HEIs in South Africa?
- What are the key factors or structures that would need to be put into place for the ongoing support of SL and CE in South Africa?

The way the questions are framed in appreciative inquiry framework of, discovery, dream, design and destiny is a key component of the research.

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1. **What type of information is to be gathered? Where a questionnaire will be used, please attach a copy.**

The research paradigm will be qualitative. This will be done through a small scale survey. The procedures that will be used are in-depth literature review, in-depth interviews, reviews of policy documents and audit reports and observer and incidental information.

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2. **How will the subjects be selected and exactly what will they be told when asked to participate in the research?**

The sample size of the survey will be small. As previously stated the sample will be a purposeful one. In Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) they point out that, with this type of sampling, researchers handpick the cases to be included in the sample in terms of their typicality. There were only a small group of champions of SL that

pioneered the work and only some of those who were involved in the initial phases are still involved. There are 10 SL champions that the researcher has identified and will attempt to interview. The researcher will attempt to interview both those that were originally involved and are no longer involved and those that have continued to champion Service Learning.

The participants will be given a document that outlines the aims of my research, the research approach and data collection and analysis, what participation involves for the students, and how the data will be used and presented. It will also state that the participants have the right to withdraw at any stage in the research process, as well as guaranteeing them to see and comment on the analysis and interpretation of the data prior to its submission. The participants will be given a copy of the interview schedule beforehand so as to more thoroughly prepare their answers. They will also be told why they were selected.

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3. Will the research be of any direct benefit to any of the participants?

Yes, the research will benefit those participants that are actively pursuing the implementation of SL as this research could support and inform their practice.

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4. Are there any risks involved for any of the participants?

No there are no risks to any of the participants

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5. How will confidentiality be guaranteed?

In working with the data collected, each participant will be given a code, and the data will thereafter be associated with the code and not with the participant.

The data will be used in a summative way with no attribution to individuals.

Care will be taken to insure that none of the participant's identity is revealed.

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6. What is to be done with the raw research data after completion of the project?

The transcripts of all the interviews will be kept in storage for three years after completion of the research.

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7. How will the end results be reported and to whom?

The results will be published as part of the Research Report for completion of the M. Ed degree in Adult Education. The report will be made available to all those who participate in the research. The researcher would hope to present the research at relevant conferences.

In signing this form, I, the supervisor of this project, undertake to ensure that many amendments to this project that are required by the Human Research Ethics Committee are made before the project commences.

Date: _____ Supervisors Signature _____

Date: _____ Applicants Signature _____

Date: _____ Department Heads Signature _____

Appendix C

Title of Research Project

The sustainability of SL in South Africa in the Post "Community Higher Education Service Partnership" Era

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Research Participation Consent

Dear Participant

Thank you for agreeing to consider being part of my research into SL and CE in South Africa. The whole area is of particular interest to me and I would consider myself as being on the journey of discovery and learning in this field with you. My current appointment is at Monash South Africa as the CE Manager which entails developing and supporting SL programs, volunteer programs and community partnership development. I have also been involved in the Council for Higher Education (CHE) audits in three Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). My role in these audits was specifically around CE and Experiential Learning. The auditing of SL programs played a large role in these processes. I am enrolled for the SL Capacity Building Program at the University of the Free State and am enjoying much discussion and debate around how SL is developing in South Africa. As well as being involved on a national level I have had the privilege of interacting with campuses in United States of America and Australia around the concepts of service learning and community engagement.

My personal philosophy of life is also expressed in the pedagogy of SL. I am involved in my community as a pastor and have an approach that believes learning takes place optimally through service and reflection, which in turn leads to change. I am currently engaged in studying towards the degree of M Ed in Adult Education at the University of the Witwatersrand. I would like to conduct a small scale survey to examine development of SL in South Africa, particularly in the post CHESP era.

I would like to invite you to participate in the research I am conducting. You are acknowledged as one of the leading thinkers and innovators of Service Learning in South Africa. The practice you have been involved in, as well your concepts and thoughts around the way ahead for Service Learning in South Africa is well known to me, through various papers that you have written, contributions made at Service Learning forums and presentation made at Service Learning conferences.

Your input to my research will be valuable and appreciated, but it is entirely voluntary, so the aim of this document is firstly to define and explain the aims and approach of my research, and secondly to allow you to agree to or excuse yourself from participating in my research. My hope would be that this report could provide valuable information for the future development of Service Learning in South Africa. A copy of the final report will be given to you after completion.

I would require approximately one to two hours of your time to have a structured interview with you. The interview would take place in September. A copy of the interview schedule is attached to this document. Please read through this document carefully and feel free to ask me any questions about its content. Also please note that in agreeing to participate, you are not bound or obligated to continue with your participation should you change your mind at any time. You have the right to withdraw from the research at any time.

Thank you for your time.

Craig Rowe

Research Aims

The aim of the research is to investigate what is being done and how best to support and encourage the continued implementation of Service Learning in South Africa. The researcher hopes to discover how Service Learning can be sustainable in South Africa. This research will identify what Service Learning practices are being established by HEIs in South Africa in the post CHESP era. HEIs previously over a period of nine years received external support from CHESP. In 2008 the CHESP project was handed over to the Higher Education Quality Committee. Since then support and funding cycle previously supplied by CHESP has ended. The researcher aims to discover how and why even though since 2008 HEIs have received no external support Service Learning has continued to be implemented in many HEIs.

What research procedures are to be used?

A small scale survey will be conducted within an Appreciative Inquiry conceptual framework. Appreciative Inquiry can be located within a qualitative research paradigm, and qualitative researchers attempt to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of meanings people bring to them" (Denzin and Lincoln in Creswell, 1998:15). I will conduct an in-depth interview with each participant. An interview schedule will be supplied to each participant before the interview (see appendix 1). The research questions that will be asked will reflect on:

- The role CHESP played in the establishment of service learning and community engagement in South Africa?
- How and to what extent Service Learning has been embedded in the Community Engagement, teaching and learning and research cultures in HEIs in South Africa?
- What the key factors or structures are that would need to be put into place for the ongoing support of service learning and community engagement in South Africa?

The way the questions are framed in appreciative inquiry framework of, discovery, dream, design and destiny is a key component of the research.

The sample size of the survey will be small and purposeful. As a researcher I have handpicked the participants to be included in the sample in terms of their typicality. You were part of a small group of champions of service learning and community engagement that pioneered the work and only some of those who were involved in the initial phases are still involved. I will attempt to interview both those that were originally involved and are no longer involved and those that have continued to champion service learning and community engagement in South Africa. Therefore your participation in this research would be welcomed.

In addition to my in-depth interviews I will also be doing in-depth analysis of the audits, articles and policy documents relating to service learning and community engagement in South Africa.

What does your participation involve?

In agreeing to participate in this research you are doing the following:

1. Give me permission to use the data drawn from the in-depth interview with you, as part of the data that I will consider in my analysis.

2. Agree to give me input on articles and journals that are available for research and analysis purposes.

3. As a champion in the field I would invite your comments on the findings because I believe they should be of benefit to you as well as to the field of Service Learning.

How will the data be used and presented?

In working with the data collected, each participant will be given a code, and the data will thereafter be associated with the code and not with participant's names.

In addition some of the data will be used in a general or summative way, with no attribution to individuals. Care will be taken to ensure that the identity of each participant is not revealed and cannot be identified by a reader of the final report.

Participants may, if they wish, examine the analysis of the data prior to its final submission, and may ask for comments to be added to the report.

I, _____ have read and understood the contents of this document and hereby agree / do not agree (cross out the non-applicable option) to participate in the research project outlined above.

I understand that in agreeing to participate that:

I am giving permission to the researcher to use the data drawn from the in-depth interview with me.

I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time.

My identity will be protected and not be disclosed to any outsider or reader of the research.

I have the right to view and comment on any analysis or interpretation made before the research is submitted or published.

Signed _____ Date _____

Appendix D: SAHECEF Constitution



SOUTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FORUM (SAHECEF) CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

The organisation is committed to:

> ***Advocating, promoting, supporting, monitoring, and strengthening community engagement at South African Higher Education Institutions***
>
> ***Furthering community engagement at Higher Education Institutions in partnership with all stakeholders with a sustainable social and economic impact on South African society***
>
> ***Fostering an understanding of community engagement as integral to the core business of higher education***

1. NAME

The name of the organisation is the *South African Higher Education Community Engagement Forum* (SAHECEF)

2. OBJECTIVES AND COMPETENCIES

2.1 Objectives

The objectives of the *South African Higher Education Community Engagement* are to:

-advocate and champion community engagement in South African Higher Education with relevant stakeholders

-share experiences and best practice in terms of community engagement;

-explore opportunities for cooperation between South African Higher Education Institutions in terms of community engagement;

-encourage partnerships between South African Higher Education Institutions and other national and international stakeholders in terms of community engagement;

-facilitate the generation and management of knowledge about community engagement in a South African context

-facilitate the dissemination of new knowledge

-promote community engagement as a vehicle for development and transformation;

-facilitate the establishment of a national community engagement resource centre;

-facilitate the organisation of national community engagement conferences and provide platforms for debate about practices , monitoring and evaluation;

-promote debate about innovative practices in the field of community engagement in the context of Higher Education

2.2 Competencies

The organisation is competent to:

-draw up policy, guidelines and regulations for its functioning;

-develop and manage financial resources and other assets;

-cooperate with institutions and communities;

-play an advocacy role for community engagement in Higher Education.

3. AREA OF OPERATION

The organisation predominantly operates in the Republic of South Africa, but may become involved in initiatives that are compatible with its objectives anywhere in the world.

4. FUNDING

The organisation shall raise funds to realise its objectives through membership fees, grants, sponsorship and general fundraising as deemed appropriate by the board.

5. MEMBERS OF THE ORGANISATION

5.1 Corporate members:

- South African higher education institutions involved in community engagement;

5.2 Associate membership:

-organisations that have similar objectives;

5.3 Honorary membership:

- Special recognition awarded by the Board to people and institutions.

The Board reserves the right to grant or cancel membership.

6. BOARD AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Management of the South African Higher Education Community Engagement Forum resides in the Board that is responsible for the overall functioning of the organisation and the development of policy within the accepted practices and regulations of the South African Higher Education sector.

6.1 Duties and Competencies of the Board:

The Board is responsible for:

- The provision of strategic leadership and guidance on community engagement in the Higher Education Sector

- The management and administration of the organisation;

- The accreditation of member organisations of the South African Higher Education Community Engagement Forum.

- The development of policy and the code of conduct of the organisation;

6.2 Composition of the Board

6.2.1The Board comprises of one formally nominated representative from each corporate member

6.2.2 Co-opted members:

The Board may, depending on knowledge and experience required at Board level, co-opt members for a specific term. These members serve the Board in an advisory capacity only and have no voting rights.

6.3 Executive Committee

The Board elects an Executive Committee consisting of a chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary, treasurer and three additional members.

6.4 Term of Office

Elected members serve a term of two years. Officials may be re-elected, up to a maximum of two consecutive terms.

7. ADVISORY BOARD

The Board and Executive Committee will consult an Advisory Board consisting of community partners and external constituencies in the execution of their duties.

8. SUB-COMMITTEES

Provision is made for the establishment of sub-committees to assist the Board to achieve the objectives of SAHECEF. 9. MEETINGS

9.1 The Board meets at least once per semester at a time and place previously decided.

9.2 The Executive Committee meets on an ad hoc basis, as and when the need arises

9.3 The sub-committees meet on an ad hoc basis, or as determined by the Board.

9.4 An annual general meeting is held after written notice of at least two calendar months .

9.5 Special general meetings may take place at any time the Board considers necessary.

9.6 When necessary, and in the interest of expediency, the Chairperson may call an Executive Committee meeting via electronic media.

10. QUORUM

10.1 A quorum of the Board and Executive Committee consists of 50% plus one of the members.

10.2 A quorum for the annual general meeting, or special general meeting consists of 50% plus one of the members of the organisation.

11. FINANCIAL YEAR, ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND ANNUAL REPORT

11.1 The financial year of the organisation extends annually from 1 January to 31 December.

11.2 The annual financial statements of the organisation are audited annually and the financial statements are available and approved at the next AGM

12. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

The constitution can only be amended with the agreement of two thirds majority of the total members present at the annual general meeting or a special general meeting convened for that purpose.

13. DISSOLUTION OF THE ORGANISATION

The organisation can only be dissolved if two thirds of the members present at an annual general meeting or special general meeting vote in favour of dissolution. At least two calendar months written notice must be given of such a meeting and the notice must clearly state that dissolution of the organisation and disposal of its assets will be considered. If no quorum is present at such a meeting, the meeting will be adjourned for at least a week and those present at such a postponed meeting will constitute a quorum.

Appendix E: Examples of Research Tables

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Question 2 PHASE 1: DISCOVERY	What have you got in your hands? i.e. How has the last 9 years of the CHESP initiative influenced your current philosophy/positioning with regards to Service Learning?
	How has your understanding of Service Learning developed?

	Interview 1	*Interview 2*	*Interview 3*	*Interview 4*	*Interview 5*	*Interview 6*	*Interview 7*	*Interview 8*	*Interview 9*	*Interview 10*
Codes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Ac	Ac	Ac	Ac	Ad	Ad	Ad	Ac/Ad	Com	Com
Comments	Planning and developed. Research focus Started off with very little prior knowledge Went on capacity building, ran capacity building, developed other staff, attended national workshops, researching and writing	Basic to start – developed over the years Organic research Conceptualizing civic society, participated in national and international collaboration, written and trained SL courses, established a CE office with SL as a core focus	CE as the focus, SL as a component, conferences and capacity building, through research and engagement with other HEI's	Personal philosophy and interest, much interaction worldwide, with campus compact, USA based programs and experts, collaboration nationally and internationally, conferences and national working groups, researching and presenting nationally and internationally	Through recent studies and capacity building programs	From a corporate CSI perspective and teaching, previous exposure to international NGO's, Development	From a corporate CSI perspective, developed a strategy and office for the HEI at, participated and worked with colleagues in SA	Through previous Higher Education experience – Initial SL programs in private HEI, linked with Experiential Learning	Develop through volunteer processes and previous NGO work	Developed an understanding of how HEI's should be involved with communities through being involved from the outset of CHESP in SA
Conclusion	Understanding developed through SLCB, research, community work, academic work, conferences, national working groups, experience in the field, collaborative work									

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Question 8 PHASE 2: **DREAM**	**If resources were not an issue, what would your dreams be for the implementation of Service Learning?**
	How will the community be different because of Service Learning?

	Interview 1	***Interview 2***	***Interview 3***	***Interview 4***	***Interview 5***	***Interview 6***	***Interview 7***	***Interview 8***	***Interview 9***	***Interview 10***
Codes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Ac	Ac	Ac	Ac	Ad	Ad	Ad	Ac/Ad	Com	Com
Comments	Community changes all the time. Research can focus on the community. Not enough done on reflection from community. What is their voice? Sort term and medium term outcomes reached Long term outcomes not known or achieved Partners were identified – unemployed and unskilled Service provider can assist with the assessment Work together, hand in hand University is prepared to learn from community	The community has become more involved in the HEI and visa versa	Boundaries should be broken down and not drawn up	See themselves as equal partners, see the value they add to learning, not seen as a test sight	Link in with HEIs		Community has been involved in a number of research projects, they have also participated in a number of programs as co-facilitators, there are a number of formal structures that have been created by the HEI as vehicles to quality assure CE and audit the flow of resources therefore allowing there to be significant development and partnerships between HEIs, community and business	Change for students and community, personal challenge	Change for students and community, personal challenges	Will see tangible long-term evidence of the partnership, measurable interventions
Conclusion	HEIs in the community and community in the HEIs – Walls broken down not built up									

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Question 2 PHASE 3: DESIGN	What is currently being planned or designed for the implementation of Service Learning?
	In HEIs?

	Interview 1	*Interview 2*	*Interview 3*	*Interview 4*	*Interview 5*	*Interview 6*	*Interview 7*	*Interview 8*	*Interview 9*	*Interview 10*
Codes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Ac	Ac	Ac	Ac	Ad	Ad	Ad	Ac/Ad	Com	Com
Comments	Curriculum development, 2012 – all courses to have 1 SL unit	SLCB – internal – 3 HEIs partnering in region for this development	Champions identified to take part in the capacity building process, implementation of SL in courses, funding available for implementers, continued mentoring and support	Capacity building originally done by 3 HEIs, 12 other HEIs attending the capacity building programmes, monthly SL meetings, community of practice established, CE directorate supportive of initiative	New courses and implementation of SL, bringing in expertise to create a community of practice	New Directorate of CE established, building on a history of activism, diverse application of SL in courses, seed funding available for research and SL programs, magazine/newsletter to communicate on campus and across HEIs	Multiple facets of CE, SL being one of them, community based research projects that inform SL courses	CE and SL decentralised into Faculties, each faculty responsible to develop their own courses, no longer funded centrally, monthly SL meetings no longer taking place, Reconceptualising of what CE and SL is in the HEI	Volunteer focus to continue	Continued reciprocal partnering with HEIs in this new transitional development phase

Conclusion	This one of the most exciting areas as there seems to be many new and dynamic developments, these all seem to have champions and supports involved

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Question 2 PHASE 4: DESTINY	What direction do you see Service Learning taking?
	What do you hope is achieved?

	Interview 1	*Interview 2*	*Interview 3*	*Interview 4*	*Interview 5*	*Interview 6*	*Interview 7*	*Interview 8*	*Interview 9*	*Interview 10*
Codes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Ac	Ac	Ac	Ac	Ad	Ad	Ad	Ac/Ad	Com	Com
Comments	Greater level of support in the HEI from all levels	Institutional commitment is continued and is developed	SL as one of the out workings of CE with regard to the development of new innovative T&L practices in HE	SL is embedded in the culture of T&L and research and not just a response to the CHE audit, the pedagogy of SL continue to be developed and discussed in communities of practice, get it more into the mainstream throughout SA and beyond	Policies, procedures and practices all get established	Courses written and approved, new champions identified and capacitated	Clear, well articulated plans are developed in all HEIs, New courses written and approved, more corporate involvement, greater recognition from the broader academic community	New emphasis on CE	New emphasis on CE	Partners are involved in all the new developments

Conclusion

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Question 1 PHASE 5: CONCLUSION	***Having been involved as a champion of Service Learning if you had the opportunity to start again, knowing what you know now, what would you do?***

	Interview 1	*Interview 2*	*Interview 3*	*Interview 4*	*Interview 5*	*Interview 6*	*Interview 7*	*Interview 8*	*Interview 9*	*Interview 10*
Codes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Ac	Ac	Ac	Ac	Ad	Ad	Ad	Ac/Ad	Com	Com
Comments	Will not start at such a rush again Make the concept of SL for all lecturers Focus on the value imparted Make it prominent as a flagship Top Management support in Word and Deed	Ensure institutional support Do things the same way – community first – then embedding SL in community initiatives Create sustainability through a centralised directorate with support structures in each discipline Train trainers in HEIs Collaborate regionally and relationally Mentor Scholars There must be benefits for all involved 1. Institutional and leadership support 2. Ground the work in community Initiatives 3. Do capacity Building 4. Link SL to CE 5. Develop the structures systematically Customize for Africa	Promote SL as a philosophy not a pedagogy – Linked to an the overarching concept of CE Promote it as a worldview – HEIs need to be challenged – do things differently – visionary Get buy in from all role players Hope SAHECEF plays a large role	Focus on capacity building, encourage ownership and champions from the bottom and the top down	Just starting out so am enjoying linking with other parties that are involved and collaborating with them Involved in SAHECEF	VC driven Research based Creative – long term Impact Community Voice Student Voice Involved in SAHECEF	VC driven Research based Creative – long term impact Give opportunity for the community voice to be heard The student voice in the same way The staff voice needs to also be heard and create time for them in their allocation to be involved, Attract corporate social investment funds Committed to SAHECEF	Dept of CE established Citizenship focus Module, generic CE – SL, Vol. Management structures CE must be credit bearing Get support from the Deans, develop interdisciplinary programs Growing influence of SAHECEF	Dept of CE established Citizenship focus Module, generic CE – SL, Volunteerism, Research, Finances, Management structures	Identify a community voice Focus on sustainability Develop interdisciplinary teams that work together at one partner, bring in HB expertise Reciprocal relationships, Make sure that there are concrete development plans; there must be a move to action plans Short term interventions must become long term solutions Don't allow quick fixes
Conclusion										

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